WRITINGS OF D'AUBIGNE MERLE J H

by D'aubigne Merle j h

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by D'aubigne Merle j h, compiled for study and devotional reading.

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Thoughts of Departure—Adieus to the Church—Critical Moment—Luther’s Courage—Discontentment at Rome—Papal Bull—Appeal to a Council PREFACE TO THE LAST EDITION My purpose is not to write the history of a party, but that of one of the greatest revolutions which has taken place among men—the history of a mighty impulse which was given to the world three centuries ago, and the influence of which is still, in our day, every where perceived. The history of the Reformation is different from the history of Protestantism. In the former, every thing bears testimony to a revival of human nature, to a transformation, social and religious, emanating from God. In the latter are too often seen a remarkable degeneracy from primitive principles, party intrigue, a sectarian spirit, and the impress of petty private feelings. The history of Protestantism might interest none but Protestants; the history of the Reformation is for all Christians, or rather all men. The historian has a choice in the field in which he is to labour. He may describe the great events which change the face of a people, or the face of the world; or he may narrate the calm and progressive course, whether of a nation, the Church, or mankind, which usually follows great social changes. Both fields of history are highly important; but the preference, in point of interest, seems due to those epochs which, under the name of Revolutions, introduce a nation or society at large to a new era and a new life.

Such a transformation I have attempted to describe with very humble powers, hoping that the beauty of the subject will compensate for my want of ability. In styling it a Revolution, I give it a name which in our day is in discredit with many, who almost confound it with revolt. This is a mistake. A revolution is a change which takes place in the world’s affairs. It is something new evolved (revolvo) from the bosom of humanity; and, indeed, before the end of the last century, the term was oftener used in a good than a bad sense. They spoke of “a happy,” a “marvellous” revolution. The Reformation being a re-establishment of the principles of primitive Christianity, is the opposite of a revolt. For that which behoved to revive it was a regenerating—for that which must always subsist, a conservative movement. Christianity and the Reformation, while establishing the grand principle that all souls are equal in the sight of God, and overthrowing the usurpations of a haughty priesthood, which presumed to place itself between the Creator and his creature, lay it down as a fundamental principle of social order, that all power is of God, and cry

aloud to all, “Love your brethren, fear God, honour the king.” The Reformation differs essentially from the revolutions of antiquity, and from the greater part of those of modern times. In these, political changes are in question, and the object is to establish or overthrow the ascendancy of one, or it may be of many. The love of truth, of holiness, and eternity, was the simple, yet powerful, spring by which our Reformation was effected. It marks a step which human nature has taken in advance. In fact, if man, instead of pursuing only material, temporal, earthly interests, proposes to himself a higher aim, aspiring to immaterial and immortal blessings, he advances and makes progress. The Reformation is one of the brightest days of this glorious advance. It is a pledge that the new struggle, which is now being decided, will terminate in favour of truth, with a triumph still more pure, spiritual, and splendid.

Christianity and the Reformation are the two greatest revolutions on record. Unlike the different political movements of which we read, they took place not in one nation merely, but in several nations, and their effects must be felt to the end of the world.

Christianity and the Reformation are the same revolution, effected at different times, and under different circumstances. They vary in secondary features, but are identical in their primary and principal lineaments. The one is a repetition of the other. The one ended the old, the other began the new world; the middle ages lie between. The one gave birth to the other, and if, in some respects, the daughter bears marks of inferiority, she on the other hand has her own peculiar properties.

One of these is the rapidity of her action. The great revolutions which have issued in the fall of a monarchy, and the change of a whole political system, or which have thrown the human mind on a new course of development, were slowly and gradually prepared. The old power had long been undermined, and its principal buttresses had one after another disappeared. It was so on the introduction of Christianity. But the Reformation is seen, at the first glance, to present a different aspect. The Church of Rome appears, under Leo X, in all its power and glory. A monk speaks, and over the half of Europe this power and glory crumble away, thus reminding us of the words in which the Son of God announces his second advent: “As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” (Matthew 24:27) This rapidity is inexplicable to those who see, in this great event, only a reform, and regard it as simply an act of criticism, which consisted in making a choice among doctrines, discarding some, retaining others, and arranging those retained, so as to form them into a new system.

How could a whole nation, how could several nations, have so quickly performed an operation so laborious? How could this critical examination have kindled that fire of enthusiasm which is essential to great, and, above all, to rapid revolutions? The Reformation, as its history will show, was altogether different. It was a new effusion of the life which Christianity brought into the world. It was the triumph of the greatest of doctrines, that which animates those who embrace it with the purest and strongest enthusiasm—the doctrine of faith, the doctrine of grace. Had the Reformation been what many Catholics and many Protestants in our day imagine,—had it been that negative system of negative reason, which childishly rejects whatever displeases it, and loses sight of the great ideas and great truths of Christianity, it had never passed the narrow limits of an academy, a cloister, or a cell. It had nothing in common with what is generally understood by Protestantism. Far from being a worn-out, emaciated body, it rose up like a man of might and fire.

Two considerations explain the rapidity and the extent of this revolution. The one must be sought in God, the other among men. The impulse was given by a mighty and invisible hand, and the change effected was a Divine work. This is the conclusion at which an impartial and attentive observer, who stops not at the surface, necessarily arrives. But the historian's task is not finished; for God works by second causes. A variety of circumstances, many of them unperceived, gradually prepared men for the great transformation of the sixteenth century, and, accordingly, the human mind was ripe when the hour of its emancipation pealed. The task of the historian is to combine these two great elements in the picture which he presents, and this has been attempted in the present history. We shall be easily understood, when we come to trace the second causes which contributed to the Reformation, but some perhaps will not understand us so well, and will even be tempted to tax us with superstition, when we attribute the accomplishment of the work to God. The idea, however, is particularly dear to us. This history, as indicated by the inscription on its title-page, places in front and over its head the simple and prolific principle, God in History. But this principle being generally neglected, and sometimes disputed, it seems necessary to expound our views with regard to it, and thereby justify the method which we have seen it proper to adopt.

History cannot, in our day, be that lifeless series of events which the greater part of previous historians deemed it sufficient to enumerate. It is now understood that in history as in man are two elements, matter and spirit. Our great historians, unable to satisfy themselves with a detail of facts, constituting only a barren chronicle, have sought for a principle of life to animate the materials of past ages.

Some have borrowed this principle from art, aiming at vivid, faithful, and graphic description, and endeavouring to make their narrative live with the life of the events themselves.

Others have applied to philosophy for the spirit which should give fruit to their labours. To facts they have united speculative views, instructive lessons, political and philosophical truths, enlivening their narrative by the language which they have made it speak, and the ideas which it has enabled them to suggest.

Both methods doubtless are good, and should be employed within certain limits. But there is another source to which, above all others, it is necessary to apply for the spirit and life of the past—I mean Religion. History should be made to live with its own proper life. God is this life. God must be acknowledged—God proclaimed—in history. The history of the world should purport to be annals of the government of the Supreme King.

I have descended into the field to which the narratives of our historians invited me, and there seen the actions of men and of states in energetic development and violent collision: of the clang of arms, I have heard more than I can tell; but no where have I been shown the majestic form of the Judge who sits umpire of the combat. And yet in all the movements of nations, there is a living principle which emanates from God. God is present on the vast stage on which the generations of men successively appear. True! He is there a God invisible; but if the profane multitude pass carelessly by, because He is concealed, profound intellects, spirits which feel a longing for the principle of their existence, seek him with so much the more earnestness, and are not satisfied until they are prostrated before Him. And their enquiries are magnificently rewarded. For, from the heights which they must reach in order to meet with God, the history of the world, instead of exhibiting to them, as to the ignorant crowd, a confused chaos, is seen like a majestic temple, on

which the invisible hand of God himself is at work, and which, from humanity, as the rock on which it is founded, is rising up to his glory. Shall we not see God in those great phenomena, those great personages, those great states, which rise, and suddenly, so to speak, spring from the dust of the earth, giving to human life a new impulse, form, and destiny? Shall not we see Him in those great heroes who start up in society, at particular epochs, displaying an activity and a power beyond the ordinary limits of man, and around whom individuals and nations come without hesitation, and group themselves as around a higher and mysterious nature? Who flung forward into space those comets of gigantic form and fiery tail, which only appear at long intervals, shedding on the superstitious herd of mortals either plenty and gladness, or pestilence and terror? Who, if not God?… Alexander seeks his origin in the abodes of Divinity; and in the most irreligious age there is no great renown which strives not to connect itself in some way with heaven. And do not those revolutions, which cast down dynasties, or even whole kingdoms into the dust; those huge wrecks which we fall in with in the midst of the sands; those majestic ruins which the field of humanity presents, do not those cry loud enough, God in History? Gibbon, sitting amid the wrecks of the Capitol, and contemplating the venerable ruins, acknowledges the intervention of a higher power. He sees, he feels it, and in vain would turn away from it. This spectre of a mysterious power reappears behind each ruin, and he conceives the idea of describing its influence in the history of the disorganisation, the decline and fall of this Roman power, which had subjugated the nations. This powerful hand, which a man of distinguished genius, one, however, who had not bent the knee before Jesus Christ, perceives athwart scattered fragments of the tomb of Romulus, reliefs of Marcus Aurelius, busts of Cicero and Virgil, statues of Cæsar and Augustus, trophies of Trajan, and steeds of Pompey, shall not we discover amid all ruins, and recognise as the hand of our God?

Strange! this interposition of God in human affairs, which even Pagans had recognised, men reared amid the grand ideas of Christianity treat as superstition. The name which Grecian antiquity gave to the Sovereign God, shows us that it had received primitive revelations of this great truth of a God, the source of history, and of the life of nations. It called him Zeus, that is to say, He who gives life to all that lives, to individuals and nations. To his altars kings and subjects come to take their oaths, and from his mysterious inspirations Minos and other legislators pretend to have received their laws. Nay more, this great truth is figured by one of the most beautiful myths of Pagan antiquity. Even Mythology might teach the sages of our day. This is a fact which it may be worth while to establish; perhaps there are individuals who will oppose fewer prejudices to the lessons of Paganism than to those of Christianity. This Zeus, then, this Sovereign God, this Eternal Spirit, the principle of life, is father of Clio, the Muse of History, whose mother is Mnemosyne or Memory. Thus, according to antiquity, history unites a celestial to a terrestrial nature. She is daughter of God and man. But, alas! the short-sighted wisdom of our boasted days is far below those heights of Pagan wisdom. History has been robbed of her divine parent, and now an illegitimate child, a bold adventurer, she roams the world, not well knowing whence she comes, or whither she goes. But this divinity of Pagan antiquity is only a dim reflection, a flickering shadow of the Eternal Jehovah. The true God whom the Hebrews worship, sees meet to imprint it on the minds of all nations that he reigns perpetually on the earth, and for this purpose gives, if I may so express it, a bodily form to this reign in the midst of Israel. A visible Theocracy behoved for once to exist on the earth, that it might incessantly recall the invisible Theocracy which will govern the world for ever. And what lustre does not the great truth—God in History—receive from the

Christian Dispensation? Who is Jesus Christ, if he be not God in History? It was the discovery of Jesus Christ that gave John Müller, the prince of modern historians, his knowledge of history. “The Gospel,” he says, “is the fulfilment of all hopes, the finishing point of all philosophy, the explanation of all revolutions, the key to all the apparent contradictions of the physical and moral world; in short, life and immortality. Ever since I knew the Saviour, I see all things clearly; with him there is no difficulty which I cannot solve.” So speaks this great historian; and, in truth, is not the fact of God’s appearance in human nature the key-stone of the arch, the mysterious knot which binds up all the things of earth, and attaches them to heaven? There is a birth of God in the history of the world, and shall God not be in history? Jesus Christ is the true God in the history of men. The very meanness of his appearance proves it. When man wishes to erect a shade or shelter on the earth, you may expect preparations, materials, scaffolding, workmen, tools, trenches, rubbish. But God, when he is pleased to do it, takes the smallest seed, which a new-born babe could have clasped in its feeble hand, deposits it in the bosom of the earth, and, from this grain, at first imperceptible, produces the immense tree under which the families of the earth recline. To do great things by imperceptible means is the law of God. In Jesus Christ this law receives its most magnificent fulfilment. Of Christianity, which has now taken possession of the portals of nations, which is, at this moment, reigning or wandering over all the tribes of the earth from the rising to the setting sun, and which incredulous philosophy herself is obliged to acknowledge as the spiritual and social law of the world—of this Christianity, (the greatest thing under the vault of heaven, nay, in the boundless immensity of Creation,) what was the commencement? An infant born in the smallest town of the most despised nation of the earth—an infant whose mother had not what the poorest and most wretched female in any one of our cities has, a room for birth—an infant born in a stable and laid in a manger!… There, O God, I behold and I adore Thee! The Reformation knew this law of God, and felt she had a call to accomplish it. The idea that God is in history was often brought forward by the Reformers. In particular, we find it on one occasion expressed by Luther, under one of those grotesque and familiar, yet not undignified figures which he was fond of employing in order to be understood by the people. “The world,” said he one day at table among his friends; “the world is a vast and magnificent game at cards, consisting of emperors, kings, and princes. For several ages the pope has beaten the emperors, princes, and kings, who stooped and fell under him. Then our Lord God came and dealt the cards, taking to himself the smallest, [Luther,] and with it has beaten the pope, who beat the kings of the earth…. God used it as his ace. ‘He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree,’ says Mary.” (Luke 1:52) The period whose history I am desirous to trace, is important with reference to the present time. Man, on feeling his weakness, is usually disposed to seek for aid in the institutions which he sees existing around him, or in devices, the offspring of his own imagination. The history of the Reformation shows that nothing new is done with what is old, and that if, according to our Saviour’s expression, there must be new vessels for new wine, there must also be new wine for new vessels. It directs man to God, the sole actor in history—to that divine Word—always ancient, from the eternity of the truths which it contains—always new, by the regenerating influence which it exerts, which three centuries ago purified society, restoring faith in God to those whom superstition had enfeebled; and which, at all epochs in the world’s history, is the source from which salvation proceeds.

It is singular to see a great number of individuals under the agitation produced by a vague longing for some fixed belief, actually applying to old Catholicism. In one sense, the movement is natural.

Religion being so little known, they imagine the only place to find it is where they see it painted, in large characters, on a banner, which age makes respectable. We say not that every kind of Catholicism is incapable of giving man what he wants. Our belief is, that a distinction should be carefully drawn between Catholicism and the Papacy. The Papacy we hold to be an erroneous and destructive system; but we are far from confounding Catholicism with it. How many respectable men, how many true Christians has not the Catholic Church contained! What immense services did not Catholicism render to existing states on their first formation, at a time when it was still strongly impregnated with the Gospel, and when the Papacy was only sketched above it in faint outline! But we are far away from those times. In our day an attempt is made to yoke Catholicism to the Papacy; and if catholic Christian truths are presented, they are little else than baits to allure men into the nets of the hierarchy. There is nothing to be expected from that quarter. Has the papacy abandoned one of its practices, its doctrines, its pretensions? Will not this religion, which other ages were unable to bear, be still less tolerable to ours? What revival was ever seen to emanate from Rome? Is it from the Papal hierarchy, all engrossed by earthly passions, that the spirit of faith, hope, and charity, which alone will save us, can proceed? Is it an effete system, which has no life for itself, which is everywhere struggling with death, and exists only by aid borrowed from without, that will give life to others, and animate Christian society with the heavenly breath for which it sighs? Or will this void in heart and soul, which some of our contemporaries begin to feel, dispose others of them to apply to the new Protestantism which has in several places supplanted the principal doctrines taught in the days of the Apostles and Reformers? A great vagueness of doctrine reigns in many of those Reformed Churches whose original members gave their blood as a seal of the living faith which animated them. Men of distinguished talents, alive to all that is beautiful in creation, have fallen into singular aberrations. A general faith in the divinity of the Gospel is the only standard which they are willing to follow. But what is this Gospel? This is the essential question; and yet all are silent on it, or, rather, each speaks in his own way. What avails it to know that in the midst of the people stands a vessel placed there by God in order to cure them, if none care for its contents, if none endeavour to appropriate them? This system cannot fill up the existing void. While the faith of the Apostles and Reformers is now in all quarters displaying its activity and power in the conversion of the world, this vague system does nothing, gives no light, no life. But let us not be without hope. Does not Roman Catholicism confess the great doctrines of Christianity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Creator, Saviour, and Sanctifier, the Truth? Does not vague Protestantism hold in its hand the Book of Life, which is “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness?” And how many upright spirits, honourable in the eyes of men, and pleasing in the sight of God, are found among the followers of these two systems! How shall we not love them?—how shall we not ardently desire their complete emancipation from the elements of the world? Charity is of vast extent; she takes the most opposite opinions into her embrace, that she may bring them to the feet of Jesus Christ.

Already there are signs which show that these two extreme opinions are in course of approximating to Jesus Christ, who is the centre of truth. Are there not some Roman Catholic churches in which the reading of the Scriptures is recommended and practised? And, in regard to Protestant rationalism, how great the advance which it has already made! It did not originate in the Reformation, for the history of this great revolution will prove that it was a time of faith; but may we not hope that it is tending towards it? May not the force of truth reach it through the Word of God,

and, reaching, transform it? Even now it gives signs of religious sentiment, inadequate, no doubt, but still forming an approach towards sound doctrine, and giving hopes of decisive progress.

Both Protestantism and old Catholicism are in themselves out of the question, and off the field; and it must be from some other source that the men of our day are to derive a saving power. There must be something which comes not of man, but of God. “Give me,” said Archimedes, “a point outside the world, and I will lift it from its poles.” True Christianity is this point outside the world. It lifts the human heart from the double pivot of egotism and sensuality, and will one day lift the whole world from its evil course, and make it turn on a new axis of righteousness and peace.

Whenever religion is in question, three objects engage the attention—God, man, and the priest. There can only be three religions on the earth, according as God, man, or the priest, is the author and head. By the religion of the priest, I mean that which is invented by the priest for the glory of the priest, and is ruled over by a sacerdotal caste. By the religion of man, I mean those systems, those various opinions which human reason forms, and which, created by man under disease, are, in consequence, utterly devoid of power to cure him. By the religion of God, I mean the truth as God himself has given it, having for its end and result the glory of God and the salvation of men.

Hierarchism, or the religion of the priest, Christianity, or the religion of God, rationalism, or the religion of man, are the three systems which in our days share Christendom among them. There is no safety either for man or for society in hierarchism and rationalism. Christianity alone will give life to the world; but, unhappily, of the three dominant systems it is not the one which counts the greatest number of followers.

Followers, however, it has. Christianity is doing its work of regeneration among many Catholics in Germany, and, doubtless, in other countries also. In our opinion, it is accomplishing it more purely and efficaciously among the evangelical Christians in Switzerland, France, Great Britain, the United States, etc. Blessed be God, the revivals, individual or social, which the Gospel produces, are no longer in our day rare events, for which we must search in ancient annals!

What I design to write, is a general history of the Reformation. I purpose to follow its course among the different nations, and to show that the same truths have everywhere produced the same results; at the same time, pointing out the diversities occasioned by differences of national character. And, first, it is in Germany especially that we find the primitive type of reform. There it presents the most regular development, there, above all, it bears the character of a revolution not limited to this or that people, but embracing the whole world. The Reformation in Germany is the fundamental history of reform. It is the great planet; the other Reformations are secondary planets. which turn with it, lighted by the same sun, and adapted to the same system, but still having a separate existence, each shedding a different light, and always possessing a peculiar beauty. To the Reformation of the sixteenth century we may apply the words of St. Paul, “There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory.” (1 Corinthians 15:41) The Swiss Reformation took place at the same time with that of Germany, and independently of it, and presented, more especially at an after period, some of the grand features which characterise the German Reformation. The Reformation in England has very special claims on our attention, from the powerful influence which the Church of that kingdom is now exercising over the whole world. But recollections of family and of flight, the thought of battles, sufferings, and exile endured for the cause of the Reformation in France, give it,

in my eyes, a peculiar attraction. Considered in itself, and also in the date of its commencement, it presents beauties of its own.

I believe that the Reformation is a work of God; this must have been already seen. Still, I hope to be impartial in tracing its history. Of the principal Roman Catholic actors in this great drama—for example, of Leo X, Albert of Magdeburg, Charles V, and Doctor Eck—I believe I have spoken more favourably than the greater part of historians have done. On the other hand, I have not sought to hide the faults and failings of the Reformers.

Since the winter of 1831–32, I have delivered public lectures on the period of the Reformation, and I then published my opening Address. These lectures have served as a preparative for the work which I now offer to the public. This history has been drawn from sources made familiar to me by long residence in Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, and by the study, in the original tongues, of documents relating to the religious history of Great Britain, and some other countries besides. These sources are indicated by notes throughout the work, and therefore require not to be mentioned here.

I could have wished to authenticate the different parts of my narrative by numerous original notes, but found that, if long and frequent, they might interrupt the course of the narrative in a manner disagreeable to the reader. I have, therefore, confined myself to certain passages which seemed fitted to make him more thoroughly acquainted with subject.

I address this history to those who love to see past events simply as they were, and not by the help of the magic mirror of genius, which magnifies and gilds, but sometimes also diminishes and distorts them. Neither the philosophy of the eighteenth, nor the romance of the nineteenth century, will furnish my opinions or my colours. I write the history of the Reformation in its own spirit. Principles, it has been said, have no modesty. Their nature is to rule, and they doggedly insist on the privilege. If they meet in their path with other principles which dispute their ascendancy, they give battle instantly; for a principle never rests till it has conquered. Nor can it be otherwise. To reign is its life; if it reigns not, it dies. Hence, while declaring that I am not able, and that I have no wish to rival other historians of the Reformation, I make a reservation in favour of the principles on which this history rests, and fearlessly maintain their superiority.

I cannot help thinking that as yet no history of the memorable epoch which I am about to describe exists in French. When I commenced my work, I saw no indication that the blank was to be filled up. This circumstance alone could have induced me to undertake the work, and I here bring it forward as my excuse. The blank exists still; and I pray Him from whom every good gift “cometh down” to grant that this humble attempt may not be without benefit to some of its readers.

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BOOK ONE State of Matters Before the Reformation

CHAP. I

Christianity—Two distinguishing Principles—Formation of the Papacy—First encroachments—Influence of Rome—Co-operation of Bishops and Factions—External Unity of

the Church—Internal Unity of the Church—Primacy of St. Peter—Patriarchates—Co-operation of Princes—Influence of the Barbarians—Rome invokes the Franks—Secular Power—Pepin and Charlemagne—The Decretals—Disorders of Rome—The Emperor the Pope's Liege Lord—Hildebrand—His character—Celibacy—Struggle with the Emperor—Emancipation of the Pope—Hildebrand's Successors—The Crusades—The Church—Corruption of Doctrine. The enfeebled world was rocking on its base when Christianity appeared. National religions which had sufficed for the fathers, could no longer satisfy the children. The new generation could not be moulded in the ancient forms. The gods of all nations transported to Rome, had there lost their oracles, as the nations had there lost their liberty. Brought face to face in the Capitol, they had mutually destroyed each other, and their divinity had disappeared. A great void had been made in the religion of the world. A kind of deism, destitute of spirit and life, kept floating, for some time, over the abyss in which the vigorous superstitions of the ancients were engulfed. But, like all negative beliefs, it was unable to build. Narrow national distinctions fell with the gods, and the nations melted down into one another. In Europe, Asia, and Africa, there was now only one empire, and the human race began to feel its universality and its unity.

Then the Word was made flesh.

God appeared among men, and as a man, "to save that which was lost." In Jesus of Nazareth "dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." This is the greatest event in the annals of the world. Ancient times had prepared it,—new times flow from it. It is their centre, their bond, and their unity.

Thenceforth all the popular superstitions were without meaning, and the slender remains which they had saved from the great shipwreck of infidelity sank before the Majestic Sun of eternal truth. The Son of man lived thirty-three years here below, curing the sick, instructing sinners, having no place where to lay his head, yet displaying, in the depth of this humiliation, a grandeur, a holiness, a power, and divinity, which the world had never known. He suffered, died, rose again, and ascended to heaven. His disciples, beginning at Jerusalem, traversed the empire and the world, everywhere proclaiming their Master "the Author of eternal salvation." From the heart of a nation, which stood aloof from all nations, came forth a mercy which invited and embraced all. A great number of Asiatics, Greeks, and Romans, till then led by priests to the feet of dumb idols, believed the Word which suddenly illumined the earth "like a sunbeam," as Eusebius expresses it. A breath of life began to move over this vast field of death. A new people, a holy nation, was formed among men, and the astonished world beheld, in the disciples of the Galilean, a purity, a self-denial, a charity, a heroism, of which it had lost even the idea.

Two principles, in particular, distinguished the new religion from all the human systems which it drove before it. The one related to the ministers of worship, the other to doctrine. The ministers of Paganism were in a manner the gods whom those human religions worshipped. The priests of Egypt, Gaul, Scythia, Germany, Britain, and Hindostan, led the people so long, at least, as the eyes of the people were unopened. Jesus Christ, no doubt, established a ministry, but he did not found a particular priesthood. He dethroned the living idols of the nations, destroyed a proud hierarchy, took from man what man had taken from God, and brought the soul again into immediate contact with the divine source of truth, proclaiming himself sole Master and sole Mediator.—"One is your Master, even Christ," said he; "and all ye are brethren." (Matthew 23:8) In regard to doctrine, human religions had taught that salvation was of man. The religions of the earth

had framed an earthly religion. They had told man that heaven would be given him as a hire—they had fixed its price, and what a price! The religion of God taught that salvation came from God, was a gift from heaven, the result of an amnesty, of an act of grace by the Sovereign. “God,” it is said, “has given eternal life.”

It is true, Christianity cannot be summed up under these two heads, but they seem to rule the subject, especially where history is concerned; and as we cannot possibly trace the opposition between truth and error, in all points, we must select those of them which are most prominent.

Such, then, were two of the constituent principles of the religion which at that time took possession of the empire, and of the world. With them we are within the true land-marks of Christianity—out of them Christianity disappears. On the preservation or the loss of them depended its greatness or its fall. They are intimately connected; for it is impossible to exalt the priests of the church, or the works of believers, without lowering Jesus Christ in his double capacity of Mediator and Redeemer. The one of these principles should rule the history of religion, the other should rule its doctrine. Originally, both were paramount; let us see how they were lost. We begin with the destinies of the former. The Church was at first a society of brethren, under the guidance of brethren. They were all taught of God, and each was entitled to come to the Divine fountain of light, and draw for himself. (John 6:45) The Epistles, which then decided great questions of doctrine, were not inscribed with the pompous name of a single man—a head. The Holy Scriptures inform us, that the words were simply these, “The apostles, elders, and brethren, to our brethren.” (Acts 15:23) But even the writings of the apostles intimate, that from the midst of these brethren a power would rise and subvert this simple and primitive order. (2 Thessalonians 2:2) Let us contemplate the formation, and follow the development of this power—a power foreign to the Church.

Paul of Tarsus, one of the greatest apostles of the new religion, had arrived at Rome, the capital of the empire and of the world, preaching the salvation which comes from God. A church was formed beside the throne of the Cæsars. Founded by this apostle, it consisted at first of some converted Jews, some Greeks, and some citizens of Rome. For a long time it shone like a pure light on a mountain top. Its faith was everywhere spoken of; but at length it fell away from its primitive condition. It was by small beginnings that the two Romes paved their way to the usurped dominion of the world. The first pastors or bishops of Rome early engaged in the conversion of the villages and towns around the city. The necessity which the bishops and pastors of the Campagna di Roma felt of recurring in cases of difficulty to an enlightened guide, and the gratitude which they owed to the Church of the metropolis, led them to remain in close union with it. What has always been seen in analogous circumstances was seen here; this natural union soon degenerated into dependence. The superiority which the neighbouring churches had freely yielded, the bishops of Rome regarded as a right. The encroachments of power form one large part of history, while the resistance of those whose rights were invaded forms the other. Ecclesiastical power could not escape the intoxication which prompts all those who are raised to aim at rising still higher. It yielded to this law of humanity and nature.

Nevertheless, the supremacy of the Roman bishop was at this time limited to oversight of the churches within the territory civilly subject to the prefect of Rome. But the rank which this city of the Emperors held in the world, presented to the ambition of its first pastor a larger destiny. The

respect paid in the second century to the different bishops of Christendom was proportioned to the rank of the city in which they resided. Now Rome was the greatest, the richest, and the most powerful city in the world. It was the seat of Empire,—the mother of nations; “All the inhabitants of the earth belong to it,” says Julian; and Claudian proclaims it “the fountain of law.”3

If Rome is queen of the cities of the world, why should not its pastor be the king of bishops? Why should not the Roman Church be the mother of Christendom? Why should not the nations be her children, and her authority their sovereign law? It was easy for the ambitious heart of man to reason in this way. Ambitious Rome did so.

Thus Pagan Rome, when she fell, sent the proud titles which her invincible sword had conquered from the nations of the earth to the humble minister of the God of peace seated amidst her ruins. The bishops in the different quarters of the empire, led away by the charm which Rome had for ages exercised over all nations, followed the example of the Campagna di Roma, and lent a hand to this work of usurpation. They took pleasure in paying to the Bishop of Rome somewhat of the honour which belonged to the Queen city of the world. At first there was no dependence implied in this honour. They treated the Roman pastor as equal does equal; but usurped powers grow like avalanches. What was at first mere brotherly advice soon became, in the mouth of the Pontiff, obligatory command. In his eyes a first place among equals was a throne. The Western bishops favoured the designs of the pastors of Rome, either from jealousy of the Eastern bishops or because they preferred the supremacy of a pope to the domination of a temporal power. On the other hand, the theological factions which rent the East sought, each in its turn, to gain the favour of Rome, anticipating their triumph from the support of the principal Church of the West.

Rome carefully registered these requests, these mediations, and smiled when she saw the nations throwing themselves into her arms. She let slip no occasion of increasing and extending her power. Praise, flattery, extravagant compliments, consultation by other churches, all became, in her eyes, and in her hands, titles and evidents of her authority. Such is man upon the throne; incense intoxicates him, and his head turns. What he has he regards as a motive to strive for more. The doctrine of the Church, and of the necessity of her external unity, which began to prevail so early as the third century, favoured the pretensions of Rome. The primary idea of the Church is, that it is the assembly of the saints, (1 Corinthians 1:2) the assembly of the first-born whose names are written in heaven. (Hebrews 12:23) Still, however, the Church of the Lord is not merely internal and invisible. It must manifest itself outwardly, and it was with a view to this manifestation that the Lord instituted the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist. The Church considered as external, has characteristics different from those which distinguish her as the Church invisible. The internal Church, which is the body of Christ, is necessarily and perpetually one. The visible Church, doubtless, has part in this unity, but considered in herself, multiplicity is a characteristic attributed to her in the Scriptures of the New Testament. While they speak to us of a Church of God, they mention, when speaking of the Church, as externally manifested, “the Churches of Galatia,” “the Churches of Macedonia,” “the Churches of Judea,” “all the Churches of the Saints.”2 These different Churches, unquestionably, may to a certain extent cultivate external union; but though this tie be wanting, they lose none of the essential qualities of the Church of Christ. In primitive times, the great tie which united the members of the Church was the living faith of the heart, by which all held of Christ as their common Head.

Various circumstances early contributed to originate and develop the idea of the necessity of an external unity. Men accustomed to the ties and political forms of an earthly country, transferred some of their views and customs to the spiritual and eternal kingdom of Jesus Christ. Persecution, powerless to destroy, or even to shake this new society, drew its attention more upon itself, and caused it to assume the form of a more compact incorporation. To the error which sprung up in deistical schools, or among sects, was opposed the one universal truth received from the Apostles, and preserved in the Church. This was well, so long as the invisible and spiritual Church was one with the visible and external Church. But a serious divorce soon took place; the form and the life separated from each other. The semblance of an identical and external organisation was gradually substituted for the internal and spiritual unity which forms the essence of genuine religion. The precious perfume of faith was left out, and then men prostrated themselves before the empty vase which had contained it. The faith of the heart no longer uniting the members of the Church, another tie was sought, and they were united by means of bishops, archbishops, popes, mitres, ceremonies, and canons. The living Church having gradually retired into the hidden sanctuary of some solitary souls, the external Church was put in its place, and declared to be, with all its forms, of divine institution. Salvation, no longer welling up from the henceforth hidden Word, it was maintained that it was transmitted by means of the forms which had been devised, and that no man could possess it if he did not receive it through this channel. None, it was said, can, by his own faith attain to eternal life. Christ communicated to the Apostles, and the Apostles communicated to the Bishops, the unction of the Holy Spirit; and this Spirit exists nowhere but in that order! Originally, whosoever had the Spirit of Jesus Christ was a member of the Church, but the terms were now reversed, and it was maintained that none but members of the Church received the Spirit of Jesus Christ. In proportion as these ideas gained ground, the distinction between clergy and people became more marked. The salvation of souls no longer depended solely on faith in Christ, but also, and more especially, on union with the Church. The representatives and heads of the Church obtained a part of the confidence due only to Jesus Christ, and in fact became mediators for the flock. The idea of the universal priesthood of Christians accordingly disappeared step by step; the servants of the Church of Christ were likened to the priests under the Old Dispensation; and those who separated from the bishop were put in the same class with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. From an individual priesthood, such as was then formed in the Church, to a sovereign priesthood, such as Rome now claims, the step was easy. In fact, as soon as the error as to the necessity of a visible unity of the Church was established, a new error was seen to arise, viz., that of the necessity of an external representative of this unity.

Although we nowhere find in the gospel any traces of a pre-eminence in St. Peter over the other apostles; although the very idea of primacy is opposed to the fraternal relations which united the disciples, and even to the spirit of the gospel dispensation, which, on the contrary, calls upon all the children of the Father to be servants one to another, recognising one only teacher, and one only chief; and although Jesus Christ sharply rebuked his disciples, as often as ambitious ideas of pre-eminence arose in their carnal hearts, men invented, and by means of passages of Scripture ill understood, supported a primacy in St. Peter, and then in this apostle, and his pretended successors at Rome, saluted the visible representatives of visible unity—the heads of the Church! The patriarchal constitution also contributed to the rise of the Roman Papacy. So early as the three first centuries, the churches of metropolitan towns had enjoyed particular respect. The Council of Nice, in its Sixth Canon, singled out three cities, whose churches had, according to it,

an ancient authority over those of the surrounding provinces; these were Alexandria, Rome, and Antioch. The political origin of this distinction is betrayed by the very name which was at first given to the bishop of these cities. He was called Exarch, in the same way as the civil governor. At a later period, the more ecclesiastical name of Patriarch was given to him. This name occurs for the first time in the Council of Constantinople, but in a different sense from that which it received at a later period; for it was only a short time before the Council of Chalcedon, that it was applied exclusively to the great metropolitans. The second ecumenical Council created a new patriarchate, that of Constantinople itself, the new Rome, the second capital of the empire. The Church of Byzantium, so long in obscurity, enjoyed the same privileges, and was put by the Council of Chalcedon in the same rank as the Church of Rome. Rome then shared the patriarchate with these three churches; but when the invasion of Mahomet annihilated the sees of Alexandria and Antioch—when the see of Constantinople decayed, and later, even separated from the west, Rome remained alone, and circumstances rallied all around her see, which from that time remained without a rival.

New accomplices, the most powerful of all accomplices, came also to her aid. Ignorance and superstition seized upon the Church, and gave her up to Rome with a bandage on her eyes, and chains on her hands. Still this slavery was not completed without opposition. Often did the voice of the churches protest their independence: This bold voice was heard especially in proconsular Africa and the East. But Rome found new allies to stifle the cry of the Churches. Princes, whom tempestuous times often caused to totter on the throne, offered her their support if she would in return support them. They offered her spiritual authority, provided she would reinstate them in secular power. They gave her a cheap bargain of souls, in the hope that she would help them to a cheap bargain of their enemies. The hierarchical power which was rising, and the imperial power which was declining, thus supported each other, and, by this alliance, hastened their double destiny.

Here Rome could not be a loser. An edict of Theodosius II, and of Valentinian III, proclaimed the bishop of Rome “Rector of the whole Church.” Justinian issued a similar edict. These decrees did not contain all that the popes pretended to see in them; but in those times of ignorance it was easy for them to give prevalence to the interpretation which was most in their favour. The power of the emperors in Italy becoming always more precarious, the Bishops of Rome failed not to avail themselves of the circumstance to shake off their dependence. But energetic promoters of the Papal power had by this time emerged from the forests of the North. The barbarians, who had invaded the West, and there fixed their abode, after intoxicating themselves with blood and rapine, behoved to lower their fierce sword before the intellectual power which they encountered. Altogether new to Christianity, ignorant of the spiritual nature of the Church, and requiring in religion a certain external show, they prostrated themselves, half savages, and half Pagans, before the High Priest of Rome. With them the West was at his feet. First, the Vandals, then the Ostrogoths, a little later the Burgundians, afterwards the Visigoths, lastly, the Lombards and Anglo-Saxons, came to do obeisance to the Roman Pontiff. It was the robust shoulders of the sons of the idolatrous North which finished the work of placing a pastor of the banks of the Tiber on the supreme throne of Christendom.

These things took place in the West at the beginning of the seventh century, precisely at the same period when the power of Mahomet, ready also to seize on a portion of the globe, was rising in the

East. From that time the evil ceases not to grow. In the eighth century we see the Bishops of Rome with one hand repulsing the Greek Emperors, their lawful sovereigns, and seeking to chase them from Italy, while, with the other, they caress the Mayors of France, and ask this new power, which is beginning to rise in the West, for a share in the wrecks of the empire. Between the East, which she repels, and the West, which she invites, Rome establishes her usurped authority. She rears her throne between two revolts. Frightened at the cry of the Arabs, who, become masters of Spain, vaunt that they will soon arrive in Italy by the passes of the Pyrennees and the Alps, and proclaim the name of Mahomet on the seven hills—amazed at the audacious Astolphus, who, at the head of his Lombards, sends forth his lion-roar, and brandishes his sword before the gates of the eternal city, threatening massacre to every Roman,—Rome, on the brink of ruin, looks around in terror, and throws herself into the arms of the Franks. The usurper Pepin asks a pretended sanction to his new royalty; the Papacy gives it to him, and gets him in return to declare himself the defender of the “Republic of God.” Pepin wrests from the Lombards what they had wrested from the emperor; but, instead of restoring it to him, he deposits the keys of the towns which he has conquered on the altar of St. Peter, and, swearing with uplifted hand, declares that it was not for a man he took up arms, but to obtain the forgiveness of his sins from God, and do homage to St. Peter for his conquests.

Charlemagne appears. The first time, he goes up to the Cathedral of St. Peter devoutly kissing the steps. When he presents himself a second time, it is as master of all the kingdoms which formed the empire of the West, and of Rome herself.

Leo III deems it his duty to give the title to him who already has the power, and, in the year 800, at the feast of Noel, places on the head of the son of Pepin the crown of the Emperor of Rome. From that time the pope belongs to the empire of the Franks, and his relations with the East are ended. He detaches himself from a rotten tree which is about to fall, in order to engraft himself on a vigorous wild stock. Among the Germanic races, to which he devotes himself, a destiny awaits him to which he had never ventured to aspire.

Charlemagne bequeathed to his feeble successors only the wrecks of his empire. In the ninth century civil power being everywhere weakened by disunion, Rome perceived that now was the moment for her to lift her head. When could the Church better make herself independent of the State than at this period of decline, when the crown which Charles wore was broken, and its fragments lay scattered on the soil of his ancient empire? At this time the spurious Decretals of Isidore appeared. In this collection of pretended decrees of the popes, the most ancient bishops, the contemporaries of Tacitus and Quintilian, spoke the barbarous Latin of the ninth century. The customs and constitutions of the Franks were gravely attributed to the Romans of the time of the emperors; popes quoted the Bible in the Latin translation of St. Jerome, who lived one, two, or three centuries after them; and Victor, Bishop of Rome, in the year 192, wrote to Theophilus, who was Archbishop of Alexandria, in 395. The impostor, who had forged this collection, strove to make out that all the bishops derived their authority from the Bishop of Rome, who derived his immediately from Jesus Christ. Not only did he record all the successive conquests of the pontiffs, but he, moreover, carried them back to the remotest periods. The popes were not ashamed to avail themselves of this despicable invention. As early as 865, Nicholas I selected it as his armour to combat princes and bishops. This shameless forgery was for ages the arsenal of Rome.

Nevertheless, the vices and crimes of the pontiffs were for some time to suspend the effects of the Decretals. The Papacy celebrates its admission to the table of kings, by shameful libations. It proceeds to intoxicate itself, and its head turns amidst the debauch. It is about this time that tradition places upon the Papal throne a damsel named Joan, who had fled to Rome with her lover, and, being taken in labour, betrayed her sex in the middle of a solemn procession. But let us not unnecessarily aggravate the disgrace of the Court of the Roman Pontiffs. Abandoned females did reign in Rome at this period. A throne, which pretended to exalt itself above the majesty of kings, grovelled in the mire of vice. Theodora and Marozia, at will, installed and deposed the pretended Masters of the Church of Christ, and placed upon the throne of Peter their paramours, their sons, and their grandsons. These scandalous proceedings, which are but too true, perhaps, gave rise to the tradition of Popess Joan.

Rome becomes a vast theatre of disorder, on which the most powerful families in Italy contend for ascendancy—the Counts of Tuscany usually proving victorious. In 1033, this house dares to place upon the pontifical throne, under the name of Benedict the Ninth, a young boy brought up in debauchery. This child of twelve, when pope, continues his ineffable turpitude. A faction elects Sylvester in his stead, and at length Pope Benedict, with a conscience loaded with adultery, and a hand dyed with the blood of murders, sells the popedom to an ecclesiastic of Rome. The Emperors of Germany, indignant at so many disorders, cleansed Rome with the sword. The empire, exercising its rights of superiority, drew the triple crown out of the mire into which it had fallen, and saved the degraded popedom by giving it decent men for heads. Henry III, in 1046, deposed three popes, and his finger, adorned with the ring of the Roman Patricians, pointed out the bishop to whom the keys of the confession of St. Peter were to be remitted. Four popes, all Germans, and nominated by the emperor, succeeded each other. When the pontiff of Rome died, deputies from that Church appeared at the imperial court, like the envoys from other dioceses, to request a new bishop. The emperor was even glad to see the pope reforming abuses, strengthening the Church, holding councils, inducting and deposing prelates, in spite of foreign monarchs; the Papacy, by these pretensions, only exalted the power of the emperor, its liege lord. But there was great danger in allowing such games to be played. The strength which the popes were thus resuming, by degrees, might be turned, all at once, against the emperor himself. When the viper recovered, it might sting the bosom which warmed it. This was what actually happened.

Here a new epoch in the Papacy begins. It starts up from its humiliation, and soon has the princes of the earth at its feet. To exalt it is to exalt the Church, is to aggrandise religion, is to secure to the mind its victory over the flesh, and to God his triumph over the world. These are its maxims, and in these ambition finds its profit, fanaticism its excuse. The whole of this new tendency is personified in one man,—Hildebrand.

Hildebrand, by turns unduly extolled or unjustly stigmatised, is the personification of the Roman pontificate in its power and glory. He is one of those master spirits of history, which contain in them an entire order of new things, similar to those presented in other spheres by Charlemagne, Luther, and Napoleon.

Leo IX took up this monk in passing through Clugny, and carried him to Rome. From that time Hildebrand was the soul of the popedom, until he became the popedom itself. He governed the Church in the name of several pontiffs before his own reign under that of Gregory VII. One great

idea took possession of this great genius. He wishes to found a visible theocracy of which the pope, as vicar of Jesus Christ, will be head. The remembrance of the ancient universal dominion of Pagan Rome haunts his imagination, and animates his zeal. He wishes to restore to Papal Rome all that the Rome of the Emperors had lost. “What Marius and Cæsar,” said his flatterers, “could not do by torrents of blood, thou performest by a word.”

Gregory VII was not led by the Spirit of the Lord. To this Spirit of truth, humility, and meekness, he was a stranger. He sacrificed what he knew to be true, when he judged it necessary to his designs. In particular, he did so in the affair of Berenger. But a spirit far superior to that of the common run of pontiffs, a deep conviction of the justice of his cause, undoubtedly did animate him. Bold, ambitious, and inflexible in his designs, he was, at the same time, dexterous and supple in the employment of means to ensure their success. His first labour was to embody the militia of the Church, for he behoved to make himself strong before he attacked the empire. A Council held at Rome cut off pastors from their families, and obliged them to belong entirely to the hierarchy. The law of celibacy, conceived and executed under popes who were themselves monks, changed the clergy into a kind of monastic order. Gregory VII pretended to have over all the bishops and priests of Christendom the same power which an abbot of Clugny had over the order over which he presided. The legates of Hildebrand, comparing themselves to the proconsuls of ancient Rome, traversed the provinces to deprive pastors of their lawful wives, and if need were, the pope himself stirred up the populace against married ministers. But Gregory’s main purpose was to shake Rome free of the empire. This bold design he never would have ventured to conceive, had not the dissensions which troubled the minority of Henry IV, and the revolt of the German princes, favoured its execution. The pope was then like one of the grandees of the empire. Making common cause with the other great vassals, he forms a party in the aristocratic interest, and then forbids all ecclesiastics, under pain of excommunication, to receive investiture to their benefices from the Emperor. He breaks the ancient ties which unite churches and their pastors to the authority of the prince, but it is to yoke all of them to the pontifical throne. His aim is by a powerful hand to enchain priests, kings, and people, and make the pope a universal monarch. It is Rome alone that every priest must fear, in Rome alone that he must hope. The kingdoms and princedoms of the earth are his domain, and all kings must tremble before the thunder of the Jupiter of modern Rome. Woe to him who resists! Subjects are loosed from their oath of allegiance, the whole country is smitten with interdict, all worship ceases, the churches are shut, and their bells are mute; the sacraments are no longer administered, and the word of malediction reaches even to the dead, to whom the earth, at the bidding of a haughty pontiff, refuses the peace of the tomb. The pope, who had been subject from the earliest days of his existence, first to the Roman Emperors, then to the Frank Emperors, and, lastly to the German Emperors, was now emancipated, and walked, for the first time, their equal, if not, indeed, their master. Gregory VII was, however, humbled in his turn; Rome was taken, and Hildebrand obliged to flee. He died at Salerno, saying, “I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore die I in exile.” Words thus uttered at the portals of the grave who will presume to charge with hypocrisy? The successors of Gregory, like soldiers who arrive after a great victory, threw themselves, as conquerors, on the subjugated churches. Spain, rescued from Islamism, Prussia, delivered from idols, fell into the hands of the crowned priest. The crusades, which were undertaken at his bidding, every where widened and increased his authority. Those pious pilgrims, who had thought they saw saints and angels guiding their armies, and who, after humbly entering the walls of

Jerusalem barefoot, burned the Jews in their synagogue, and, with the blood of thousands of Saracens, deluged the spots to which they had come, seeking the sacred footsteps of the Prince of Peace, carried the name of pope into the East, where it had ceased to be known from the time when he abandoned the supremacy of the Greeks for that of the Franks. On the other hand, what the armies of the Roman republic and of the empire had not been able to do, the power of the Church accomplished. The Germans brought to the feet of a bishop the tribute which their ancestors had refused to the most powerful generals. Their princes, on becoming emperors, thought they had received a crown from the popes, but the popes had given them a yoke. The kingdoms of Christendom, previously subjected to the spiritual power of Rome, now became its tributaries and serfs.

Thus every thing in the Church is changed. At first it was a community of brethren, and now an absolute monarchy is established in its bosom. All Christians were priests of the living God, (1 Peter 2:9) with humble pastors for their guides; but a proud head has risen up in the midst of these pastors, a mysterious mouth utters language full of haughtiness, a hand of iron constrains all men, both small and great, rich and poor, bond and slave, to take the stamp of its power. The holy and primitive equality of souls before God is lost, and Christendom, at the bidding of a man, is divided into two unequal camps—in the one, a caste of priests who dare to usurp the name of Church, and pretend to be invested in the eyes of the Lord with high privileges—in the other, servile herds reduced to blind and passive submission, a people gagged and swaddled, and given over to a proud caste. Every tribe, language, and nation of Christendom, fall under the domination of this spiritual king, who has received power to conquer.

CHAP. II

Grace—Dead Faith—Works—Unity and Duality—Pelagianism—Salvation at the hands of Priests—Penances—Flagellations—Indulgences—Works of Supererogation—Purgatory—Taxation—Jubilee—The Papacy and Christianity—State of Christendom.

But, along with the principle which should rule the history of Christianity was one which should rule its doctrine. The grand idea of Christianity was the idea of grace, pardon, amnesty, and the gift of eternal life. This idea supposed in man an estrangement from God, and an impossibility on his part to reenter into communion with a Being of infinite holiness. The opposition between true and false doctrine cannot, it is true, be entirely summed up in the question of salvation by faith, and salvation by works. Still it is its most prominent feature, or rather, salvation considered as coming from man is the creating principle of all error and all abuse. The excesses produced by this fundamental error led to the Reformation, and the profession of a contrary principle achieved it. This feature must stand prominently out in an introduction to the history of the Reformation. Salvation by grace, then, is the second characteristic which essentially distinguished the religion of God from all human religions. What had become of it? Had the Church kept this great and primordial idea as a precious deposit? Let us follow its history. The inhabitants of Jerusalem, Asia, Greece, and Rome, in the days of the first emperors, heard the glad tidings, “By grace are ye saved through faith—it is the gift of God.” (Ephesians 2:8) At this voice of peace—at this gospel—at this powerful word—many guilty souls believing were brought near to Him who is the source of peace, and numerous Christian churches were formed in the midst of the corrupt generation then existing. But

a great misapprehension soon arose as to the nature of saving faith. Faith, according to St. Paul, is the means by which the whole being of the believer—his intellect, his heart, and his will—enter into possession of the salvation which the incarnation of the Son of God has purchased for him. Jesus Christ is apprehended by faith, and thenceforth becomes every thing for man, and in man. He imparts a divine life to human nature; and man thus renewed, disengaged from the power of selfishness and sin, has new affections, and does new works. Faith (says Theology, in order to express these ideas) is the subjective appropriation of the objective work of Christ. If faith is not an appropriation of salvation, it is nothing; the whole Christian economy is disturbed, the sources of new life are sealed up, and Christianity is overturned at its base.

Such was the actual result. The practical view being gradually forgotten, faith soon became nothing more than what it still is to many—an act of the understanding—a simple submission to superior authority. This first error necessarily led to a second. Faith being stripped of its practical character, could not possibly be said to save alone. Works no longer coming after it, behoved to be placed beside it, and the doctrine that man is justified by faith and by works gained a footing in the Church. To the Christian unity, which includes under the same principle justification and works, grace and law, doctrine and duty, succeeded the sad duality, which makes religion and morality to be quite distinct,—a fatal error, which separates things that cannot live unless united, and which, putting the soul on one side, and the body on the other, causes death. The words of the apostle, echoing through all ages, are, “Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” (Galatians 3:3)

Another great error arose to disturb the doctrine of grace. This was Pelagianism. Pelagius maintained that human nature is not fallen—that there is no hereditary corruption—and that man, having received the power of doing good, has only to will it in order to perform it. If goodness consists in certain external actions, Pelagius is right. But if we look to the motives from which those external actions proceed, we find in every part of man selfishness, forgetfulness of God, pollution, and powerlessness. The Pelagian doctrine, driven back from the Church by Augustine, when it advanced with open front, soon presented a side view in the shape of semi-Pelagianism, and under the mask of Augustinian formulæ. This heresy spread over Christendom with astonishing rapidity. The danger of the system appeared, above all, in this—by placing goodness, not within, but without, it caused a great value to be set on external works, on legal observances, and acts of penance. The more of these men did, the holier they were; they won heaven by them, and individuals were soon seen (a very astonishing circumstance, certainly) who went farther in holiness than was required. Pelagianism, at the same time that it corrupted doctrine, strengthened the hierarchy; with the same hand with which it lowered grace it elevated the Church; for grace is of God, and the Church is of man. The deeper our conviction that the whole world is guilty before God, the more will we cleave to Jesus Christ as the only source of grace. With such a view, how can we place the Church on a level with him, since she is nothing but the whole body of persons subject to the same natural misery? But, so soon as we attribute to man a holiness of his own, all is changed, and ecclesiastics and monks become the most natural medium of receiving the grace of God. This was what happened after Pelagius. Salvation, taken out of the hands of God, fell into the hands of priests, who put themselves in the Lord’s place. Souls thirsting for pardon behoved no longer to look towards heaven, but towards the Church, and, above all, towards its pretended head. To blinded minds, the Pontiff of Rome was instead of God. Hence the greatness of the

popes and indescribable abuses. The evil went farther still. Pelagianism, in maintaining that man may attain perfect sanctification, pretended, likewise, that the merits of saints and martyrs might be applied to the Church. A particular virtue was even ascribed to their intercession. They were addressed in prayer, their aid was invoked in all the trials of life, and a real idolatry supplanted the adoration of the true and living God.

Pelagianism, at the same time, multiplied rites and ceremonies. Man imagining that he could, and that he ought, by good works, to render himself worthy of grace, saw nothing better fitted to merit it than outward worship. The law of ceremonies becoming endlessly complicated, was soon held equal at least to the moral law, and thus the conscience of Christians was burdened anew with a yoke which had been declared intolerable in the times of the apostles. (Acts 15:10) But what most of all deformed Christianity was the system of penance which rose out of Pelagianism. Penance at first consisted in certain public signs of repentance, which the Church required of those whom she had excluded for scandal, and who were desirous of being again received into her bosom. By degrees, penance was extended to all sins, even the most secret, and was considered as a kind of chastisement to which it was necessary to submit, in order to acquire the pardon of God through the absolution of priests.

Ecclesiastical penance was thus confounded with Christian repentance, without which there cannot be either justification or sanctification.

Instead of expecting pardon from Christ only by faith, it was expected chiefly from the Church by works of penance.

Great importance was attached to the outward marks of repentance, tears, fastings, and macerations, while the internal renewal of the heart, which alone constitutes true conversion, was forgotten. As confession and works of penance are easier than the extirpation of sin, and the abandonment of vice, many ceased to struggle against the lusts of the flesh, deeming it better to supply their place by means of certain macerations.

Works of penance substituted in lieu of the salvation of God kept multiplying in the Church from the days of Tertullian in the third century. The thing now deemed necessary was to fast, go barefoot, and wear no linen, etc., or to quit house and home for distant lands, or, better still, to renounce the world and embrace the monastic state! To all this were added, in the eleventh century, voluntary flagellations. These, at a later period, became a real mania in Italy, which at that time was violently agitated. Nobles and peasants, young and old, even children of five, go two and two by hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands, through villages, towns and cities, with an apron tied round their waist, (their only clothing,) and visit the churches in procession in the dead of winter. Armed with a whip, they flagellate themselves without mercy, and the streets resound with cries and groans, such as to force tears from those who hear them.

Still long before the evil had reached this height, men felt the oppression of the priests and sighed for deliverance. The priests themselves had perceived, that if they did not apply a remedy, their usurped power would be lost, and, therefore, they invented the system of barter, so well known under the name of Indulgences. What they said was this:—“You penitents are not able to fulfil the tasks which are enjoined you? Well, then, we, priests of God, and your pastors, will take the heavy burden on ourselves.” For a fast of seven weeks,” says Regino, Abbot of Prum, “there will be paid

by a rich man twentypence, by one less so tenpence, by the poor threepence, and so in like proportion for other things." Bold voices were raised against this traffic, but in vain. The pope soon discovered the advantages which he might draw from these indulgences. In the thirteenth century, Alexander Hales, the irrefragable doctor, invented a doctrine well fitted to secure this vast resource to the Papacy, and a bull of Clement VII declared it an article of faith. Jesus Christ, it was said, did far more than was necessary to reconcile God to men; for that a single drop of his blood would have sufficed; but he shed much blood in order to found a treasury for his church, a treasury which even eternity should not be able to exhaust. The supererogatory merits of the saints, i.e. the value of the works which they did beyond their obligation, served also to augment this treasury, the custody and administration of which have been intrusted to Christ's vicar upon earth, who applies to each sinner for the faults committed after baptism these merits of Jesus Christ and the saints according to the measure and quantity which his sins render necessary. Who will venture to attack a practice whose origin is so holy? This inconceivable traffic soon extends, and becomes more complex. The philosophers of Alexandria speak of a fire in which souls are to be made pure. This philosophical opinion, which several ancient doctors had adopted, Rome declared to be a doctrine of the Church. The pope, by a bull, annexed purgatory to his domain. He decreed that man should there expiate what he might not be able to expiate here below, but that indulgences could deliver souls from that intermediate state in which their sins must otherwise detain them. This dogma is expounded by Thomas Aquinas in his famous theological Summa. Nothing was spared to fill the mind with terror. The torments which the purifying fire inflicts on those who become its victims were painted in dreadful colours. Even at the present day, in many Catholic countries, we see pictures exhibited in churches, or in the public streets, in which poor souls in the midst of burning flames are calling in agony for relief. Who could refuse the redemption-money which, on falling into the treasury of Rome, was to ransom the soul from such sufferings? In order to give regularity to this traffic, there was shortly after drawn up (probably by John 22,) the famous and scandalous taxation of indulgences, of which there have been more than forty editions.

Ears the least delicate would be offended were we to repeat all the horrible things contained in it.

Incest will cost, if it is not known, five groschen, if known, six; so much will be paid for murder, so much for infanticide, adultery, perjury, house-breaking, etc. "Shame upon Rome," exclaims Claudius Esperse, a Roman theologian, and we add, Shame upon human nature! for we cannot reproach Rome with anything which does not recoil upon man himself. Rome is humanity magnified in some of its evil propensities. We say this for the sake of truth, and we also say it for the sake of justice.

Boniface VIII, the boldest and most ambitious of the popes after Gregory VII, outstripped all his predecessors. In the year 1300 he published a bull, by which he announced to the Church, that every hundred years all persons repairing to Rome would there obtain a plenary indulgence. Crowds flocked from Italy, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, France, Spain, Germany, Hungary, and all quarters. Old men of sixty and seventy set out, and there was counted at Rome in one month to the number of two hundred thousand pilgrims. All these strangers bringing rich offerings, the pope and the Romans saw their treasury filled.

Roman avarice soon fixed each jubilee at fifty years, next at thirty-three, and at last at twenty-five. Then for the greater convenience of buyers, and the greater profit of sellers, the jubilee and its

indulgences were transported from Rome to all parts of Christendom. There was no occasion to leave home. What others had gone to seek beyond the Alps, each might purchase at his own door. The evil could not go farther.

Then the Reformer arose.

We formerly saw what became of the principle which should rule the history of Christianity, and we have now seen what became of that which should rule its doctrine; both were lost. To establish a mediating caste between man and God, and insist that the salvation which God gives shall be purchased by works, penances, and money, is the Papacy. To give to all by Jesus Christ without a human mediator, and without that power, which is called the Church, free access to the great gift of eternal life, which God bestows on man, is Christianity and the Reformation. The Papacy is an immense wall raised between man and God by the labour of ages. Whosoever would pass it must lay his account with paying or suffering. And yet will it not be passed? The Reformation is the power which threw down this wall, restored Christ to man, and levelled the path by which he may come to his Creator. The Papacy interposes the Church between God and man. Christianity and the Reformation make them meet face to face. The Papacy separates—the Gospel unites them.

Having thus traced the history of the decay and extinction of the two great principles which distinguish the religion of God from all the religions of man, let us attend to some of the results of this vast alteration.

First, however, let us pay some tribute of respect to this Church of the middle ages which succeeded that of the Apostles and Fathers, and preceded that of the Reformers. The Church, although decayed, and always more and more enslaved, still was the Church, that is to say, still remained the most powerful friend that man possessed. Her hands, though tied, could still bless. During those ages, great servants of Jesus Christ, men, who in essential doctrines were true Protestants, shed a benign light, and in the most humble convent or the most obscure parish, were found poor monks and poor priests to solace deep griefs. The Catholic Church was not the Papacy. The latter acted the part of oppressor, the former that of the oppressed. The Reformation, which declared war on the one came to deliver the other. And yet, truth to tell, the Papacy itself was sometimes, in the hands of God, who brings good out of evil, a necessary counterpoise to the power and ambition of princes.

CHAP. III

Religion—Relics—Easter Merriment—Manners—Corruption—Dissorderly Lives of Priests, Bishops, and Popes—A Priest’s Family—Education—Ignorance—Ciceronians.

Let us now attend to the State of the Church before the Reformation. The people of Christendom no longer expecting the gratuitous gift of eternal life from the true and living God, it was necessary, in order to obtain it, to have recourse to all the methods which a superstitious, timid, and frightened conscience could invent. Heaven is full of saints and mediators who can solicit the favour. Earth is full of pious works, sacrifices, observances, and ceremonies, which can merit it. Such is the picture of the religion of this period, as drawn by one who was long a monk, and afterwards a fellow-worker with Luther.

Myconius says, “The sufferings and merits of Christ were as a vain tale, or as the Fables of Homer. Not a word was said of the faith by which the righteousness of the Saviour, and the inheritance of eternal life, are secured. Christ was a severe judge, ready to condemn all who did not recur to the intercession of saints, or the indulgences of popes. Instead of him there figured as intercessors, first the Virgin Mary, like the Diana of Paganism, and after her saints, of whom the popes were continually enlarging the catalogue. These mediators gave the benefit of their prayers only to those who had deserved well of the orders founded by them. For this it was necessary to do not what God commands in his word, but a great number of works which monks and priests had devised, and which brought in large sums of money. These were, Ave-Marias, prayers of St. Ursula, and St. Bridget. It was necessary to chant and cry night and day. There were as many places of pilgrimage as there were mountains, forests, or valleys. But these toils might be bought off with money. Money, therefore, and every thing that had any value, chickens, geese, ducks, eggs, wax, straw, butter, and cheese, were brought to the convents and to the priests. Then chants resounded, and bells were rung, perfumes filled the sanctuary, and sacrifices were offered; kitchens were stuffed, glasses rattled, and masses winding up threw a cover over all these pious works. The bishops did not preach, but they consecrated priests, bells, monks, churches, chapels, images, books, cemeteries, all these things yielding large returns. Bones, arms, and feet, were presented in gold and silver boxes. They were given out to be kissed during mass, and this too yielded a large profit.”

“All these folks maintained, that the pope being in the place of God, (2 Thessalonians 2:4) could not be deceived, and they would not hear of any thing to the contrary.” In the Church of All Saints at Wittemberg were shown a piece of Noah’s Ark, a small portion of soot from the furnace of the Three Young Men, a bit of the manger in which our Saviour was laid, hair from the beard of the great Christopher, and nineteen thousand other relics of greater or less value. At Schaffhausen was shown the breath of St. Joseph, which Nicodemus had received into his glove. In Wurtemberg, a vender of indulgences was seen selling his wares, and having his head adorned with a large feather, plucked from the wing of the archangel Michael. But there was no occasion to go to a distance in quest of these precious treasures. Persons with hired relics travelled the country, and hawked them about, as has since been done with the Holy Scriptures. The faithful, having them thus brought to their houses, were spared the trouble and expence of pilgrimage. Relics were exhibited with great ceremony in the churches, while those travelling hawkers paid a fixed sum to the owners, and also gave them so much percentage on their returns. The kingdom of heaven had thus disappeared, and men, to supply its place on the earth, had opened a disgraceful traffic. In this way, a profane spirit had invaded religion, and the most sacred seasons of the Church, those which, most forcibly and powerfully invited the faithful to self-examination and love, were dishonoured by buffoonery and mere heathen blasphemies. The “Easter Drolleries” held an important place in the acts of the Church. As the festival of the resurrection required to be celebrated with joy, every thing that could excite the laughter of the hearers was sought out, and thrust into sermons. One preacher imitated the note of the cuckoo, while another hissed like a goose. One dragged forward to the altar a layman in a cassock; a second told the most indecent stories; a third related the adventures of the Apostle Peter, among others, how, in a tavern, he cheated the host by not paying his score. The inferior clergy took advantage of the occasion to turn their superiors into ridicule. The churches were thus turned into stages, and the priests into mountebanks.

If such was the state of religion, what must that of morals have been? It is true, and equity requires we should not forget, that, at this time, corruption was not universal. Even when the Reformation took place, much piety, righteousness, and religious vigour, were brought to light. Of this, the mere sovereignty of God was the cause; but still, how can it be denied, that He had previously deposited the germs of this new life in the bosom of the Church? In our own day, were all the immoralities and abominations which are committed in a single country brought together, the mass of corruption would undoubtedly fill us with alarm. Still it is true, that, at this period, evil presented itself in a form, and with a universality, which it has never had since. In particular, the abomination of desolation was seen standing in the holy place, to an extent which has not been permitted since the period of the Reformation. With faith morality had decayed. The glad tidings of eternal life is the power of God for the regeneration of man. But take away the salvation which God gives, and you take away purity of heart and life. This was proved by the event. The doctrine and the sale of indulgences operated on an ignorant people as a powerful stimulus to evil. It is no doubt true, that, according to the doctrine of the Church, indulgences were of use only to those who promised to amend, and actually kept their promise. But what was to be expected of a doctrine which had been invented with a view to the profit which it might be made to yield? The venders of indulgences, the better to dispose of their wares, were naturally disposed to present them in the most winning and seductive form. Even the learned were not too well informed on the subject, while the only thing seen by the multitude was, that indulgences gave them permission to sin. The merchants were in no haste to disabuse them of an error so greatly in favour of the trade. In those ages of darkness, what disorders and crimes must have prevailed when impunity could be purchased with money! What ground could there be for fear when a trifling contribution to build a church procured exemption from punishment in the world to come! What hope of renovation, when all direct communication between men and their God had ceased—when, estranged from him, their spirit and life, they moved to and fro among frivolous ceremonies and crude observances in an atmosphere of death! The priests were the first to yield to the corrupting influence. In wishing to raise, they had lowered themselves. They had tried to steal from God a ray of his glory, that they might place it in their own bosom; but, instead of this, had only placed in it some of the leaven of corruption, stolen from the Evil one. The annals of the period teem with scandalous stories. In many places people were pleased to see their priest keeping a mistress, in the hope that it might secure their wives from seduction. How humbling the scene which the house of such a priest must have presented! The unhappy man maintained the woman and the children she might have borne him, out of tithes and alms.2 His conscience upbraided him. He blushed before his people, his servants, and his God. The woman fearing, that, in the event of the priest’s death, she might become destitute, sometimes made provision beforehand, and played the thief in her own house. Her honour was gone, and her children were a living accusation against her. Objects of universal contempt, both parties rushed into quarrelling and dissipation. Such was the home of a priest!… In these fearful scenes, the people read a lesson of which they were not slow to avail themselves. The rural districts became the theatre of numerous excesses. The places where priests resided were often the abodes of dissoluteness. Corneille Adrian at Bruges, and Abbot Trinkler at Cappel,5 imitated the manners of the East, and had their harems. Priests associating with low company, frequented taverns and played at dice, crowning their orgies with quarrels and blasphemy. The Council of Schaffhausen issued an order forbidding priests to dance in public except at marriages, or to carry more than one kind of weapon. They, moreover, ordered that such

priests as were found in houses of bad fame should be stript of their cassocks.7 In the archbishopric of Mayence, they leapt the walls at night, and then shouted and revelled in all sorts of debauchery within taverns and inns. Doors and locks were not secure from their attacks. In several places, each priest was liable to the bishop in a certain tax for the female he kept, and for every child she bore him. One day, a German bishop, who was attending a great festival, openly declared that in a single year, the number of priests who had been brought before him for this purpose amounted to eleven thousand. This account is given by Erasmus.9

Among the higher orders of the priesthood, the corruption was equally great. The dignitaries of the Church preferred the turmoil of camps to chanting at the altar, and to take lance in hand, and reduce those around them to obedience, was one of the first qualities of a bishop. Baldwin of Tours, who was constantly warring with his vassals and neighbours, razed their castles, built others of his own, and thought of nothing but enlarging his territory. It is told of a certain bishop of Eichstadt, that when he sat in his court, he had a coat-of-mail under his gown, and a large sword in his hand. One of his sayings was, that in fair fight he was not afraid of five Bavarians. The bishops and the inhabitants of the towns where they resided were perpetually at war. The burghers demanded freedom, while the priests insisted on absolute obedience. When the latter proved victorious, they punished revolt, and satiated their vengeance with numbers of victims; but the flame of insurrection burst forth at the very moment when they imagined they had suppressed it. And what a spectacle was presented by the pontifical throne at the period immediately preceding the Reformation! To say the truth, even Rome was not often witness to such infamy.

Roderigo Borgia, after he had lived with a lady of Rome, continued the same illegitimate intercourse with her daughter, Rosa Vanozza, and had five children by her. This man, a cardinal and an archbishop, was living at Rome with Vanozza, and other females besides, frequenting churches and hospitals, when the pontifical chair became vacant by the death of Innocent VIII. Borgia secured it by buying each cardinal for a regular price. Four mules loaded with gold publicly entered the palace of Cardinal Sforza, the most influential among them. Borgia became Pope under the name of Alexander VI, and was delighted at having thus reached the pinnacle of pleasure. On his coronation-day, he appointed his son Cæsar, a youth of ferocious temper and dissolute habits, Archbishop of Valentia and Bishop of Pampeluna. Then, when his daughter Lucretia was married, he celebrated the occasion in the Vatican with fêtes which were attended by his mistress, Julia Bella, and enlivened by comedies and obscene songs. “All the ecclesiastics,” says a historian, “had mistresses, and all the convents of the capital were houses of bad fame.” Cæsar Borgia espoused the faction of the Guelphs, and when, by their assistance, he had destroyed the Ghibelins, he turned round upon the Guelphs, and, in like manner, destroyed them. But he was unwilling that any should share the spoil with him, and, therefore, after Alexander had, in 1497, made his eldest son Duke of Benevento, the Duke disappeared. George Schiavoni, a dealer in wood on the banks of the Tiber, one night saw a dead body thrown into the river, but said nothing; such occurrences were common. The dead body proved to be that of the Duke, who had been murdered by his brother Cæsar. Nor was this enough. Having taken offence at his brother-in-law, he made him be stabbed on the stair of the pontifical palace. The wounded man, covered with blood, was carried to his apartment, where he was constantly watched by his wife and sister, who, dreading Cæsar’s poison, prepared his food with their own hands. Alexander placed sentinels at his door, but Cæsar laughed at their precautions, and as the pope was going to

see his son-in-law, Cæsar said to him, “What is not done at dinner will be done at supper.” In short, he one day forced his way into the room, drove out the wife and sister, and calling in his executioner, Michilotto, the only person to whom he showed any confidence, looked on while his brother-in-law was strangled.2 Alexander had a favourite, named Peroto. The pope’s partiality for him offended the young Duke. He pursued him, and Peroto, taking refuge under the pontifical mantle, clasped the pope in his arms. Cæsar stabbed him, and the blood of his victim sprung into the pontiff’s face. “The pope,” adds a contemporary witness to these scenes, “loves his son the Duke, and is much afraid of him.” Cæsar was the handsomest and most powerful man of his age. He fought with six wild bulls, and despatched them with ease. Every morning at Rome persons were found who had been assassinated during the night, while poison carried off those whom the sword could not reach. Men dared not to move or breathe in Rome, every one trembling till his own turn should arrive. Cæsar Borgia was the hero of crime. The spot of earth where iniquity attained this dreadful height was the pontifical throne. When once man has given himself over to the powers of darkness, the higher the station he pretends to occupy in the sight of God, the deeper he sinks into the abysses of hell. The dissolute fêtes which were given in the pontifical palace by the pope, his son Cæsar, and his daughter Lucretia, cannot be described, or even thought of, without horror. The impure groves of antiquity, perhaps, never saw the like. Historians have accused Alexander and Lucretia of incest, but the proof seems defective. The pope had prepared poison for a rich cardinal, in a small box of comfits which were to be served after a sumptuous repast. The cardinal being put on his guard, bribed the steward, and the poisoned box was placed before Alexander, who ate of it and died. The whole city ran to see the dead viper, and could not get enough of the sight.2 Such was the man who occupied the pontifical see at the beginning of the century in which the Reformation commenced. The clergy having thus brought religion and themselves into disrepute, a powerful voice might well exclaim, “The ecclesiastical state is opposed to God and to his glory. The people well know this, and but too well do they show it, by the many songs, proverbs, and jests, against priests, which are current among the lower classes, and by all those caricatures of monks and priests which we see on all the walls, and even on playing cards. Every man feels disgust when he sees or when he hears of an ecclesiastic.” These are Luther’s words. The evil had spread through all ranks. A spirit of error had been sent to men, corruption of manners kept pace with corruption of faith, and a mystery of iniquity lay like an incubus on the enslaved Church of Jesus Christ.

There was another consequence which necessarily resulted from the oblivion into which the fundamental doctrine of the gospel had fallen. Ignorance was the companion of corruption. The priests having taken into their own hands the distribution of a salvation which belongs only to God, deemed this a sufficient title to the respect of the people. What occasion had they to study sacred literature? Their business was not to expound the Scriptures, but to give diplomas of indulgence—a ministry which called not for the laborious acquisition of extensive knowledge. In the rural districts, says Wimpheling, the persons selected for preachers were miserable creatures, who had been previously raised from beggary, cast-off cooks, musicians, huntsmen, grooms, and still worse. The higher clergy were often sunk in deep ignorance. A Bishop of Dunfeld congratulated himself that he had never learned either Greek or Hebrew, while the monks contended that all heresies sprung out of these languages, and especially out of the Greek. “The New Testament,” said one of them, “is a book full of briers and serpents. “The Greek,” continued he, “is a new language recently invented, and of it we ought specially to beware. As to Hebrew, my

dear brethren, it is certain that all who learn it, that very instant become Jews." We quote from Heresbach, a friend of Erasmus, and a respectable writer. Thomas Linacer, a learned and celebrated ecclesiastic, had never read the New Testament. In the last days of his life, (in 1524,) he caused a copy of it to be brought, but immediately dashed it from him with an oath, because, on opening it, he had lighted on these words, "I say unto you, Swear not at all." Now he was a great swearer. "Either this is not the gospel," said he, "or we are not Christians." Even the Theological Faculty of Paris did not hesitate at this time to say, in presence of the Parliament, "It is all over with religion if the study of Greek and Hebrew is allowed." If, among ecclesiastics, there were a scattered few who had made some attainments, it was not in sacred literature. The Ciceronians of Italy affected great contempt for the Bible because of its style. Men calling themselves priests of the Church of Jesus Christ, translated the writings of holy men inspired by the Spirit of God into the style of Virgil and Horace, in order to adapt them to the ears of good society. Cardinal Bembo, instead of the Holy Spirit, wrote the breath of the heavenly zephyr; instead of to forgive sins,—to bend the manes and the Sovereign God; and instead of Christ the Son of God,—Minerva sprung from the forehead of Jupiter. Having one day found the respectable Sadolet engaged in translating the Epistle to the Romans, he said to him, "Leave off this child's play; such trifling ill becomes a man of gravity."

Such are some of the consequences of the system under which Christendom then groaned. Our picture, undoubtedly, proves both the corruption of the Church and the necessity of a Reformation; and it was this we proposed in sketching it. The vital doctrines of Christianity had almost entirely disappeared, and with them the light and life which constitute the essence of genuine religion. The strength of the Church had been wasted, and its body, enfeebled and exhausted, lay stretched almost without life, over the whole extent which the Roman empire had occupied.

CHAP. IV

Imperishable nature of Christianity—Two Laws of God—Apparent Power of Rome—Hidden Opposition—Decay—Threefold Opposition—Kings and Subjects—The Pope judged in Italy—Discoveries by Kings and Subjects—Frederick the Wise—His Moderation—His Anticipation. The evils which then afflicted Christendom, viz., superstition, infidelity, ignorance, vain speculation, and corruption of manners—all natural fruits of the human heart—were not new upon the earth. Often had they figured in the history of states. In the East, especially, various religions which had had their day of glory, but had become enervated, had been attacked by them, and, yielding to the assault, had fallen under it, never again to rise. Is Christianity to experience the same fate? Will she be destroyed like these ancient popular religions? Will the blow which gave them death be strong enough to deprive her of life? Is there nothing that can save her? Will those hostile powers that now oppress her, and which have already overthrown so many other forms of worship, be able to seat themselves without opposition on the ruins of the Church of Jesus Christ?

No! There is in Christianity what there was not in any of those popular religions. It does not, like them, present certain abstract ideas, interwoven with traditions and fables, destined to fall, sooner or later, under the attacks of human reason. It contains pure truth, founded on facts capable of standing the scrutiny of every upright and enlightened mind. Christianity does not aim merely at exciting certain vague religious sentiments, which, when they have once lost their charm, cannot be again revived. Its end is to satisfy, and it, in fact, does satisfy, all the religious wants of human

nature, whatever the degree of refinement to which it may have attained. It is not the work of man, whose labours fade and are effaced; it is the work of God, who sustains what he creates; and the pledge of its duration is the promise of its divine Head.

It is impossible that human nature can ever rise so high as to look down on Christianity, or if, for a time, human nature do think herself able to dispense with it, it soon appears with renewed youth and life, as alone fit for curing souls. Degenerate nations then return with new ardour to those ancient, simple, and powerful truths, which, in the hour of their infatuation, they had turned from with disdain.

Christianity, in fact, displayed in the sixteenth century the same regenerating power which it had exerted in the first. After fifteen centuries the same truths produced the same results. In the days of the Reformation, as in those of Paul and Peter, the Gospel, with invincible force, overthrew the mightiest obstacles. Its sovereign power was manifested from north to south among nations differing most widely from each other in manners, character, and intellectual development. Then, as in the days of Stephen and James, it lighted up the fire of enthusiasm and devotedness in nations which seemed almost extinguished, and exalted them even to the height of martyrdom.

How was this revival of the Church and of the world accomplished? The observer might then have seen the operation of two laws by which God governs the world at all times.

First, as He has ages to act in, he begins his preparations leisurely, and long before the event which He designs to accomplish.

Then, when the time is come, he produces the greatest results by the smallest means. It is thus he acts in nature and in history. When he wishes an immense tree to grow, he deposits a little grain in the earth; and, when he wishes to renew his Church, he employs the humblest instrument to accomplish what emperors and all the learned and eminent in the Church were unable to perform. By and by we will search for and we will discover this little seed which a Divine hand deposited in the earth in the days of the Reformation; but at present, let us endeavour to ascertain the various means by which God prepared this great event. At the period when the Reformation was ready to burst forth, Rome appeared to be in peace and safety. One would even have said that nothing could disturb her triumph after the great victories which she had gained. General Councils—those Upper and Lower Houses of Catholicity—had been subdued. The Vaudois and the Hussites had been suppressed. No University, with the exception, perhaps, of that of Paris, which sometimes raised its voice when its kings gave the signal, doubted the infallibility of the oracles of Rome. Each seemed to have accepted his alloted share in her power. The higher clergy deemed it better to give a distant chief the tenth part of their revenues, and quietly consume the other nine, than to hazard all for an independence which would cost much and yield little. The lower clergy, decoyed by the perspective of rich benefices, which ambition made them fancy and discover in the distance, were willing, by a little slavery, to realise the flattering hopes which they entertained. Besides, they were almost everywhere so oppressed by the chiefs of the hierarchy, that they could scarcely struggle under their powerful grasp, far less rise boldly and hold up their heads. The people knelt before the Roman altar, and kings themselves, though they began in secret to despise the Bishop of Rome, durst not venture to attack his power with a hand which the age would have deemed sacrilegious. But opposition, if it seemed externally to have slackened, or even ceased, when the Reformation burst forth, had more inward strength. A nearer view of the

edifice will disclose to us more than one symptom which presaged its downfall. General Councils, though vanquished, had diffused their principles throughout the Church, and carried division into the enemy's camp. The defenders of the hierarchy were divided into two parties, viz., those who maintained the system of absolute Papal domination, on the principles of Hildebrand, and those who were desirous of a constitutional Papal government, offering guarantees and giving liberty to the churches. Nor was this the whole. Faith in the infallibility of the Roman bishop was greatly shaken among all parties; and, if no voice was raised in opposition to it, it was because every one rather desired anxiously to retain the little faith in it which he still had. The least shock was dreaded, because it might overturn the edifice. Christendom held in its breath; but it was to prevent a disaster by which its own existence might have been endangered. From the moment when man trembles at the thought of abandoning a long venerated belief, it has lost its influence over him, and even the appearance of respect which he may be desirous to keep up will not be long maintained. The Reformation had been gradually prepared in three different worlds—the political, the ecclesiastical, and the literary. Political bodies, private Christians, and theologians, the literary and the learned, all contributed to the revolution of the sixteenth century. Let us take a survey of this triple opposition, concluding with the literary class, though, at the period immediately preceding the revolution, it was perhaps the most powerful of all.

First, among political bodies, Rome had lost much of its ancient credit. Of this the Church herself was the primary cause; for, properly speaking, it was not the errors and superstitions which she had introduced into Christianity that gave the fatal blow. Before Christendom could have been able to condemn her on this account, it must have stood higher than the Church, in respect of intellectual and religious development. But there was a class of things which the laity well understood, and it was by these they judged the Church. She had become of the "earth, earthy." The sacerdotal empire, which tyrannised over the nations, existed solely by the illusions of its subjects; and having a halo for its crown, had forgotten its nature, and left heaven, with his spheres of light and glory, to plunge into the vulgar interests of burghers and princes. Though representing those who are born of the Spirit, the priests had exchanged the Spirit for the flesh. They had abandoned the treasures of knowledge, and the spiritual power of the Word, for the brute force and tinkling of the age. The thing happened naturally enough. At first the Church pretended that her object was to defend spiritual order. But in order to protect it from the opposition and assaults of the people, she had resorted to earthly means, to vulgar weapons, which a false prudence had induced her to take up. When the Church had once begun to handle such weapons, her spirituality was at an end. Her arm could not become temporal without rendering her heart temporal also. The appearance presented soon became the reverse of what it had been at the outset. At first she had thought proper to employ the earth in defending heaven; now she employed heaven to defend the earth. Theocratic forms became in her hands merely a mean of accomplishing worldly interests. The offerings which the people laid at the feet of the sovereign pontiff of Christendom were expended in maintaining the luxury of his court and the soldiers of his armies. His spiritual power served him as a ladder on which to climb, and then put the kings and nations of the earth under his feet. The charm broke, and the power of the Church was lost as soon as the men of the world could say, "She is become as one of us." The great were the first to examine the titles of this imaginary power. This examination might, perhaps, have been sufficient to overthrow Rome; but, happily for her, the education of princes was everywhere in the hands of her adepts. These inspired their august pupils with sentiments of veneration for the

Roman pontiff. The rulers of the people grew up within the sanctuary, and princes of ordinary capacity could never entirely quit it. Several even had no other ambition than to be found in it at the hour of death. They preferred to die under a cassock rather than a crown.

Italy, that apple of discord in Europe, perhaps contributed most to open the eyes of kings. Having occasion to communicate with popes on matters which concerned the temporal prince of the States of the Church, and not the Bishop of bishops, they were greatly astonished when they saw them ready to sacrifice rights which appertained to the pontiff, in order to secure certain advantages to the prince. They discovered that these pretended organs of truth had recourse to all the petty wiles of politics, to deceit, dissimulation, and perjury. Then, at length, the bandage, which education had tied upon the eyes of princes, fell off. Then wily Ferdinand of Arragon tried stratagem against stratagem. Then the impetuous Louis XII caused a medal to be struck with this inscription, “Perdam Babylonis nomen.”2 And honest Maximilian of Austria, grieved to the heart on learning the treachery of Leo X, declared openly, “Henceforth this pope, too, is to me nothing better than a villain; now I can say that throughout my life not one pope has kept faith with me, or been true to his word. If it please God, I hope that this one will be the last.”

Kings and states began, moreover, to feel impatient under the heavy burden which the popes imposed on them, and to demand that Rome should free them from contributions and annats which wasted their resources. Already had France opposed Rome with the pragmatic sanction, and the heads of the empire claimed to share in it. In 1511 the emperor took part in the Council of Pisa, and had even at one time an idea of seizing the popedom for himself. But, among the rulers of the people none were so useful to the Reformation as the prince in whose states it was to commence. Of all the Electors of that period, the most powerful was Frederick of Saxony, surnamed the Wise. Having succeeded, in 1487, to the hereditary states of his family, he had received the electoral dignity from the emperor, and in 1493 undertook a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where he was dubbed “Knight of the Holy Sepulchre.” His power and influence, his riches and liberality, raised him above all his equals. God chose him to be the tree under whose shelter the seed of truth might be able to push forth its first blade, without being uprooted by storms from without. No man was better fitted for this noble service. Frederick possessed the general esteem, and, in particular, had the entire confidence of the emperor, whom he even represented in his absence. His wisdom consisted not in the dexterous arts of a wily politician, but in an enlightened and foreseeing prudence, the first maxim of which was never to offer violence, from interested motives, to the laws of honour and religion. At the same time, he felt in his heart the power of the word of God. One day when Staupitz, the Vicar-General, was with him, the conversation turned upon those who entertained the people with vain declamation. “All discourses,” said the Elector, “which are filled only with subtleties and human traditions, are wondrously cold, nerveless, and feeble. It is impossible to advance one subtlety which another subtlety cannot destroy. The Holy Scriptures alone are clothed with such power and majesty, that, destroying all our learned logical contrivances, they press us home, and constrain us to exclaim, ‘Never man so spake.’” Staupitz having signified that he was entirely of this opinion, the Elector shook him cordially by the hand, and said, “Promise me that you will always think so.”

Frederick was just the prince required at the outset of the Reformation. Too much feebleness on the part of its friends might have allowed it to be strangled, while too much haste might have caused the storm, which at the very first began with hollow murmuring sound to gather against it,

to burst too soon. Frederick was moderate but strong. He had that Christian virtue which God always requires in those who would adore his ways—he waited upon God. He put in practice the wise counsel of Gamaliel, “If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it.” Acts 5:38-39. “Matters,” said this prince to Spengler of Nuremberg, one of the most enlightened men of his time; “matters are come to such a point, that there is nothing more which men can do in them; God alone must act. To His mighty hand, therefore, we commit these great events, which are too difficult for us.” Providence made an admirable choice in selecting such a prince to protect his work in its infancy.

CHAP. V The People—The Empire—Providential Preparations—Impulse of the Reformation—Peace—Middle Classes—National Character—Yoke of the Pope—State of the Empire—Opposition to Rome—The Burghers—Switzerland—Valour—Liberty—Small Cantons—Italy—Obstacles to Reform—Spain—Obstacles—Portugal—France—Preparations—Hopes Deceived—Netherlands—England—Scotland—The North—Russia—Poland—Bohemia—Hungary. The discoveries made by kings had gradually extended to their subjects. The wise began to habituate themselves to the idea that the Bishop of Rome was only a man, and sometimes even a very bad man. They had a suspicion that he was no holier than the bishops, whose reputation was very equivocal. The licentiousness of the popes roused the indignation of Christendom, and hatred of the Roman name rankled in the heart of the nations.

Numerous causes concurred in facilitating the deliverance of the different countries of the West. Let us glance at these countries. The empire was a confederation of different states, with an emperor at their head, each state having supreme authority within its own territory. The Imperial Diet, composed of all the princes or sovereign states, legislated for the whole Germanic body. It belonged to the emperor to ratify the laws, decrees, or resolutions of the assembly, and to see them applied and carried into execution, while the seven most powerful princes under the title of Electors, had the disposal of the imperial crown. The north of Germany, inhabited chiefly by the ancient Saxon race, had acquired the greatest degree of freedom. The emperor, incessantly attacked by the Turks in his hereditary possessions, was obliged to court those princes and bold nations whose aid was then necessary to him. Free towns in the north, west, and south of the empire, had, by their trade, their manufactures, and exertions of every description, risen to a high degree of prosperity, and thereby of independence, but the powerful house of Austria, then invested with the imperial crown, held the greater part of the southern states of Germany under its control, and closely watched their movements. It was preparing to extend its dominion over the whole empire, and even beyond it, when the Reformation interposed a mighty barrier to its encroachments, and saved the independence of Europe. As Judea, when Christianity arose, was in the centre of the ancient world, so Germany was in the centre of Christendom, looking at once toward the Netherlands, England, France, Switzerland, Italy, Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, Denmark, and all the North. It was in the heart of Europe that the principle of life was to be developed, and the beatings of this heart were to circulate through all the arteries of the body the noble blood which was to give animation to all its members. The particular constitution which the empire had received conformably to the dispensation of Providence, favoured the propagation of new ideas. Had Germany been a monarchy properly so called, like France or England, the

arbitrary will of the monarch might have been able long to arrest the progress of the gospel. But it was a confederation. Truth attacked in one state might be received with favour in another. The internal peace which Maximilian had just secured for the empire was not less favourable to the Reformation. For a long time the numerous members of the Germanic body had taken pleasure in tearing each other. Nought had been seen but trouble and discord, war incessantly renewed, neighbour against neighbour, town against town, and noble against noble. Maximilian had given a solid basis to public order, by erecting the Imperial Chamber, with power to decide in all questions between different states. The inhabitants of Germany, after all their troubles and disquietudes, saw the commencement of a new era of security and repose. Nevertheless, when Luther appeared, Germany still presented to the observing eye that kind of motion which agitates the sea after long protracted storms. The calm was uncertain. More than one example of this will be seen as we proceed. By giving an entirely new impulse to the Germanic nations, the Reformation put an end for ever to all the former causes of agitation. Destroying the system of barbarism, which had till then been paramount, it put Europe in possession of a new system.

Christianity had, at the same time, exercised a peculiar influence on Germany. The middle classes had made rapid improvement. Throughout the different quarters of the empire, and more especially in the free towns, were numerous institutions well fitted to improve the great mass of the population. In these arts flourished. The burghers, devoting themselves in security to the calm toils and sweet relations of social life, became more and more accessible to knowledge, and in this way were continually acquiring new influence and authority. The foundation of the Reformation in Germany was not to be laid by magistrates, who must often shape their conduct according to political exigencies, nor by nobles fired with the love of military glory, nor by a greedy and ambitious clergy, working religion for profit, as if it were their exclusive property. The task was reserved for the citizens, the commonalty, the great body of the people. The national character of the Germans was specially fitted to adapt itself to a religious Reformation. No spurious civilisation had enervated it. The precious seed, which the fear of God deposits in the bosom of a people, had not been thrown to the winds. Ancient manners yet existed, displaying themselves in that integrity and fidelity, that love of labour, that perseverance, that serious temper, which is still to be seen, and gives presage of greater success to the gospel, than the jeering levity, or boorish temper of some other European nations. The people of Germany were indebted to Rome for the great instrument of modern civilisation, viz., faith, polish, learning, laws, all save their courage and their arms, had come from the sacerdotal city, and, in consequence, Germany had ever after been in close alliance with the Papacy. The one was a kind of spiritual conquest by the other, and we all know to what purposes Rome has invariably applied her conquests. Nations which were in possession of faith and civilisation before a Roman pontiff existed, always maintained in regard to him, a greater measure of independence. Still the more thorough the subjugation of the German, the more powerful will the reaction be when the period of awakening shall arrive. When Germany does open her eyes, she will indignantly break loose from the chains which have so long held her captive. The bondage she has had to endure will make her more sensible of her need of deliverance; and freedom, and bold champions of the truth, will come forth from this house of hard labour and bondage, in which all her people have, for ages, been confined.

There was, at that time, in Germany, what the politicians of our days call a “see-saw system.” When the emperor was of a resolute character, his power increased; when, on the contrary, he

was of a feeble character, the influence and power of the princes and electors were enlarged. Never had these felt themselves stronger in regard to their chief than in the time of Maximilian, at the period of the Reformation; and as he took part against it, it is easy to understand how favourable the circumstance of his comparative weakness must have been to the propagation of the gospel.

Moreover, Germany was tired of what the Romans derisively styled “the patience of the Germans.” They had indeed, shown much patience from the days of Louis of Bavaria, when the emperors laid down their arms, and the tiara was placed, without opposition, above the crown of the Cæsars. The contest, however, had done little more than change its place, by descending several steps. The same struggles which the emperors and popes had exhibited to the world were soon renewed on a smaller scale, in all the towns of Germany, between the bishops and the magistrates. The burghers took up the sword which the emperors had allowed to drop from their hands. As early as 1329 the burghers of Frankfort on the Oder had intrepidly withstood all their ecclesiastical superiors. Excommunicated for having continued faithful to the Margrave Louis, they had been left for twenty-eight years without mass, baptism, marriage, or Christian burial; and, when the monks and priests made their re-entry, they laughed at it as a comedy or farce,—sad symptoms, doubtless, but symptoms of which the clergy were the cause. At the period of the Reformation this opposition between the magistrates and ecclesiastics had increased. The privileges of the former, and the temporal pretensions of the latter, were constantly causing jostling and collision between the two bodies. But burgomasters, councillors, and secretaries of towns, were not the only persons among whom Rome and the clergy found opponents. Wrath was at the same time fermenting among the people, and broke out as early as 1502, when the peasantry, indignant at the grinding yoke of their ecclesiastical sovereigns, entered into a combination which goes under the name of the Shoe-Alliance.

Thus everywhere, both in the upper and lower regions of society, a grumbling sound was heard,—a precursor of the thunder which was soon to burst. Germany seemed ripe for the work which the sixteenth century had received as its task. Providence, which moves leisurely, had every thing prepared, and the very passions which God condemns were to be overruled by his mighty hand for the accomplishment of his designs.

Let us see how other nations were situated.

Thirteen small republics, placed with their confederates in the centre of Europe among mountains, forming, as it were, its citadel, contained a brave and simple people. Who would have gone to those obscure valleys in quest of persons who, with the sons of Germany, might be the deliverers of the Church? Who would have thought that petty unknown towns, just emerging from barbarism, hid behind inaccessible mountains, at the extremity of nameless lakes, would, in point of Christianity, take precedence of Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, and Rome? Nevertheless, it so pleased Him who wills that one spot of earth be watered with dew, and that another spot on which the rain has not descended shall remain parched, (Amos.)

There were other circumstances besides which might have been expected to throw numerous obstacles in the way of the Reformation among the Helvetic Republics. If, in a monarchy, the impediments of power were to be dreaded, the thing to be feared in a democracy was the precipitation of the people. But Switzerland had also had its preparations. It was a wild but noble

tree, which had been preserved in the bosom of the valleys, in order that a valuable fruit might one day be engrafted on it. Providence had diffused among this new people principles of independence and freedom, destined to display their full power whenever the signal for contest with Rome should be given. The pope had given the Swiss the title of Protectors of the Liberty of the Church; but they seem to have taken the honourable appellation in a very different sense from the pontiff. If their soldiers guarded the pope in the vicinity of the ancient Capitol, their citizens, in the bosom of the Alps, carefully guarded their religious liberties against the assaults of the pope and the clergy. Ecclesiastics were forbidden to apply to a foreign jurisdiction. The “Letter of the Priests” (Pfaffenbrief, 1370) was an energetic protestation of Swiss liberty against the abuses and power of the clergy. Amongst these states, Zurich was distinguished for its courageous opposition to the pretensions of Rome. Geneva, at the other extremity of Switzerland, was at war with its bishop. These two towns particularly signalised themselves in the great struggle which we have undertaken to describe. But if the Swiss towns, accessible to every kind of improvement, were among the first to fall in with the movement of reform, it was otherwise with the inhabitants of the mountains. The light had not yet travelled so far. These cantons, the founders of Swiss freedom, proud of the part which they had performed in the great struggle for independence, were not readily disposed to imitate their younger brethren of the plains. Why change the faith with which they had chased Austria, and which had by its altars consecrated all the scenes of their triumph? Their priests were the only enlightened guides to whom they could have recourse. Their worship and their festivals gave a turn to the monotony of their tranquil life, and pleasantly broke the silence of their peaceful retreats. They remained impervious to religious innovation. On crossing the Alps, we find ourselves in that Italy which was in the eyes of the majority the Holy Land of Christendom. Whence should Europe have expected the good of the Church if not from Italy, if not from Rome? Might not the power which by turns raised so many different characters to the pontifical chair, one day place in it a pontiff who would become an instrument of blessing to the heritage of the Lord? Or if pontiffs were to be despaired of, were there not bishops and councils, who might reform the Church? Nothing good comes out of Nazareth; but out of Jerusalem, out of Rome!… Such might be the thoughts of men, but God thought otherwise. He said, “Let him who is filthy, be filthy still,” (Revelation 22:1-21) and abandoned Italy to her iniquities. This land of ancient glory was alternately a prey to intestine wars and foreign invasion. The wiles of politics, the violence of faction, the turmoil of war, seemed to have sole sway, and to banish far away both the gospel and its peace.

Besides, Italy, broken, dismembered, and without unity, seemed little fitted to receive a common impulse. Each frontier was a new barrier where truth was arrested. And if the truth was to come from the North, how could the Italians, with a taste so refined, and a society in their eyes so exquisite, condescend to receive any thing at the hands of barbarous Germans? Were men who admired the cadence of a sonnet more than the majesty and simplicity of the Scriptures, a propitious soil for the seed of the divine word? But be this as it may, in regard to Italy, Rome was still to continue Rome. Not only did the temporal power of the popes dispose the different Italian factions to purchase their alliance and favour at any price, but in addition to this, the universal ascendancy of Rome presented various attractions to the avarice and vanity of the ultramontane states. The moment that the question of emancipating the rest of the world from Rome should be raised, Italy would again become Italy; domestic quarrels would not prevail to the advantage of a foreign system. Attacks on the head of the Peninsular family would at once revive affections and

common interests which had long been in abeyance. The Reformation had therefore little chance in that quarter. And yet there did exist, beyond the mountains, individuals who had been prepared to receive the gospel light, and Italy was not entirely disinherited.

Spain had what Italy had not—a grave, noble, and religiously disposed people. At all times has it numbered men of piety and learning among its clergy, while it was distant enough from Rome to be able easily to shake off the yoke. There are few nations where one might have more reasonably hoped for a revival of that primitive Christianity which Spain perhaps received from St. Paul himself. And yet Spain did not raise her head among the nations. She was destined to fulfil the declaration of Divine wisdom, “The first shall be last.” Various circumstances led to this sad result.

Spain, in consequence of its isolated position, and its distance from Germany, must have felt only slight shocks of the great earthquake which so violently heaved the empire. It was moreover, engrossed with treasures very different from those which the word of God then offered to the nations. The new world eclipsed the eternal world. A land altogether new, and apparently silver and gold, inflamed all imaginations. An ardent desire for riches left no room in a Spanish heart for nobler thoughts. A powerful clergy, with scaffolds and treasures at its disposal, ruled the Peninsula. The Spaniard willingly yielded a servile obedience to his priests, who, disburdening him of the prior claims of spiritual occupation, left him free to follow his passions, and to run the way of riches, discoveries, and new continents. Victorious over the Moors, Spain had, at the expence of her noblest blood, pulled down the crescent from the walls of Grenada, and many other cities, and, in its place, planted the cross of Jesus Christ. This great zeal for Christianity, which seemed to give bright hopes, turned against the truth. Why should Catholic Spain, which had vanquished infidelity, not oppose heresy? How should those who had chased Mahomet from their lovely country allow Luther to penetrate into it? Their kings did even more. They fitted out fleets against the Reformation, and in their eagerness to vanquish it, went to seek it in Holland and England. But these attacks aggrandised the nations against which they were directed, and their power soon crushed Spain. In this way, these Catholic regions lost, through the Reformation, even that temporal prosperity which was the primary cause of their rejection of the spiritual liberty of the gospel. Nevertheless, it was a brave and generous people that dwelt beyond the Pyrenees. Several of their noble sons with the same ardour, but with more light than those who had shed their blood in Moorish dungeons, came to lay their life, as an offering, on the faggot piles of the Inquisition.

It was nearly the same with Portugal as with Spain. Emmanuel the Happy gave it an age of gold, which must have unfitted it for the self-denial which the gospel demands. The Portuguese, rushing into the recently discovered routes to the East Indies and Brazil, turned their backs on Europe and the Reformation.

Few nations might have been thought more disposed than France to receive the gospel. Almost all the intellectual and spiritual life of the middle ages centred in her. One would have said that the paths were already beaten for a great manifestation of the truth. Men who were the most opposed to each other, and who had the greatest influence on the French people, felt that they had some affinity with the Reformation. St. Bernard had given an example of that heart-felt faith, that inward piety, which is the finest feature of the Reformation, while Abelard had introduced into the study of

theology that reasoning principle, which, incapable of establishing truth, is powerful in destroying falsehood. Numerous heretics, so called, had rekindled the flames of the word of God in the French provinces. The University of Paris had withstood the Church to the face, and not feared to combat her. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Clemangis and the Gersons had spoken out boldly. The pragmatic sanction had been a great act of independence, and promised to prove the palladium of the Gallican liberties. The French nobility, so numerous and so jealous of their precedence, and who, at this period, had just seen their privileges gradually suppressed to the extension of the influence of the crown, must have felt favourably disposed towards a religious revolution, the effect of which might be to restore a portion of the independence which they had lost. The people, lively, intelligent and open to generous emotions, were accessible to the truth in a degree as great, if not greater, than any other people. The Reformation might have promised to be, in this nation, the birth that was to crown the long travail of many ages. But the Church of France, which seemed for so many generations to have been rushing in the same direction, turned suddenly round at the moment of the Reformation, and took quite a contrary direction. Such was the will of Him who guides nations and their rulers. The prince who then sat in the chariot and held the reins, and who, as a lover of letters, might have been thought likely to be the first to second reform, threw his people into another course. The symptoms of several centuries proved fallacious, and the impulse given to France struck and spent itself on the ambition and fanaticism of its kings. The Valois took the place which she ought to have occupied. Perhaps, if she had received the gospel, she would have become too powerful. God was pleased to take the feeblest nations, nations that as yet were not, to make them the depositaries of his truth. France, after having been almost reformed, ultimately found herself again become Roman Catholic. The sword of princes thrown into the scale, made it incline towards Rome. Alas! another sword, that of the reformed themselves, completed the ruin of the Reformation. Hands habituated to the sword, unlearned to pray. It is by the blood of its confessors, and not by that of its enemies, that the gospel triumphs. At this time the Netherlands was one of the most flourishing countries in Europe. It contained an industrious population, enlightened by the numerous relations which it maintained with the different quarters of the world, full of courage, and zealous to excess for its independence, its privileges, and its freedom. Placed on the threshold of Germany, it must have been one of the first to hear the sound of the Reformation. Two parties, quite distinct from each other, occupied these provinces. The more Southern one was surfeited with wealth, and submitted. How could all those manufactures, carried to the highest perfection—how could that boundless traffic by land and sea—how could Bruges, the great entrepot of the trade of the North—how could Antwerp, that queen of commercial cities, accommodate themselves to a long and sanguinary struggle for points of faith? On the contrary, the northern provinces defended by their sands, the sea, and their inland waters, and still more, by the simplicity of their manners, and their determination to lose all sooner than the gospel, not only saved their franchises, their privileges, and their faith, but also conquered their independence, and a glorious national character.

England scarcely seemed to promise what she has since performed. Repulsed from the Continent, where she had so long been obstinately bent on conquering France, she began to throw her eye towards the ocean, as the domain which was to be the true scene of her conquests, and which was reserved for her inheritance. Twice converted to Christianity, once under the ancient Britons, and the second time under the Anglo-Saxons, she very devoutly paid to Rome the annual tribute of St. Peter. But she was reserved for high destinies. Mistress of the ocean, and present at once in

all the different quarters of the globe, she, with the nations that were to spring from her, was one day to be the hand of God in shedding the seeds of life over the remotest islands and the largest continents. Already several circumstances gave a presentiment of her destiny. Bright lights had shone in the British Isles, and some glimmerings still remained. A multitude of foreigners, artists, merchants, and mechanics, arriving from the Netherlands, Germany, and other countries, filled their cities and their sea-ports. The new religious ideas must have been conveyed easily and rapidly. In fine, the reigning monarch was an eccentric prince, who, possessed of some knowledge and great courage, was every moment changing his projects and ideas, and turning from side to side, according to the direction in which his violent passions blew. It was possible that one of the inconsistencies of Henry VIII might prove favourable to the Reformation.

Scotland was at this time agitated by factions. A king five years old, a queen regent, ambitious nobles, and an influential clergy, kept this bold nation in constant turmoil. It was, nevertheless, one day to hold a first place among those that received the Reformation. The three kingdoms of the North, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, were united under a common sceptre. These rude and warlike nations seemed to have little in common with the doctrine of love and peace. And yet, by their very energy, they were, perhaps, more disposed than the people of the South to receive the evangelical doctrine in its power. But, the descendants of warriors and pirates, they brought, it would seem, too warlike a character to the Protestant cause; at a later period, their sword defended it with heroism.

Russia, retired at the extremity of Europe, had few relations with other states, and belonged, moreover, to the Greek communion. The Reformation effected in the Western exerted little or no influence on the Eastern Church.

Poland seemed well prepared for a reform. The vicinity of the Christians of Bohemia and Moravia had disposed it to receive, while the vicinity of Germany must have rapidly communicated, the evangelical impulse. So early as 1500, the nobility of Poland Proper had demanded the cup for the laity, appealing to the usage of the primitive Church. The liberty enjoyed by its towns, and the independence of its nobles, made it a safe asylum for Christians persecuted in their own country, and the truth which they brought thither was received with joy by a great number of its inhabitants. In our days, however, it is one of the countries which has the smallest number of confessors. The flame of reformation, which had long gleamed in Bohemia, had been almost extinguished in blood. Nevertheless, precious remains which had escaped the carnage, still survived to see the day of which John Huss had a presentiment.

Hungary had been torn by intestine wars under the government of princes without character and without experience, and who had at last yoked the fate of their people to Austria, by giving this powerful House a place among the heirs of the crown.

Such was the state of Europe at the beginning of the sixteenth century, which was destined to produce so mighty a transformation in Christian society.

CHAP. VI

Roman Theology—Remains of Life—Justification by Faith—Witnesses for the Truth—Claude—The Mystics—The Vaudois—Valdo—Wickliffe—Huss—Prediction—Protestantism before the

Reformation—Arnoldi—Utenheim—Martin—New Witnesses in the Church—Thomas Conecte—The Cardinal of Crayn—Institoris—Savonarola—Justification by Faith—John Vitraire—John Laillier—John of Wessalia—John of Goch—John Wessel—Protestantism before the Reformation—The Bohemian Brethren—Prophecy of Proles—Prophecy of the Franciscan of Isenach—Third Preparative—Literature.

Having pointed out the state of nations and princes, we now proceed to the preparation for Reform, as existing in Theology and in the Church. The singular system of Theology which had been established in the Church must have powerfully contributed to open the eyes of the rising generation. Made for an age of darkness, as if such an age had been to exist for ever, it seemed destined to become obsolete and defective in all its parts as soon as the age should have improved. Such was the actual result. The popes had from time to time made various additions to Christian doctrine. They had changed or taken away whatever did not accord with their hierarchy, while any thing not contrary to their system was allowed to remain till further orders. This system contained true doctrines, such as redemption, and the influence of the Holy Spirit; and these an able theologian, if any such then existed, might have employed to combat and overthrow all the rest. The pure gold, mingled with the worthless lead in the treasury of the Vatican, made it easy to detect the imposition. It is true, that when any bold opponent called attention to it, the fanner of Rome immediately threw out the pure grain. But these very proceedings only increased the confusion. This confusion was unbounded, and the pretended unity was only a heap of disunion. At Rome there were doctrines of the Court, and doctrines of the Church. The faith of the metropolis differed from the faith of the provinces; while in the provinces, again, the variation was endless. There was a faith for princes, a faith for the people, and a faith for religious orders. Opinions were classed as belonging to such a convent, such a district, such a doctor, such a monk.

Truth, in order to pass peacefully through the time when Rome would have crushed her with an iron sceptre, had done, like the insect which with its threads forms the chrysalis in which it shuts itself up during the cold season. And strange enough, the instruments which divine truth had employed for the purpose were the so much decried schoolmen. These industrious artisans of thought had employed themselves in unravelling all theological ideas, and out of the numerous threads had made a veil under which the ablest of their contemporaries must have found it difficult to recognise the truth in its original purity. It seems a sad thing, that an insect full of life, and sometimes glowing with the most brilliant colours, should enclose itself, apparently without life, in its dark cocoon; and yet it is the shroud that saves it. It was the same with truth. Had the selfish and sinister policy of Rome, in the days of her ascendancy, met the truth in naked simplicity, she would have destroyed, or at least tried to destroy it, but disguised as it was, by the theologians of the time, under subtleties and endless distinctions, the popes either saw it not, or thought that, in such a state, it could not do them harm. They accordingly patronised both the workmen and their work. But spring might come, and then forgotten truth might lift her head, and throw aside her shroud. In her seeming tomb, having acquired new strength, she might now again prove victorious over Rome and all its errors. This spring arrived. At the moment when the absurd trappings of the schoolmen were falling off under the attack of skilful hands, and amid the jeers of the new generation, truth made her escape, and came forth all young and beautiful. But not merely did the writings of the schoolmen bear powerful testimony in favour of truth. Christianity had everywhere

imparted a portion of her own life to the life of the people. The Church of Christ was like a building which had fallen into ruin; in digging among its foundations, a portion of the solid rock on which it had been originally founded was discovered. Several institutions, which dated from the pure times of the Church, were still existing, and could not fail to suggest to many minds evangelical ideas utterly at variance with the prevailing superstitions. Moreover, the inspired writers and ancient doctors of the Church, whose writings were extant in many libraries, occasionally sent forth a solitary voice; and may we not hope that this voice was listened to in silence by more than one attentive ear? Let us not doubt, (and how sweet the thought!) Christians had many brothers and many sisters in those monasteries, in which we are too ready to see nothing but hypocrisy and dissoluteness. The Church had fallen in consequence of having lost the grand doctrine of Justification by faith in the Saviour; and hence, before she could rise, it was necessary that this doctrine should be restored. As soon as it was re-established in Christendom, all the errors and observances which had been introduced, all that multitude of saints, pious works, penances, masses, indulgences, etc., behoved to disappear. As soon as the one Mediator and his one sacrifice were recognised, all other mediators and other sacrifices were done away. “This article of justification,” says one whom we may regard as divinely illumined on the subject, “is that which creates the Church, nourishes, builds up, preserves, and defends her. No man can teach well in the Church, or successively resist an adversary, unless he hold fast by this truth. This,” adds the writer from whom we quote, “is the heel which bruises the Serpent’s head.”

God, who was preparing his work, raised up during the revolution of ages a long series of witnesses to the truth. But the truth to which those noble men bore testimony, they knew not with sufficient clearness, or at least were unable to expound with sufficient distinctness. Incapable of accomplishing the work, they were just what they should have been in order to prepare it. We must add, however, that if they were not ready for the work, the work was not ready for them. The measure was not yet filled up. Ages had not accomplished their destined course, and the need of a true remedy was not generally felt. No sooner had Rome usurped power than a powerful opposition was formed against her,—an opposition which extended across the middle ages. In the ninth century, Archbishop Claude of Turin, and in the twelfth century, Peter of Bruges, his disciple Henry, and Arnold of Brescia, in France and in Italy endeavour to establish the worship of God in spirit and in truth. Generally, however, in searching for this worship, they confine it too much to the exclusion of images and external observances. The Mystics, who have existed in almost all ages, seeking in silence for holiness of heart, purity of life, and tranquil communion with God, cast looks of sadness and dismay on the desolation of the Church. Carefully abstaining from the scholastic brawls and useless discussions under which true piety had been buried, they endeavoured to withdraw men from the vain mechanism of external worship, and from the mire and glare of ceremonies, that they might lead them to the internal repose enjoyed by the soul which seeks all its happiness in God. This they could not do without coming at every point into collision with accredited opinions, and without unveiling the sores of the Church. Still they had no clear view of the doctrine of justification by faith. The Vaudois, far superior to the Mystics in purity of doctrine, form a long chain of witnesses to the truth. Men enjoying more freedom than the rest of the Church, appear to have inhabited the heights of the Alps in Piedmont from ancient times; and their numbers were increased, and their doctrine purified, by the followers of Valdo. From their mountain tops the Vaudois, during a long series of ages, protest against the superstitions of Rome. “They contend for the living hope which they have in God through Christ, for regeneration,

and inward renewal by faith, hope, and charity, for the merits of Jesus Christ, and the all-sufficiency of his righteousness and grace."2

Still, however, this primary truth of a sinner's justification, this capital doctrine, which ought to have risen from the midst of their doctrines, like Mont Blanc from the bosom of the Alps, has not due prominence in their system. Its top is not high enough. In 1170, Peter Vaud, or Valdo, a rich merchant of Lyons, sells all his goods and gives to the poor. He, as well as his friends, seem to have had it in view practically to realise the perfection of primitive Christianity. He, accordingly, begins in like manner with the branches, and not the root. Nevertheless, his word is powerful, because of his appeal to Scripture, and shakes the Roman hierarchy to its very foundations. In 1360, Wickliffe appears in England, and appeals from the pope to the word of God, but the real internal sore of the Church is, in his eyes, only one of the numerous symptoms of disease.

John Huss lifts his voice in Bohemia, a century before Luther lifts his in Saxony. He seems to penetrate farther than his predecessors into the essence of Christian truth. He asks Christ to give him grace to glory only in his cross, and in the inestimable weight of his sufferings, but his attention is directed less against the errors of the Roman Church, than the scandalous lives of its clergy. He was, however, if we may so speak, the John Baptist of the Reformation. The flames of his martyrdom kindled a fire in the Church, which threw immense light on the surrounding darkness, and the rays of which were not to be so easily extinguished.

John Huss did more; prophetic words came forth from the depth of his dungeon. He had a presentiment, that the true Reformation of the Church was at hand. So early as the period when chased from Prague, he had been forced to wander in the plains of Bohemia, where his steps were followed by an immense crowd of eager hearers, he had exclaimed, "The wicked have begun to lay perfidious nets for the Bohemian goose; but if even the goose, which is only a domestic fowl, a peaceful bird, and which never takes a lofty flight into the air, has, however, broken their toils, other birds of loftier wing will break them with much greater force. Instead of a feeble goose, the truth will send eagles and falcons, with piercing eye."2 The Reformers fulfilled this prediction. And after the venerable priest had been summoned before the Council of Constance, after he had been thrown into prison, the chapel of Bethlehem, where he had proclaimed the Gospel and the future triumphs of Jesus Christ, occupied him more than his defence. One night, the holy martyr thought he saw, in the depth of his dungeon, the features of Jesus Christ, which he had caused to be painted on the walls of his study, effaced by the pope and the bishops. The dream distresses him, but next day he sees several painters employed in restoring the pictures in greater number and splendour. Their task finished, the painters, surrounded by a great multitude, exclaim, "Now, let popes and bishops come, they never shall efface them more." John Huss adds, "Many people in Bethlehem rejoiced, and I among them." "Think of your defence, rather than of dreams," said his faithful friend, Chevalier de Chlum, to whom he had communicated the dream. "I am not a dreamer," replied Huss; "but this I hold for certain—the image of Christ will never be effaced. They wished to destroy it, but it will be painted anew in men's hearts by far abler preachers than I. The nation which loves Jesus Christ will rejoice; and I, awaking among the dead, and, so to speak, rising again from the tomb, will thrill with joy." A century elapsed, and the torch of the Gospel, rekindled by the Reformers, did, in fact, illumine several nations which rejoiced in its light. But in those ages, a word of life is heard not only among those whom Rome regards as its adversaries; Catholicity itself—let us say it for our comfort—contains in its bosom numerous witnesses to the

truth. The primitive edifice has been consumed; but a noble fire is slumbering under its ashes, and we see it from time to time throwing out brilliant sparks.

It is an error to suppose that, up to the Reformation, Christianity existed only under the Roman Catholic form, and that, at that period only, a part of that church assumed the form of Protestantism.

Among the doctors who preceded the sixteenth century, a great number, doubtless, inclined to the system which the Council of Trent proclaimed in 1562, but several also inclined to the doctrines professed at Augsburgh in 1530 by the Protestants; the majority, perhaps, vibrated between the two.

Anselm of Canterbury lays down the doctrines of the incarnation and expiation as of the essence of Christianity. And in a treatise in which he teaches how to die, he says to the dying person, “Look only to the merits of Jesus Christ.” St. Bernard with powerful voice proclaims the mystery of redemption. “If my fault comes from another,” says he, “why should not my righteousness also be derived? Certainly, it is far better for me to have it given me, than to have it innate.”3 Several schoolmen, and after them chancellor Gerson, forcibly attack the errors and abuses of the Church.

But, above all, let us think of the thousands of obscure individuals unknown to the world, who, however, possessed the true life of Christ. A monk named Arnoldi, daily in his quiet cell utters this fervent exclamation, “O Jesus Christ my Lord! I believe that thou alone art my redemption and my righteousness.”

Christopher of Utenheim, a pious bishop of Bâsle, causes his name to be written on a picture painted on glass, and surrounds it with this inscription, that he may have it always under his eye, “The cross of Christ is my hope; I seek grace, and not works.”

Friar Martin, a poor Carthusian, wrote a touching confession, in which he says, “O most loving God! I know there is no other way in which I can be saved and satisfy thy justice, than by the merit, the spotless passion, and death of thy well-beloved Son. Kind Jesus! All my salvation is in thy hands. Thou canst not turn the arms of thy love away from me, for they created, shaped, and ransomed me. In great mercy, and in an ineffable manner, thou hast engraved my name with an iron pen on thy side, thy hands, and thy feet,” etc. Then the good Carthusian places his confession in a wooden box, and deposits the box in a hole which he had made in the wall of his cell. The piety of Friar Martin would never have been known had not the box been found, 21st December, 1776, in taking down an old tenement which had formed part of the Carthusian Convent at Bâsle. But this touching faith these holy men had only for themselves, and knew not how to communicate to others. Living in retreat, they might more or less say, as in the writing which Friar Martin put into his box, “Et si hæc prædicta confiteri non possim lingua, confiteor tamen corde et scripto.” “And these things aforesaid, if I cannot confess with the tongue, I, however, confess with the heart and in writing.” The word of truth was in the sanctuary of some pious souls, but, to use a Scripture expression, it had not “free course” in the world. Still, if the doctrine of salvation was not always confessed aloud, there were some in the very bosom of the Church of Rome who, at least, feared not to declare openly against the abuses which dishonoured it.

Scarcely had the Councils of Constance and Bâsle, which condemned Huss and his followers, been held, than the noble series of witnesses against Rome, to which we have been pointing,

again appears with greater lustre. Men of a noble spirit, revolting at the abominations of the Papacy, rise up like the prophets under the Old Testament, like them sending forth a voice of thunder, and with a similar fate. Their blood reddens the scaffold, and their ashes are thrown to the wind.

Thomas Conecte, a Carmelite, appears in Flanders, and declares, “that abominations are done at Rome, that the Church has need of reformation, and that, in the service of God, one must not fear the excommunications of the pope.” Flanders listens with enthusiasm, but Rome burns him in 1432, and his contemporaries exclaim that God has exalted him to heaven.

André, Archbishop of Crayn, and a Cardinal, being at Rome as the ambassador of the emperor, is amazed when he sees that the holiness of the pope, in which he had devoutly believed, is only a fable; and in his simplicity he addresses evangelical representations to Sextus IV. He is answered with mockery and persecution. Then (1482) he wishes a new Council to be assembled at Bâsle. “The whole Church,” exclaims he, “is shaken by divisions, heresies, sins, vices, iniquities, errors, and innumerable evils, so much so, that it is on the eve of being swallowed up by the devouring abyss of condemnation. This is my only reason for proposing a General Conncil for the Reformation of the Catholic faith, and the amendment of manners.” The Archbishop of Bâsle was thrown into the prison of that town, and there died. Henry Institoris, the inquisitor, who first moved against him, used these remarkable words, “The whole world is crying out and demanding a council; but no human power can reform the Church by means of a Council. The Almighty will find another method, which is now unknown to us, though it is at the door; and, by this method the Church will be brought back to its primitive condition.”4 This remarkable prophecy, pronounced by an inquisitor, at the very period of Luther’s birth, is the finest apology for the Reformation. The Dominican, Jerome Savonarola, shortly after he had entered the order at Bologna in 1475, devotes himself to constant prayer, fasting, and macerations, and exclaims, “O thou who art good, in thy goodness teach me thy righteousness.” Translated to Florence in 1489, he preaches with effect; his voice is thrilling, his features animated, his action beautifully attractive. “The Church,” exclaims he, “must be renewed.” And he professes the grand principle which alone can restore life to it. “God,” says he, “forgives man his sin, and justifies him in the way of mercy. For every justified person existing on the earth, there has been an act of compassion in heaven; for no man is saved by his works. None can glory in themselves; and if in the presence of God, the question were put to all the righteous, ‘Have you been saved by your own strength?’ they would all with one voice exclaim, ‘Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name be the glory.’ Wherefore, O God, I seek thy mercy, and I bring thee not my own righteousness: the moment thou justifiest me by grace, thy righteousness belongs to me; for grace is the righteousness of God. So long, O man, as thou believest not, thou art, because of sin, deprived of grace. O God, save me by thy righteousness, that is, by thy Son, who alone was found righteous among men.” Thus the great and holy doctrine of justification by faith gladdens the heart of Savonarola. In vain do the prelates of the Church oppose him;2 he knew that the oracles of God are superior to the visible church, and that he must preach them with her, without her, or in spite of her.—“Fly far from Babylon,” exclaims he. It is Rome he thus designates. Rome soon answers him in her own way. In 1497 the infamous Alexander launches a brief at him, and in 1498 torture and faggot do their work on the Reformer. A Franciscan, named John Vitraire, of Tournay, whose monastic spirit seems not of a very elevated description, nevertheless, declaims forcibly against the corruption of the Church. “It were better for

a man," says he, "to cut his child's throat than put it into a religion not reformed. If your curate, or any other priest, keep women in his house, you ought to go and drag the women by force, or in any other way, pell-mell, out of the house. There are some persons who say prayers to the Virgin Mary, in order that, at the hour of death, they may see the Virgin Mary. Thou shalt see the devil, and not the Virgin Mary." The monk was ordered to retract, and he did so in 1498.

John Laillier, a Doctor of Sorbonne, declares, in 1484, against the tyrannical domination of the hierarchy. "All ecclesiastics," says he, "have received equal power from Christ. The Roman Church is not the head of other churches. You ought to keep the commandments of God and the Apostles; and, in regard to the command of all the bishops and other lords of the Church, care no more for it than you would for a straw; they have destroyed the Church by their tricks. The priests of the Eastern Church sin not in marrying; and, believe me, neither shall we in the Western Church if we marry. Since St. Sylvester the Church of Rome has been, not a church of Christ, but a church of State and money. We are no more bound to believe the legends of the saints than the Chronicles of France."

John of Wessalia, a doctor of theology at Erfurt, a man of great spirit and intellect, attacks the errors on which the hierarchy rests, and proclaims the holy Scriptures to be the only source of faith. "It is not religion" (that is, the monastic state) "that saves us," says he to some monks, "but the grace of God. God has from all eternity kept a book in which he has entered all his elect. Whosoever is not entered there will not, through eternity; and whosoever is, will never see his name erased. It is solely by the grace of God that the elect are saved. He whom God is pleased to save, by giving him grace, will be saved, though all the priests in the world were to condemn and excommunicate him. And he whom God sees meet to condemn, though these should all wish to save him, will be made to feel his condemnation. How audacious in the successors of the apostles to order, not what Christ has prescribed in his holy books, but what they themselves devised, when carried away, as they now are, by a thirst for money, or a rage for power. I despise the pope, the Church, and the Councils, and I extol Jesus Christ." Wessalia, who had gradually arrived at those convictions, boldly announces them from the pulpit, and enters into communication with deputies from the Hussites. Feeble, bent with age, and wasted by disease, the courageous old man, with tottering step, appears before the Inquisition, and, in 1482, dies in its dungeons.

About the same time, John de Goch, prior at Malines, extolled Christian liberty as the soul of all the virtues. He charged the received doctrine with Pelagianism, and surnamed Thomas Aquinas the "Prince of Error." "Canonical Scripture alone," said he, "deserves full faith, and has an irrefragable authority. The writings of the ancient fathers are of authority only in so far as they are conformable to canonical truth.—There is truth in the common byword, 'What a monk dares undertake, Satan would blush to think.'" But the most remarkable of the forerunners of the Reformation was undoubtedly John Wessel, surnamed "The Light of the World," a man full of courage and love for the truth, who taught theology successively at Cologne, Louvain, Paris, Heidelberg, and Gröningen. Luther said of him, "Had I read his works sooner, it might have been said, Luther has drawn everything from Wessel; so much do his spirit and mine accord." "St. Paul and St. James," says Wessel, "say different but not contrary things. Both hold that the just live by faith, but a faith which works by love. He who understanding the gospel believes, desires, hopes, confides in the good news, and loves Him who justifies and blesses him, gives himself entirely to Him whom he loves, and attributes nothing to himself, knowing that in himself he has nothing.2

The sheep should distinguish between the things on which they feed, and avoid a hurtful food, though it should be offered by the shepherd. The people ought to follow their shepherds to the pastures, but when they lead them to what is not pasture, they are no more shepherds; and because they are not in their duty, the flock is no longer bound to obey them. Nothing is more effectual in destroying the Church than a corrupt clergy. All Christians, even the meanest and simplest, are bound to resist those who destroy the Church. The commands of prelates and doctors ought to be performed only in the manner prescribed by St. Paul, (1 Thessalonians 5:21) namely, in so far as, sitting in the chair of Moses, they speak according to Moses. We are the servants of God, and not of the pope, according as it is said, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.' The Holy Spirit has reserved to himself to foster, quicken, preserve, and enlarge the unity of the Church, and not abandoned it to the Roman Pontiff, who often gives himself no concern about the matter. Even sex does not hinder a woman, if she is faithful and prudent, and has love shed abroad in her heart, from feeling, judging, approving, and concluding, by a judgment which God ratifies."

Thus, as the Reformation approaches, the voices which proclaim the truth are multiplied. One would say the Church is bent on demonstrating that the Reformation had an existence before Luther. Protestantism was born into the Church, the very day that the germ of the Papacy appeared in it, just as in the political world conservative principles began to exist the very moment that the despotism of the great or the disorders of the factious showed open front. Protestantism was even sometimes stronger than the Papacy in the ages preceding the Reformation. What had Rome to oppose to all these witnesses for the truth at the moment when their voice was heard through all the earth? But this was not all. The Reformation existed not in the teachers only; it existed also among the people. The doctrines of Wickliffe, proceeding from Oxford, had spread over Christendom, and had preserved adherents in Bavaria, Swabia, Franconia, and Prussia. In Bohemia, from the bosom of discord and war, ultimately came forth a peaceful Christian community, which resembled the primitive Church, and bore lively testimony to the great principle of Evangelical opposition, viz., "That Christ himself, not Peter and his successor, is the rock on which the Church is built." Belonging equally to the German and Slavonian racès, these simple Christians had missionaries among the different nations who spoke their tongues, that they might without noise gain adherents to their opinions. At Rostoch, which had been twice visited by them, Nicolas Kuss began in 1511 to preach publicly against the pope.

It is important to attend to this state of things. When wisdom from above will with loud voice deliver her instructions, there will everywhere be intellects and hearts to receive it. When the sower, who has never ceased to walk over the Church, will come forth for a new and extensive sowing, the earth will be ready to receive the grain. When the trumpet, which the Angel of the covenant has never ceased to blow, will cause it to sound louder and louder, many will make ready for battle. The Church already feels that the hour of battle is approaching. If, during the last century, more than one philosopher gave intimation of the revolution with which it was to close, can we be astonished, that, at the end of the fifteenth century, several doctors foresaw the impending Reformation which was to renovate the Church?

André Prolés, provincial of the Augustins, who, for more than half a century, presided over this body, and with unshaken courage maintained the doctrines of Augustine within his order, when assembled with his friars in the Convent of Himmelspforte, near Wernigerode, often stopped

during the reading of the word of God, and addressing the listening monks, said to them “Brethren, you hear the testimony of holy Scripture. It declares, that by grace we are what we are—that by it alone we have all that we have. Whence, then, so much darkness, and so many horrible superstitions?… Oh! brethren, Christianity has need of a great and bold reformation, and I already see its approach.” Then the monks exclaimed, “Why don’t you yourself begin this reformation, and oppose all their errors?” “You see, my brethren,” replied the old provincial, “that I am weighed down with years, and feeble in body, and possess not the knowledge, talent, and eloquence, which so important a matter requires. But God will raise up a hero, who, by his age, his strength, his talents, his knowledge, his genius, and eloquence, will occupy the first rank. He will begin the reformation, he will oppose error, and God will give him such courage that he will dare to resist the great.” An old monk of Himmelspforte, who had often heard these words, related them to Flacius. In the very order of which Prolés was provincial, the Christian hero thus announced by him was to appear. In the Franciscan Convent at Isenach, in Thuringia, was a monk named John Hilten. He was a careful student of the Prophet Daniel, and the Apocalypse of St. John; he even wrote a Commentary on these Books, and censured the most crying abuses of monastic life. The enraged monks threw him into prison. His advanced age, and the filthiness of his dungeon, bringing on a dangerous illness, he asked for the friar superintendant, who had no sooner arrived, than, without listening to the prisoner, he began to give vent to his rage, and to rebuke him harshly for his doctrine, which (adds the chronicle) was at variance with the monk’s kitchen. The Franciscan, forgetting his illness, and fetching a deep sigh, exclaims, “I calmly submit to your injustice for the love of Christ; for I have done nothing to shake the monastic state, and have only censured its most notorious abuses. But,” continued he, (this is the account given by Melancthon in his Apology for the Confession of Augsburg,) “another will come in the year of the Lord one thousand five hundred and sixteen; he will destroy you, and you will not be able to resist him.” John Hilten, who had announced the end of the world in the year 1651, was not so much mistaken in the year in which the future Reformer was to appear. He was born not long after at a short distance from Hilten’s dungeon, commenced his studies in the same town where the monk was prisoner, and publicly engaged in the Reformation only a year later than the Franciscan had mentioned.

CHAP. VII

Letters—Revival—Remembrance of Antiquity in Italy—Influence of the Humanists—Christianity of Dante—Valla—Infidelity in Italy—Platonic Philosophy—Rise of Literature in Germany—Youth in Schools—Printing—Character of German Literature—Literati and Schoolmen—A New World—Reuchlin—Reuchlin in Italy—His Works—His Influence in Germany—Mystics—Struggle with the Dominicans.

Thus princes and people, the living members of the Church, and the theologians, laboured, each in their sphere, to prepare the work which the sixteenth century was about to carry into effect. But there was another auxiliary which was to lend its aid to the Reformation,—I mean Literature. The human mind was expanding—a circumstance which must of itself have led to its emancipation. If a small seed fall close to an old wall, as it grows into a tree it will push down the wall. The Pontiff of Rome had become tutor to the nations, and his superior intelligence had made the task easy to him. He had long kept them in a state of minority, but resistance now broke forth on all sides. This venerable tutelage, which had been primarily established by the principles of eternal life, and of civilisation which Rome had imparted to barbarous nations, could no longer be exercised without

opposition. A formidable adversary had met her in the face, and was prepared to control her. The natural tendency of the human mind to expand, to investigate, and acquire knowledge, had given birth to this new power. Man opened his eyes, and at every step questioned the proceedings of that long respected guide under whose direction, while blindfolded, he had moved on without saying a word. In regard to the nations of new Europe, the age of infancy had passed away, and that of manhood had begun. To the childlike simplicity, which believed everything, had succeeded a spirit of curiosity, an intellect not to be satisfied without sifting everything to the utmost. It was asked for what end God had spoken to the world, and whether men had a right to station themselves as mediators between God and their brethren.

There was only one thing which could have saved the Church, and this was to raise herself still higher above the people. To keep on a level with them was not enough. But so far from this, she was even found to be far beneath them, having begun to descend at the same time that they began to rise. At the period when mankind began to ascend to the regions of intellect, the priesthood was grovelling below among earthly pursuits and worldly interests. This phenomenon has repeatedly appeared in history. The wings of the eaglet were full fledged, and what hand was high enough to prevent it from taking its flight? The human mind made its first start in Italy.

Scholasticism and romantic poetry had at no time reigned unopposed. Italy never entirely lost the remembrance of antiquity; and this remembrance having been strongly awakened towards the end of the middle ages, soon gave the mind a new impulse.

Even in the fourteenth century, Dante and Petrarch restored the honour of the ancient Roman poets, at the same time that the former gave the most powerful popes a place in his hell, and the latter boldly protested for the primitive constitution of the Church. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, John of Ravenna taught Latin literature with applause at Padua and Florence, while Chrysoloras, at Florence and Pavia, interpreted the beautiful writers of Greece.

While in Europe light was thus coming forth from the prisons in which it had been confined, the East was sending new beams to the West. The standard of the Osmanlis, planted in 1453 on the walls of Constantinople, had put the learned to flight. They had, in consequence, transported the literature of Greece into Italy, where the torch of the ancients rekindled minds which had lain smothered for so many ages. George of Trebisond, Argyropolos, Bessarion, Lascaris, Chalcondylas, and many others, inspired the West with their love of Greece and its noblest productions. The patriotic feelings of the Italians were thus stimulated, and a great number of learned men appeared in Italy. Of these, the most illustrious were Gasparino, Aretin, Poggio, and Valla, who strove to restore the honour of Roman antiquity, and place it on a footing with that of Greece. In this way, a great flood of light had appeared, and Rome could not but suffer by it. The passion for antiquity, which took possession of the Humanists, had a great effect in weakening the attachment to the Church in minds of the highest order; for “no man can serve two masters.” At the same time, the studies in which the learned were engaged put them in possession of a new class of instruments, which were unknown to the schoolmen, and by means of which they could test and decide upon the lessons of the Church. Finding that beauties which charmed them in classical authors existed in profusion in the Bible, and not in the works of theologians, the Humanists were quite prepared to give the Bible precedence before the Doctors. By reforming taste, they prepared a reformation in faith. The Literati, it is true, loudly protested that their pursuits were not at variance

with the belief of the Church; but yet they had assailed the schoolmen long before the Reformers began to do it, and played off their wit on these barbarians—those “Teutons who living, lived not.” Some even proclaimed doctrines of the gospel, and assailed Rome in the objects of her dearest affection. Already Dante, while adhering to many Roman dogmas, had proclaimed the power of faith in terms similar to those which the first Reformers employed. “It is true faith,” he said, “that makes us citizens of heaven.2 Faith, according to the gospel doctrine, is the principle of life; it is the feeble spark which, spreading always wider and wider, at length becomes a living flame, and shines within us like a star in heaven. Without faith, no good works, no honesty of life, can give us aid. How great soever our sins may be, the arms of divine grace are greater still, and wide enough to embrace whatever turns towards God. The soul is not lost by the anathema of the pontiffs; and eternal love can always reach it, so long as there remains one bloom of hope.4 From God, from God alone, through faith our justice comes.” And speaking of the Church, Dante exclaims, “O my bark! how ill loaded thou art! O Constantine! what mighty evil was engendered, I will not say by thy conversion, but by that offering which the rich father then received from thee!” At a later period, Laurentius Valla, applying the study of antiquity to the opinions of the Church, denies the authenticity of the correspondence between Christ and King Abgarus, rejects the tradition as to the origin of the Apostles’ Creed, and saps the foundation of the pretended inheritance which the popes held of Constantine.

Still, however, the great light which the study of antiquity threw out in the fifteenth century, was fitted only to destroy, and not to build up. The honour of saving the Church could not be given either to Homer or Virgil. The revival of letters, sciences, and arts did not found the Reformation. The Paganism of the poets, on reappearing in Italy, rather strengthened the Paganism of the heart. The scepticism of the school of Aristotle, and a contempt of everything not connected with philology, took possession of many of the Literati, and engendered an infidelity which, while it affected submission to the Church, in reality attacked the most important truths of religion. Peter Pomponatius, the most famous representative of this impious tendency, taught at Bologna and Padua, that the immortality of the soul and providence are only philosophical problems. John Francis Pica, nephew of Pica de la Mirandôla, tells of a pope who did not believe a God,2 and of another who, having confessed to one of his friends, that he did not believe in the immortality of the soul, appeared one night after his death to the same friend, and said to him, “Ah! the eternal fire that consumes me, makes me but too sensible of the immortality of that soul, which, according to the view I held, was to die with the body.” This reminds us of the celebrated words which Leo X is alleged to have said to his Secretary Bembo, “All ages know well enough of what advantage this fable about Christ has been to us and ours.” … Frivolous superstitions were attacked, but their place was supplied by infidelity, with its disdainful sneering laugh. To laugh at things, however sacred, was fashionable, and a proof of wit; and if any value was set on religion, it was merely as a mean of governing the people. “I have a fear,” exclaimed Erasmus in 1516, “and it is, that, with the study of ancient literature, ancient Paganism will reappear.

It is true that then, as after the sarcasms of the age of Augustus, and as in our own times, after those of the last century, a new Platonic philosophy sprung up and attacked that irrational incredulity, seeking, like the philosophy of the present day, to inspire some respect for Christianity, and restore the religious sentiment to the heart. The Medici at Florence favoured these efforts of the Platonics. But no philosophical religion will regenerate the Church and the world. Proud,

disdaining the preaching of the cross, and pretending to see nothing in Christian doctrines but figures and symbols, which the majority of men cannot comprehend, it may bewilder itself in a mystical enthusiasm, but will always prove powerless, either to reform or to save.

What then must have happened, had not true Christianity re-appeared in the world, and had not faith filled the hearts of men anew with its power and its holiness? The Reformation saved religion, and with it society, and, therefore, if the Church of Rome had had the glory of God and the good of the people at heart, it would have welcomed the Reformation with delight. But what were such things as these to Leo X?

However, a torch could not be lighted in Italy without sending its beams beyond the Alps. The affairs of the Church established a constant intercourse between the Italian Peninsula and the other parts of Christendom, and the barbarians being thus soon made to feel the superiority and pride of the Italians, began to blush for the imperfection of their language and their style. Some young noblemen, a Dalberg, a Langen, a Spiegelberg, inflamed with an eager desire of knowledge, passed over into Italy, and on their return to Germany, brought back learning, grammar, and the classics, now so eagerly sought after, and communicated them to their friends. Shortly after, Rodolph Agricola, a man of distinguished genius, appeared, and was held in as high veneration for his learning and genius, as if he had lived in the age of Augustus or Pericles. The ardour of his mind, and the fatigues of the school, wore him out in a few years; but not till noble disciples had been trained, through intimate intercourse with him, to carry their master's fire all over Germany. Often, when assembled around him, they had together deplored the darkness of the Church, and asked why Paul so often repeats that men are justified by faith and not by works.2

Around the feet of these new teachers soon gathered rustic youths, who lived by alms and studied without books, and who, divided into sections of priests of Bacchus, arquebusiers, and many more besides, moved in disorderly bands from town to town, and school to school. No matter; these strange bands were the commencement of a literary public. The masterpieces of antiquity began gradually to issue from the presses of Germany, supplanting the schoolmen; and the art of printing, discovered at Mayence in 1440, multiplied the energetic voices which remonstrated against the corruption of the Church, and those voices, not less energetic, which invited the human mind into new paths. The study of ancient literature had, in Germany, very different effects from those which it had in Italy and France. Her study was combined with faith. In the new literary culture, Germany turned her attention to the advantage which religion might derive from it. What had produced in some a kind of intellectual refinement, of a captious and sterile nature, penetrated the whole life of others, warmed their hearts, and prepared them for a better light. The first restorers of letters in France were characterised by levity, and often even by immorality of conduct. In Germany, their successors, animated by a spirit of gravity, zealously devoted themselves to the investigation of truth. Italy offering her incense to profane literature and science, saw an infidel opposition arise. Germany, occupied with a profound theology, and turned inwardly upon herself, saw the rise of an opposition based on faith. The one sapped the foundations of the Church, and the other repaired them. Within the empire was formed a remarkable union of free, learned, and noble-minded men, among whom princes were conspicuous, who endeavoured to render science useful to religion. Some brought to their studies the humble faith of children, while others brought an enlightened and penetrating intellect, disposed, perhaps, to exceed the bounds of legitimate freedom and criticism; both, however, contributed to clear the pavement of the temple from the

obstructions produced by so many superstitions. The monkish theologians perceived their danger, and began to clamour against the very studies which they had tolerated in Italy and France, because in those countries they had gone hand in hand with levity and dissoluteness. They entered into a conspiracy to oppose the study of language and science, because they had caught a glimpse of faith following in their rear. A monk was putting some one on his guard against the heresies of Erasmus. “In what,” it was asked, “do they consist?” He confessed that he had not read the work of which he was speaking, but one thing he knew, viz., that Erasmus had written in too good Latin. The disciples of literature, and the scholastic theologians, soon came to an open rupture. The latter were in dismay when they saw the movement which was taking place in the domain of intellect, and thought that immobility and darkness were the best safeguards of the Church. Their object in contending against the revival of letters was to save Rome, but they helped to ruin it. Here Rome had much at stake. Forgetting herself for an instant under the pontificate of Leo X, she abandoned her old friends, and clasped her young adversaries in her arms. The papacy and letters formed an intimacy which seemed destined to break up the ancient alliance between monasticism and the hierarchy. At the first glance the popes perceived not that what they had taken for a whip was a sword capable of inflicting a mortal wound. In the same way, during the last century, princes were seen receiving at their court political and philosophic systems, which, if carried into full effect, would have overturned their thrones. The alliance was not of long duration. Literature advanced without troubling itself about the injury which it might do to the power of its patron. The monks and schoolmen were aware that to abandon the pope was just to abandon themselves; and the pope, notwithstanding of the passing patronage which he gave to the fine arts, was not the less active when he saw the danger, in adopting measures, how much opposed soever they might be to the spirit of the time. The universities defended themselves as they best could against the invasion of new light. Cologne expelled Rhagius; Leipsic, Celtes; Rostoch, Herman von dem Busch. Still the new doctors, and with them the ancient classics, gradually and often even by the aid of princes, made good their footing in these public schools. Societies of grammarians and poets were soon established in spite of the schoolmen, and every thing, even to the name of the Literati, behoved to be converted into Latin and Greek; for how could the friends of Sophocles and Virgil have such names as Krachenberger or Schwarzerd? At the same time, a spirit of independence breathed in all the universities. Students were no longer seen in schoolboy fashion, with their books under their arms, walking sagely and demurely with downcast eye behind their masters. The petulance of a Martial and an Ovid had passed into the new disciples of the Muses. It was transport to them to hear the sarcasms which fell in torrents on the dialectical theologians, and the heads of the literary movement were sometimes accused of favouring, and even of exciting, the disorderly proceedings of the students.

Thus a new world, emerging out of antiquity, was formed in the very heart of the world of the middle ages. The two parties could not avoid coming to blows, and the struggle was at hand. It began with the greatest champion of literature, with an old man on the eve of finishing his peaceful career. To secure the triumph of truth, the first thing necessary was to bring forth the weapons by which she was to conquer, from the arsenals where they had lain buried for ages. These weapons were the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. It was necessary to revive in Christendom a love and study of sacred literature, both Greek and Hebrew. John Reuchlin was the individual whom divine Providence selected for this purpose. A very fine boy’s voice was remarked in the choir of the church of Pforzheim, and attracted the attention of the Margrave of Baden. It

was that of John Reuchlin, a young boy of agreeable manners and a lively disposition, son of an honest burgher of the place. The Margrave soon took him entirely under his protection, and in 1473 made choice of him to accompany his son Frederick to the University of Paris. The son of the bailiff of Pforzheim arrived with the prince, his heart exuberant with joy at being admitted to this school, the most celebrated of all the West. Here he found the Spartan Hermonymos and John Wessel, surnamed “The Light of the World,” and had an opportunity of engaging under skilful masters in the study of Greek and Hebrew, which had not then a single professor in Germany, and of which he was one day to be the restorer in the country of the Reformation. The poor young German made copies of the poems of Homer, and the speeches of Isocrates, for wealthy students, and in this way gained the means of continuing his studies and buying books. But what he hears from the mouth of Wessel is of a different nature, and makes a deep impression on his mind. “The popes may be mistaken. All human satisfactions are blasphemy against Christ, who has perfectly reconciled and justified the human race. To God alone belongs the power of giving full absolution. There is no necessity for confessing our sins to a priest. There is no purgatory, at least if it be not God himself, who is a devouring fire, and purges away every defilement.” Reuchlin, when scarcely twenty, teaches Philosophy, Greek, and Latin, at Bâsle, and a German (a thing then regarded as a wonder) is heard speaking Greek. The partizans of Rome begin to feel uneasy on seeing noble spirits at work among these ancient treasures. “The Romans,” says Reuchlin, “are making mouths and raising an outcry, pretending that all these literary labours are hostile to Roman piety, inasmuch as the Greeks are schismatics. Oh! what toils and sufferings must be endured to bring Germany back to wisdom and knowledge!”

Shortly afterward, Eberhard of Wurtemberg invited Reuchlin to Tubingen, that he might be the ornament of this rising university, and in 1483 took him with him into Italy. At Florence his companions and friends were Chalcondylas, Aurispa, and John Pica de Mirandola. At Rome, when Eberhard received a solemn audience of the pope, surrounded by his cardinals, Reuchlin delivered an address in such pure and elegant Latin, that the assembly, who expected nothing of the kind from a barbarous German, were filled with the greatest astonishment, while the pope exclaimed, “Assuredly this man deserves to take his place beside the best orators of France and Italy.”

Ten years later Reuchlin was obliged to take refuge in Heidelberg, at the court of the Elector Philip, to escape the vengeance of Eberhard’s successor. Philip, in concert with John of Dalberg, Bishop of Worms, his friend and chancellor, exerted himself to spread the light which was beginning to peep forth from all parts of Germany. Dalberg had founded a library, to which all the learned had free access, and Reuchlin, in this new sphere, made great efforts to remove the barbarism of his countrymen.

Having been sent to Rome by the elector in 1498, on an important mission, he availed himself of all the time and all the money he could spare to make new progress in Hebrew, under the learned Israelite, Abdias Sphorne, and purchased all the Greek and Hebrew manuscripts which he could find, with the view of employing them as so many torches to increase the light which was beginning to dawn in his native country.

Argyropolos, a distinguished Greek, was at this time in the metropolis explaining the ancient marvels of the literature of his country to a numerous audience. The learned ambassador repairs

with his suite to the hall where the teacher was lecturing, and, after bowing to him, deplores the misery of Greece, expiring under the blows of the Ottomans. The astonished Hellenist asks the German, “Who are you? Do you understand Greek?” Reuchlin replies, “I am a German, and know something of your tongue.” At the request of Argyropolos he reads and explains a passage of Thucydides, which the professor had at the moment before him. Then Argyropolos, filled with astonishment and grief, exclaims, “Alas! Alas! Greece, oppressed and obliged to flee, has gone and hid herself beyond the Alps!”

Thus the sons of rude Germany, and those of ancient learned Greece, met in the palaces of Rome, and the East and West shook hands in this rendezvous of the world—the one pouring into the lap of the other those intellectual treasures which had with difficulty been saved from the barbarism of the Ottomans. God, when his designs require it, employs some great catastrophe to break down the barrier, and instantly bring together those who seemed to be for ever parted.

Reuchlin, on his return to Germany, was able to go back to Wurtemberg, and proceeded, at this time especially, to execute those works which proved so useful to Luther and the Reformation. This individual, who, as Count Palatine, held an eminent station in the empire, and who as a philosopher, contributed to humble Aristotle and exalt Plato—made a Latin Dictionary, which supplanted those of the Schoolmen—composed a Greek Grammar, which greatly facilitated the study of that language—translated and expounded the penitential Psalms—corrected the Vulgate, and was the first in Germany (this constitutes his highest merit and glory) who published a Hebrew Grammar and Dictionary. By this work Reuchlin opened the long sealed books of the Old Testament, and reared “a monument,” as he himself expresses it, “more durable than brass.”

It was not merely by his writings, but also by his life, that Reuchlin sought to advance the reign of truth. Tall in stature, of commanding appearance, and affable address, he instantly gained the confidence of all with whom he had any intercourse. His thirst for knowledge was equalled only by his zeal in communicating it. He spared neither money nor labour to introduce the editions of the classics into Germany as they issued from the presses of Italy; and in this way the son of a bailiff did more to enlighten his countrymen than rich municipalities or powerful princes. His influence over youth was great; and, in this respect, who can calculate how much the Reformation owes to him? We will give only one example. His cousin, a young man named Schwarzerd, son of an artisan, who had acquired celebrity as an armourer, came to lodge with his sister, Elizabeth, in order to study under his direction. Reuchlin, delighted at the genius and application of his young pupil, adopted him. Advice, presents of books, examples, nothing, in short, he spared to make his relative useful to the Church and to his country. He rejoiced to see his work prospering under his eye; and, thinking the name Schwarzerd too barbarous, translated it into Greek, and named the young student Melancthon. It was Luther’s illustrious friend. But grammatical studies did not satisfy Reuchlin. Like his masters, the Jewish doctors, he began to study the hidden meaning of the Word; “God,” said he, “is a Spirit, the Word is a breath,—man breathes, God is the Word. The names which he has given himself are an echo of eternity.” Like the Cabalists, he hoped to “pass from symbol to symbol, from form to form, till he arrived at the last and purest of all forms—that which regulates the power of the Spirit.”2

While Reuchlin was bewildering himself in these quiet and abstruse researches, the enmity of the Schoolmen forced him suddenly, and much against his will, into a fierce war, which was one of the

preludes of the Reformation.

There was at Cologne a baptized Rabbin, named Pfefferkorn, who was intimately connected with the inquisitor Hochstraten. This man and the Dominicans solicited and procured from the emperor, Maximilian, (it may have been with good intentions,) an order, in virtue of which the Jews were to bring all their Hebrew books (the Bible excepted) to the town-house of the place where they resided. There the books were to be burned. The motive alleged was, that they were full of blasphemies against Jesus Christ. It must be confessed that they were, at least, full of absurdities, and that the Jews themselves would not have lost much by the intended execution. The emperor desired Reuchlin to give his opinion of the books. The learned doctor expressly singled out all the books which were written against Christianity, leaving them to their destined fate, but he tried to save the others. “The best method of converting the Israelites,” added he, “would be to establish two Hebrew professors in each University, who might teach theologians to read the Bible in Hebrew, and thus refute the Jewish doctors.” The Jews, in consequence of this advice, obtained restitution of their books. The proselytes and the inquisitors, like hungry ravens which see their prey escape, sent forth cries of fury. Picking out different passages from the writings of Reuchlin, and perverting their meaning, they denounced the author as a heretic, accused him of a secret inclination to Judaism, and threatened him with the fetters of the Inquisition. Reuchlin was at first taken by surprise; but these men always becoming more and more arrogant, and prescribing dishonourable terms, he, in 1513, published a “Defence against his Detractors of Cologne,” in which he painted the whole party in vivid colours. The Dominicans vowed vengeance, and hoped, by an act of authority, to re-establish their tottering power. Hochstraten, at Mayence, drew up a charge against Reuchlin, and the learned works of this learned man were condemned to the flames. The Innovators, the masters and disciples of the new school, feeling that they were all attacked in the person of Reuchlin, rose as one man. Times were changed,—Germany and literature were very different from Spain and the Inquisition. The great literary movement had created a public opinion. Even the dignified clergy were somewhat influenced by it. Reuchlin appeals to Leo X, and that pope, who had no great liking for ignorant monks and fanatics, remits the whole affair to the Bishop of Spires, who declares Reuchlin innocent, and condemns the monks in the expences of process. The Dominicans, those props of the papacy, filled with rage, recur to the infallible decision of Rome, and Leo, not knowing how to act between the two hostile powers, issues a mandate superseding the process. The union of letters with faith forms one of the characteristic features of the Reformation, and distinguishes it, both from the introduction of Christianity, and the religious revival of the present day. The Christians, who were contemporary with the Apostles, had the refinement of their age against them, and, with some few exceptions, it is the same now; but the majority of literary men were with the Reformers. Even public opinion was favourable to them. The work thereby gained in extent, but perhaps it lost in depth.

Luther, sensible of all that Reuchlin had done, wrote to him shortly after his victory over the Dominicans, “The Lord has acted through you, in order that the light of Holy Scripture may again begin to shine in this Germany, where, for many ages, alas! it was not only smothered, but almost extinguished.”

CHAP. VIII

Erasmus—Erasmus a Canon—At Paris—His Genius—His Reputation—His Influence—Popular Attack—Praise of Folly—Tatters—Church People—Saints—Folly and the Popes—Attack on Science—Principle—The Greek New Testament—His Profession of Faith—His Writings and Influence—His Failings—A Reform without Shocks—Was it possible—The Church without Reform—His timidity—His Indecision—Erasmus loses himself with all Parties. But a man had now appeared, who regarded it as the great business of his life to attack the scholasticism of the universities and convents, and was the great writer of the opposition at the commencement of the sixteenth century.

Reuchlin was not twelve years old when this first genius of the age was born. A man of great vivacity and talent, by name Gerard, a native of Gouda, in the Netherlands, loved a physician's daughter, named Marguerite. The principles of Christianity did not regulate his life, or at least passion silenced them. His parents, and nine brothers, would have constrained him to embrace the monastic state. He fled, leaving the object of his affection about to become a mother, and repaired to Rome. Frail Marguerite gave birth to a son. Gerard heard nothing of it, and some time after having received intimation from his parents, that the object of his affection was no more, he, in a paroxysm of grief, turned priest, and consecrated himself for ever to the service of God. On his return to Holland, she was still alive! Marguerite would not many another, and Gerard, remaining faithful to his sacerdotal vows, their affection became concentrated on their little son. His mother had tended him with the greatest care, and his father, after his return, sent him to school, though he was only four years of age. He was not thirteen, when his teacher, Sinthemius, of Deventer, clasping him rapturously in his arms, exclaimed, "This child will reach the highest pinnacles of science." It was Erasmus of Rotterdam.

About this time his mother died, and his father, broken-hearted, was not long in following her to the grave.

Young Erasmus, left alone in the world, showed the greatest aversion to become a monk, a state of life which his guardians were for compelling him to adopt, but to which, from the circumstances of his birth, he may be said to have been always opposed. Ultimately he was prevailed upon to enter a convent of canons regular, but he had no sooner done it than he felt, as it were, borne down by the weight of his vows. Recovering a little liberty, he is soon seen, first at the Court of the Archbishop of Cambray, and afterwards at the University of Paris, where he prosecuted his studies in extreme poverty, but with the most indefatigable diligence. As soon as he could procure any money, he employed the first part of it in the purchase of Greek books, and the remainder in the purchase of clothes. Often did the poor Dutchman make fruitless application to his guardians, and to this probably it was owing, that, in after life, one of his greatest pleasures was to give assistance to poor students. Engaged without intermission in the pursuit of truth and knowledge, he gave a reluctant attendance on scholastic disputes, and revolted from the study of theology, afraid that he might discover some errors in it, and be, in consequence, denounced as a heretic.

It was at this time Erasmus began to feel his strength. By the study of the ancients, he acquired a perspicuity and an elegance of style, which placed him far above the most distinguished Literati of Paris. His employment as a teacher procured him powerful friends, while the works which he published attracted general admiration and applause. He well knew how to please the public, and shaking off the last remnants of the school and the cloister, devoted himself entirely to literature,

displaying in all his writings those ingenious observations, and that correct, lively, and enlightened spirit, which at once amuse and instruct. The laborious habits which he acquired at this period he retained through life. Even in his journeys, which were usually made on horseback, he was never idle. He composed while he was rambling across the fields, and, on arriving at his inn, committed his thoughts to writing. It was in this way, while travelling from Italy to England, he composed his Praise of Folly.

Erasmus, early in life, acquired a high reputation among the learned, but the enraged monks owed him a grudge, and vowed vengeance. He was much courted by princes, and was inexhaustible in finding excuses to evade their invitations, liking better to gain his livelihood in correcting books with the printer Frobenius, than to live surrounded by luxury and honour, at the magnificent courts of Charles V, Henry VIII, and Francis I, or to encircle his head with the Cardinal's hat which was offered him.

He taught in Oxford from 1509 to 1516, and then left it for Bâsle, where he fixed his residence in 1521.

What was his influence on the Reformation?

It has been overrated by some and underrated by others. Erasmus never was, and never could have been, a Reformer, but he paved the way for others. Not only did he diffuse among his contemporaries a love of science, and a spirit of research and examination, which led others much farther than he went himself, but he was also able, through the protection of distinguished prelates and mighty princes, to expose the vices of the Church, and lash them with the most cutting satire.

Erasmus, in fact, attacked monks and abuses in two ways. First, there was his popular attack. That little fair-haired man, whose peering blue eyes keenly observed whatever came before him, and on whose lips a somewhat sarcastic smile was always playing, though timid and embarrassed in his step, and apparently so feeble that a breath of air might have thrown him down, was constantly pouring out elegant and biting sarcasms against the theology and superstition of his age. His natural character and the events of his life had made this habitual to him. Even in writings where nothing of the kind was to have been expected, his sarcastic humour is ever breaking out, and, as with needle points, impaling those schoolmen and ignorant monks against whom he had declared war. There are many features of resemblance between Erasmus and Voltaire. Previous authors had given a popular turn to that element of folly which mingles with all the thoughts and all the actions of human life. Erasmus took up the idea, and personifying Folly, introduces her under the name of Moria, daughter of Plutus, born in the Fortunate Islands, nursed on intoxication and impertinence, and swaying the sceptre of a mighty empire. Giving a description of it, she paints, in succession, all the states of the world which belong to her, dwelling, especially, on church folks, who refuse to own her kindness, although she loads them with her favours. She directs her jibes and jests against the labyrinth of dialectics, in which the theologians wander bewildered, and the grotesque syllogisms by which they pretend to support the Church. She also unveils the disorders, the ignorance, the impurity, and absurd conduct of the monks.

"They are all mine," says she, "those people who have no greater delight than to relate miracles, or hear monstrous lies, and who employ them to dissipate the ennui of others, and, at the same time, to fill their own purses, (I allude, particularly, to priests and preachers.) Near them are those who

have adopted the foolish, yet pleasing persuasion, that if they cast a look at a bit of wood or a picture representing Polyphemus or Christopher, they will, at least, outlive that day."—"Alas! what follies," continues Moria, "follies at which even I myself can scarcely help blushing! Do we not see each country laying claim to its particular saint? Each misery has its saint and its candle. This one relieves you in toothache, that one gives assistance at childbirth, a third restores your stolen goods, a fourth saves you in shipwreck, and a fifth keeps watch over your flocks. Some of these are all-powerful in many things at once. This is particularly the case with the Virgin, the mother of God, to whom the vulgar attribute almost more than to her Son. In the midst of all these follies, if some odious sage arise, and, giving a counter-note, exclaim, (as in truth he may,) 'You will not perish miserably if you live as Christians. You will redeem your sins, if to the money which you give you add hatred of the sins themselves, tears, vigils, prayers, fastings, and a thorough change in your mode of life. Yon saint will befriend you if you imitate his life.'—If some sage, I say, charitably duns such words into their ears, Oh! of what felicity does he not deprive their souls, and into what trouble, what despondency, does he not plunge them! The mind of man is so constituted that imposture has a much stronger hold upon it than truth.2 If there is any saint more fabulous than another, for instance, a St. George, a St. Christopher, or a St. Barbara, you will see them adored with much greater devotion than St. Peter, St. Paul, or Christ himself."

Folly, however, does not stop here; she applies her lash to the bishops themselves, "who run more after gold than after souls, and think they have done enough when they make a theatrical display of themselves, as Holy Fathers, to whom adoration is due, and when they bless or anathematise." The daughter of "the Fortunate Isles" has the hardihood even to attack the Court of Rome, and the pope himself, who, spending his time in diversion, leaves Peter and Paul to perform his duty. "Are there," says she, "more formidable enemies of the Church than those impious pontiffs, who, by their silence, allow Jesus Christ to be destroyed, who bind him by their mercenary laws, falsify him by their forced interpretations, and strangle him by their pestilential life?"

Holbein appended to the Praise of Folly, most grotesque engravings, among which the pope figures with his triple crown. Never, perhaps, was a work so well adapted to the wants of a particular period. It is impossible to describe the impression which it produced throughout Christendom. Twenty-seven editions were published in the lifetime of Erasmus; it was translated into all languages, and served more than any other to confirm the age in its antisacerdotal tendency. But to this attack by popular sarcasm, Erasmus added the attack of science and erudition. The study of Greek and Latin literature had opened up a new prospect to the modern genius which began to be awakened in Europe. Erasmus entered with all his heart into the idea of the Italians, that the school of the ancients was that in which the sciences ought to be studied, that, abandoning the inadequate and absurd books which had hitherto been used, it was necessary to go to Strabo for geography, to Hippocrates for medicine, to Plato for philosophy, to Ovid for mythology, and to Pliny for natural history. But he took a farther step, the step of a giant, destined to lead to the discovery of a new world, of more importance to humanity than that which Columbus had just added to the old world. Following out his principle, Erasmus insisted that men should no longer study theology in Scotus and Thomas Aquinas, but go and learn it from the Fathers of the Church, and, above all, from the New Testament. He showed that it was not even necessary to keep close to the Vulgate, which swarmed with faults, and he rendered an immense service to truth, by publishing his critical edition of the Greek text of the New Testament, a text as

little known in the West as if it never had existed. This edition appeared at Bâsle in 1516, the year before the Reformation. Erasmus thus did for the New Testament what Reuchlin had done for the Old. Theologians were thenceforth able to read the word of God in the original tongues, and at a later period to recognise the purity of doctrine taught by the Reformers.

“I wish,” said Erasmus on publishing his New Testament, “to bring to its level that frigid, wordy, disputatious thing, termed Theology. Would to God the Christian world may derive advantage from the work, proportioned to the pain and toil which it has cost.” The wish was accomplished. It was in vain for the monks to exclaim, “He is trying to correct the Holy Spirit.” The new Testament of Erasmus sent forth a living light. His paraphrases on the Epistles and Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John; his editions of Cyprian and Jerome; his translations of Origen, Athanasius, and Chrysostom; his “True Theology.” his “Preacher;”2 his Commentaries on several of the Psalms, contributed greatly to spread a taste for the word of God and pure theology. The effect of his labours even went farther than his intentions. Reuchlin and Erasmus restored the Bible to the learned; Luther restored it to the people. We have not yet described all that Erasmus did. When he restored the Bible, he called attention to its contents. “The highest aim of the revival of philosophical studies,” said he, “should be to give a knowledge of the pure and simple Christianity of the Bible.” An admirable sentiment! Would to God the organs of philosophy, in our day, were as well acquainted with their calling! “I am firmly resolved,” continued he, “to die studying the Scriptures; it is my joy and my peace.” “The sum of all Christian philosophy,” he elsewhere says, “is reduced to this: To place all our hope in God, who through grace without our merits, gives us everything by Jesus Christ: To know that we are ransomed by the death of his Son: To die to worldly lusts, and walk conformably to his doctrine and his example, not only doing no injury to any, but, on the contrary, doing good to all: To bear trials patiently, in the hope of future recompence: in fine, to claim no credit to ourselves because of our virtues, but give thanks to God for all our faculties, and all our works. These are the feelings which ought to pervade the whole man, until they have become a second nature.”2

Then raising his voice against the great mass of ecclesiastical injunctions, regarding dress, fasts, feast-days, vows, marriage, and confessions, by which the people were oppressed, and the priest was enriched, Erasmus exclaims, “In churches, the interpretation of the gospel is scarcely thought of. The better part of sermons must meet the wishes of the commissaries of indulgences. The holy doctrine of Christ must be suppressed, or interpreted contrary to its meaning, and for their profit. Cure is now hopeless, unless Christ himself turn the hearts of kings and pontiffs, and awaken them to enquire after true piety.” The works of Erasmus rapidly succeeded each other. He laboured incessantly, and his writings were read just as they came from his pen. That spirit, that native life, that rich, refined, sparkling and bold intellect, which, without restraint, poured out its treasures before his contemporaries, carried away and entranced vast numbers of readers, who eagerly devoured the works of the philosopher of Rotterdam. In this way he soon became the most influential man in Christendom, and saw pensions and crowns raining down upon him from all quarters. When we contemplate the great revolution, which, at a later period, renewed the Church, it is impossible not to own that Erasmus was used by many as a kind of bridge, over which they passed. Many who would have taken alarm at evangelical truths, if presented in all their force and purity, yielded to the charm of his writings, and ultimately figured among the most zealous promoters of the Reformation. But the very circumstance of his being good in preparing, prevented

him from being good at performing. “Erasmus knows very well how to expose error,” says Luther, “but he knows not how to teach the truth.” The gospel was not the fire which warmed and sustained his life, the centre around which his activity radiated. He was, first of all, a learned, and, in the second place only, a Christian man. He was too much under the influence of vanity to have a decided influence on his age. He anxiously calculated the effect which every step he took might have on his reputation, and there was nothing he liked so much to talk of as himself and his fame. “The pope,” wrote he to an intimate friend with puerile vanity, at the period when he became the declared opponent of Luther, “the pope has sent me a letter full of kindness and expressions of respect. His secretary solemnly vows that the like was never heard of, and that it was written word for word at the pope’s own dictation.”

Erasmus and Luther are the representatives of two great ideas on the subject of reform, and of two great parties of their own age, and of all ages. The one is composed of men, whose leading characteristic is a prudential timidity; the other of men of courage and resolution. These two parties were, at this period, personified in these two distinguished heads. The men of prudence thought that the cultivation of theological science might lead gradually, and without disruption, to the reformation of the Church. The men of action thought that the diffusion of more correct ideas among the learned would not put a stop to the superstitions of the people, and that the correction of particular abuses was of little avail, unless the whole life of the Church were renewed.

“A disadvantageous peace,” said Erasmus, “is far better than the justest war.” He thought (and how many Erasmuses have been and still are in the world?) that a Reformation which shook the Church might run a risk of overturning it; and he was therefore terrified when, on looking forward, he saw the passions of men excited, saw evil everywhere mingling itself with any little good that could be accomplished, existing institutions destroyed in the absence of others to supply their place, and the vessel of the Church leaking in every part, and at length engulfed amid the storm. “Those who bring the sea into new lagoons,” said he, “are often deceived in the result; the formidable element, once introduced, does not take the direction which they wished to give it, but rushes where it pleases, and causes great devastation. “Be this as it may,” continued he, “let disturbances be by all means avoided. Better put up with wicked princes than by innovations enthrone evil.”2 But the courageous among his contemporaries were prepared with their answer. History had clearly enough demonstrated, that a frank exposition of the truth, and a mortal struggle with falsehood, could alone secure the victory. Had temporising and politic artifices been resorted to, the wiles of the papal court would have extinguished the light in its first glimmerings. Had not all sorts of mild methods been tried for ages? Had not Council been held after Council, with the view of reforming the Church? Yet all had been useless. Why pretend to repeat an experiment that had so often failed? No doubt a fundamental reform might be effected without disruption. But when did anything great and good make its appearance among men without causing agitation? This fear of seeing evil mingle with good, if legitimate, would arrest the noblest and holiest enterprises. We must not fear the evil which may be heaved up in the course of great agitation, but be strong in combating and destroying it.

Besides, is there not an entire difference between the commotion which human passions produces and that which emanates from the Spirit of God? The one shakes society, the other consolidates it. How erroneous to imagine, like Erasmus, that in the state in which Christianity then was, with that mixture of opposite elements, truth and falsehood, life and death, violent shocks might still be

prevented! As well might you try to shut the crater of Vesuvius, when the angry elements are actually at war in its bosom! The middle ages had seen more than one violent commotion in an atmosphere less loaded with storms than at the period of the Reformation. The thing wanted at such a time is not to arrest and suppress, but to direct and guide.

If the Reformation had not burst forth, who can tell the fearful ruin by which its place might have been supplied? Society, a prey to a thousand elements of destruction, and destitute of regenerating and conservative elements, would have been dreadfully convulsed. Assuredly it would not have been a reform to the taste of Erasmus, or such an one as many moderate but timid men in our day dream of, that would then have overtaken society. The people, devoid of that light and piety which the Reformation carried down into the humblest ranks, giving themselves up to the violence of their passions, and to a restless spirit of revolt, would have burst forth like a wild beast broken loose from its chain, after having been goaded to madness. The Reformation was nothing but an interposition of the Spirit of God among men, a setting of the world in order by the hand of God. No doubt, it might stir up the fermenting elements which lie hidden in the human heart; but God was there to overrule them. Evangelical doctrine, heavenly truth, penetrating the masses of the population, destroyed what deserved to perish, but, at the same time, gave new strength to all that deserved to remain. The Reformation exerted itself in building up, and it is mere prejudice to allege that it destroyed. “The ploughshare, too,” it has been truly said, in speaking of the Reformation, “might think it hurts the earth, because it cuts it asunder, whereas it only makes it productive.” The great principle of Erasmus was, “Give light, and the darkness will disappear of itself.” The principle is good, and Luther acted on it. But when the enemies of the light strive to extinguish it, or to force the flambeau out of the hand which carries it is it necessary, from a love of peace, to let them do so? ought not the wicked to be resisted?

Erasmus was deficient in courage. Now, courage is indispensable, whether it be to effect a Reformation, or to storm a town. There was much timidity in his character. From a boy the very name of death made him tremble. He was excessively anxious about his health, and would grudge no sacrifice in order to escape from a place where some contagious malady prevailed. His love of the comforts of life was greater even than his vanity, and hence his rejection, on more than one occasion, of the most brilliant offers.

Accordingly, he made no pretensions to the character of a Reformer. “If the corruptions of the Court of Rome demand some great and prompt remedy,” said he, “it is no affair of mine, or of those like me.” He had not the strong faith which animated Luther. While the latter was always prepared to yield up his life for the truth, Erasmus candidly declared, “Others may aspire to martyrdom; as for me, I deem not myself worthy of the honour. Were some tumult to arise, I fear I would play the part of Peter.”

Erasmus, by his writings and his sayings, had done more than any other man to prepare the Reformation; but, when he saw the tempest, which he himself had raised, actually come, he trembled. He would have given anything to bring back the calm of other days, even though accompanied with its dense fogs. It was no longer time. The embankment had burst, and it was impossible to arrest the flood which was destined at once to purify and fertilise the world. Erasmus was powerful as an instrument of God, but when he ceased to be so, he was nothing.

Ultimately, Erasmus knew not for which party to declare. He was not pleased with any, and he had his fears of all. “It is dangerous to speak,” said he, “and it is dangerous to be silent.” In all great religious movements we meet with those irresolute characters, which, though respectable in some points of view, do injury to the truth, and, in wishing not to displease any, displease all.

What would become of the truth did not God raise up bolder champions to defend it? The following is the advice which Erasmus gave to Viglius Zuichem, (afterwards President of the Supreme Court at Brussels,) as to the manner in which he ought to conduct himself towards the sectaries—(this was the name by which he had already begun to designate the Reformers)—“My friendship for you makes me desirous that you should keep far aloof from the contagion of the sects, and not furnish them with any pretext for saying, ‘Zuichem is ours.’ If you approve their doctrine, at least disguise it, and, above all, do not enter into discussion with them. A lawyer should finesse with these people as a dying man once did with the devil. The devil asked him, ‘What believest thou?’ The dying man, afraid that if he made a confession of his faith, he might be surprised into some heresy, replied, ‘What the Church believes.’ The devil rejoined, ‘What does the Church believe?’ The man again replied, ‘What I believe.’ The devil, once more, ‘And what dost thou believe?’—‘What the Church believes.’ ” Duke George of Saxony, a mortal enemy of Luther, receiving an equivocal answer from Erasmus to a question which he had put to him, said, “My dear Erasmus, wash the fur for me, and do not merely wet it.” Secundus Curio, in one of his works, describes two heavens—the Papistical and the Christian heaven. He does not find Erasmus in either, but discovers him moving constantly between them in endless circles.

Such was Erasmus. He wanted that internal liberty which makes a man truly free. How different he would have been if he had abandoned himself, and sacrificed all for truth! But after trying to effect some reforms with the approbation of the Church, and for Rome deserting the Reformation when he saw the two to be incompatible, he lost himself with all parties. On the one hand, his palinodes could not suppress the rage of the fanatical partisans of the Papacy. They felt the mischief which he had done them, and they did not forgive it. Impetuous monks poured out reproaches on him from the pulpit,—calling him a second Lucian,—a fox, which had laid waste the vineyard of the Lord. A doctor of Constance had the portrait of Erasmus hung up in his study, that he might have it in his power at any moment to spit in his face. On the other hand, Erasmus, by deserting the standard of the gospel, deprived himself of the affection and esteem of the noblest men of the period in which he lived, and must, doubtless, have forfeited those heavenly consolations which God sheds in the hearts of those who conduct themselves as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. At least we have some indication of this in his bitter tears—his painful vigils, and troubled sleep—his disrelish for his food—his disgust with the study of the muses, once his only solace—his wrinkled brow—his pallid cheek—his sad and sunken eye—his hatred of a life to which he applies the epithet of cruel—and those longings for death which he unbosoms to his friends. Poor Erasmus! The enemies of Erasmus went, we think, somewhat beyond the truth when they exclaimed, on Luther’s appearance, “Erasmus laid the egg, and Luther has hatched it.”

CHAP. IX The nobles—Different Motives—Hütten—Literary League—Letters of some Obscure Men—Their Effect—Luther’s Opinion—Hütten at Brussels—His Letters—Seckingen—War—His Death—Cronberg—Hans Sachs—General Fermentation. The same symptoms of regeneration, which we have seen among princes, bishops, and the learned, existed among the men of the world, among nobles, knights, and warriors. The German nobility performed an important part in

the Reformation. Several of the most illustrious sons of Germany entered into close alliance with the Literati, and inflamed with an ardent, sometimes even an excessive zeal, laboured to deliver their countrymen from the yoke of Rome.

Various causes must have contributed to procure friends for the Reformation among the ranks of the nobility. Some, by their attendance at the universities, had been warmed with the same flame that animated the learned. Others, whose education had trained them to generous feelings, had their minds predisposed in favour of the beautiful doctrines of the gospel. To several, the Reformation seemed to present something of a chivalrous character, which fascinated them, and bore them along in its train. Lastly, it must be acknowledged, that not a few had a grudge at the clergy, who had powerfully contributed in the reign of Maximilian, to deprive the nobles of their ancient independence, and bring them under subjection to their sovereigns. They, in their enthusiasm, considered the Reformation as the prelude of a great political renovation. They thought they saw the empire emerging from this crisis with new splendour, and hailed the better state, brilliant with the purest glory, which was on the eve of being established in the world by chivalrous swords, not less than by the word of God.

Ulrich de Hütten, who, on account of his philippics against the Papacy, has been surnamed the Demosthenes of Germany, forms, as it were, the link which united the chevaliers and men of letters. He distinguished himself by his writings, as much as by his sword. Descended from an ancient family in Franconia, he was sent at eleven years of age, to the Convent of Foulda, with the view of his becoming a monk. But Ulrich, who had no inclination for this state, ran off from the convent when he was sixteen, and repaired to the University of Cologne, where he devoted himself to the study of languages. Afterwards leading an unsettled life, he was in the ranks as a common soldier at the siege of Padua, in 1513, saw Rome in all its disorder, and there sharpened the arrows which he afterwards shot at her. On his return to Germany, Hütten wrote a pamphlet against Rome, entitled “The Roman Trinity,” in which he unveils all the disorders of that court, and shows the necessity of pulling down her tyranny by main force. A traveller named Vadiscus, who figures prominently in the piece, says, “There are three things which are usually brought back from Rome,—a sore conscience, a disordered stomach, and an empty purse. There are three things which Rome does not believe,—the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the dead, and hell. There are three things in which Rome carries on a trade,—the grace of Christ, ecclesiastical benefices, and women.” The publication of this work obliged Hütten to quit the court of the Archbishop of Mayence, where he was residing when he composed it. The affair of Reuchlin with the Dominicans was the signal which brought forward all the literati, magistrates, and nobles, who were opposed to the monks. The defeat of the inquisitors, who, it was said, had only saved themselves from a regular and absolute sentence of condemnation by money and intrigue, gave encouragement to all their adversaries. Counsellors of the empire, and magistrates of the most considerable towns—Pirckheimer of Nuremberg, Peutinger of Augsburg, Stuss of Cologne, distinguished preachers, such as Capito and Œcolampadius, doctors of medicine, historians, all the literati, orators, and poets, at the head of whom, Ulrich de Hütten was conspicuous, formed the army of Reuchlinists, of whom a list was even published. The most remarkable production of this league was the famous popular satire, entitled, “Letters of some Obscure Men.” This production was principally written by Hütten, and one of his university friends, Crotus Robianus, but it is difficult to say with which of the two the idea originated, if, indeed, it was not with the learned

printer, Angst. It is even doubtful if Hütten had any hand in the first part of the work. Several Humanists, who had met in the fortress of Ebernbourg, appear to have contributed to the second part. It is a picture in bold characters, a caricature sometimes coarsely painted, but full of truth and vigour, a striking likeness in colours of fire. The effect was immense. Monks, who are adversaries of Reuchlin, and the supposed authors of the letters, discourse on the affairs of the time, and on theological subjects after their own manner, and in their barbarous Latin. They address to their correspondent, Ortuin Gratius, professor at Cologne, and friend of Pfefferkorn, the silliest and most useless questions. They give the most amusing proof of the excessive ignorance and incredulity, their superstition, their low and vulgar spirit, their coarse gluttony in making a god of their belly, and, at the same time, their pride, their fanatical and persecuting zeal. They inform him of several of their droll adventures, their escapes, their dissoluteness, and a variety of scandals in the lives of Hochstraten, Pfefferkorn, and other leaders of their party. The tone of these letters, sometimes hypocritical and sometimes childish, gives them a very comic effect, and yet the whole is so natural, that the Dominicans and Franciscans of England received the work with high approbation, believing that it really was composed on the principles of their order, and in defence of it. A prior of Brabant, in his credulous simplicity, purchased a great number of copies, and presented them to the most distinguished among the Dominicans. The monks, irritated more and more, applied to the pope for a stringent bull against all who should dare to read these epistles, but Leo X refused to grant it. They were accordingly obliged to put up with the general laugh, and gulp down their rage. No work gave a stronger blow to these pillars of Papism. But it was not by jesting and satire that the gospel was to triumph. Had this course been persisted in; had the Reformers, instead of attacking the Reformation with the weapons of God, had recourse to the jeering spirit of the world, the cause had been lost. Luther loudly condemned these satires. A friend having sent him one of them, entitled, “The Tenor of the Supplication of Pasquin,” he wrote in answer, “The foolish things you sent me appear to be written by a mind which is under no control. I submitted them to a meeting of friends, and they have all given the same opinion.” And speaking of the same work, he writes to another of his correspondents, “This Supplication appears to me to be by the same hand as the Letters of some Obscure Men. I approve of his wishes, but I approve not of his work, for he does not refrain from injury and insult.” This sentence is severe, but it shows what kind of spirit was in Luther, and how superior he was to his contemporaries. It must be added, however, that he was not at all times observant of these wise maxims.

Ulrich having been obliged to renounce the protection of the Archbishop of Mayence, applied for that of Charles V, who had at this time quarrelled with the pope, and accordingly repaired to Brussels, where Charles was holding his court. But so far from obtaining anything, he learned that the pope had required the emperor to send him to Rome bound hand and foot. The inquisitor, Hochstraten, Reuchlin’s persecutor, was one of those whom Rome had charged to pursue him. Ulrich, indignant that such a demand should have been made to the emperor, quitted Brabant. When a short way from Brussels, he met Hochstraten on the highroad. The inquisitor, frightened out of his wits, falls on his knees, and commends his soul to God and the saints. “No,” said the knight, “I will not soil my sword with such blood as yours!” and giving him several strokes with the flat of his sword, allowed him to depart.

Hütten took refuge in the castle of Ebernbourg, where Francis de Seckingen offered an asylum to all who were persecuted by the Ultramontanists. It was here that his ardent zeal for the

emancipation of his country dictated the remarkable letters which he addressed to Charles V, Frederick Elector of Saxony, Albert Archbishop of Mayence, and the princes and nobles, and which entitle him to a place among the most distinguished authors. Here too, he composed all those works which, being read and comprehended by the people, inspired Germany with a hatred of Rome and a love of freedom. Devoted to the cause of the Reformers, his object was to induce the nobility to take up arms in favour of the gospel, and fall with the sword on that Rome which Luther only wished to destroy by the Word, and by the invincible force of truth.

Still, amid all this fondness for war, we are pleased at finding tenderness and delicacy of sentiment in Hütten. On the death of his parents, though he was the eldest son, he gave up all the family property to his brothers, and prayed them not to write him or send him any money, lest, notwithstanding their innocence, they might be brought into trouble by his enemies, and fall into the ditch along with him.

If the truth cannot own Hütten for one of her children, (for her companions are ever holiness of life and purity of heart,) she will, at least, make honourable mention of him, as one of the most readoubtable adversaries of error. A similar testimony may be borne to François de Seckingen, his illustrious friend and patron. This noble chevalier, whom several of his contemporaries deemed worthy of the imperial crown, holds first place among the warriors who were the antagonists of Rome. While delighting in the noise of arms, he had an ardent love of science, and a high veneration for its professors. When at the head of an army which threatened Wurtemberg, he gave orders, in the event of Stuttgard being taken by assault, to spare the property and house of the celebrated scholar, John Reuchlin. He afterwards invited him to his camp, and, embracing him, offered to assist him in his quarrel with the monks of Cologne. For a long time chivalry had gloried in despising literature, but this period presents us with a different spectacle. Under the massy cuirass of the Seckingens and Hüttens, we perceive the intellectual movement which is beginning to be everywhere felt. The first fruits which the Reformation gives to the world are warriors enamoured with the arts of peace.

Hütten, who, on his return from Brussels, had taken refuge in the castle of Seckingen, invited the valorous knight to study the evangelical doctrine, and make him acquainted with the foundations on which it rests. “And is there any one,” exclaimed Seckingen in astonishment, “who dares to overturn such an edifice? Who could do it?”

Several individuals, who afterwards became celebrated as Reformers, found an asylum in this castle; among others, Martin Bucer, Aquila, Schwebel, and Œcolampadius, so that Hütten justly styled Ebernbourg “the hotel of the just.” Œcolampadius had to preach daily in the castle, but the warriors there assembled began to weary hearing so much of the meek virtues of Christianity, and the sermons of Œcolampadius, though he laboured to shorten them, seemed too long. They, indeed, repaired to the church almost every day, but, for the most part, only to hear the blessing and offer a short prayer. Hence Œcolampadius exclaimed, “Alas! the Word is here sown on stony ground.”

Seckingen, longing to serve the cause of truth in his own way, declared war on the Archbishop of Treves, “in order,” as he said, “to open a door for the gospel.” In vain did Luther, who had by this time appeared, endeavour to dissuade him; he attacked Treves with five thousand knights and a thousand common soldiers, but the bold archbishop, aided by the Elector Palatine and the

Landgrave of Hesse, forced him to retreat. The following spring, the allied princes attacked him in his castle of Landstein. After a bloody assault, Seckingen, having been mortally wounded, was forced to surrender. The three princes, accordingly, make their way into the fortress, and, after searching through it, at last find the indomitable knight on his death-bed, in a subterraneous vault.

He stretches out his hand to the Elector Palatine, without seeming to pay any attention to the other princes, who overwhelm him with questions and reproaches: “Leave me at rest,” said he to them; “I am now preparing to answer a mightier than you!…” When Luther heard of his death he exclaimed, “The Lord is just, yet wonderful! It is not with the sword that he means to propagate the gospel!”

Such was the sad end of a warrior, who, as emperor or elector, might, perhaps, have raised Germany to high renown, but who, confined within a limited circle, wasted the great powers with which he was endowed. It was not in the tumultuous spirit of these warriors that Divine truth, which had come down from heaven, was to take up her abode. Theirs were not the weapons by which she was to conquer; God, in annihilating the mad projects of Seckingen, gave a new illustration of the saying of St. Paul, “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.”

Another chevalier, Harmut of Cronberg, a friend of Hütten and Seckingen, appears to have had more wisdom and more knowledge of the truth. He wrote with great moderation to Leo X, beseeching him to give up his temporal power to its rightful possessor, viz., the emperor. Addressing his dependants like a father, he endeavoured to make them comprehend the doctrines of the gospel, and exhorted them to faith, obedience, and confidence in Jesus Christ, “who,” added he, “is the sovereign Lord of all.” He resigned a pension of two hundred ducats into the hands of the emperor, “because he was unwilling,” as he expressed it, “to continue in the service of one who lent his ear to the enemies of the truth.” I have somewhere met with a beautiful saying of his, which seems to place him far above Hütten and Seckingen. “The Holy Spirit, our heavenly Teacher, is able, when he pleases, to teach us more of the faith of Christ in one hour than we could learn in ten years at the University of Paris.”

Those who look for the friends of reformation only on the steps of thrones, or in cathedrals and academies, and maintain that no such friends exist among the people, are under a serious mistake. God, while preparing the heart of the wise and powerful, was also preparing, in retirement, many simple and humble-minded men, who were one day to become obedient to the Word. The history of the period gives evidence of the fermentation which was then going on among the humbler classes. The popular literature, previous to the Reformation, had a tendency directly opposed to the spirit which was prevalent in the Church. In the “Eulenspiegel,” a celebrated popular poetical collection of the period, the laugh is incessantly kept up at priests, beasts, and gluttons, who keep full-stocked cellars, fine horses, and well-lined pantries. In the “Renard Reinecke,” the households of priests, with their little children, play an important part. Another popular writer thunders with all his might against those ministers of Christ who ride splendid horses, but won’t fight the infidels; and John Rosenblut, in one of his carnival games, brings the Grand Turk upon the stage, to preach a seasonable sermon to all the states of Christendom.

It was unquestionably in the bowels of the people that the Reformation, which was soon to break out, was fermenting. Not only from this class were youths seen coming forth, who were afterwards

to occupy the first stations in the Church, but even individuals, who continued all their lives to labour in the humblest professions, contributed powerfully to the great awakening of Christendom. It may be proper to give some traits in the life of one of them. On the 5th November 1494, a tailor of Nuremberg, by name Hans Sachs, had a son born to him. The son, named Hans (John) like his father, after having received some schooling, was apprenticed to a shoemaker. Young Hans availed himself of the liberty of thought, which this humble profession afforded, to penetrate into the higher world, in which his soul delighted. Songs, after they ceased in the castles of chivalry, seem to have sought, and to have found, an asylum among the burghers of the joyous cities of Germany. A singing-school was held in the Church of Nuremberg. The performances which took place there, and in which young Hans was accustomed to join, opened his heart to religious impressions, and helped to awaken a taste for poetry and music. The genius of the youth could not long brook confinement within the walls of his workshop. He wished to see with his own eyes that world of which he had read so much, and been told so many stories by his comrades, and which his imagination peopled with wonders. In 1511 he bundles up his effects, and sets out in the direction of the South. The young traveller, falling in with gay comrades, students roaming the country, and many dangerous temptations soon feels a serious struggle within. The lusts of the world and his pious resolutions war with each other. Trembling for the result, he takes flight, and, in 1513, hides himself in the little town of Wels in Austria, where he lives in retirement, devoting himself to the study of the fine arts. The emperor, Maximilian, happens to pass through the town with a brilliant suite, and the young poet is quite fascinated with the splendour of the court. The prince receives him into his hunting train, and Hans once more forgets himself, under the noisy vaults of the palace of Insprüch. But his conscience again sounds the alarm, and the young huntsman, immediately throwing aside his brilliant uniform, takes his departure, and arrives at Schwatz near Munich. There, in 1514, at the age of twenty, he composed his first hymn, “In Honour of God,” setting it to a remarkable air. It was received with great applause. In the course of his journeys, he was witness to many sad proofs of the abuses under which religion groaned. On his return to Nuremberg, Hans commences business, marries, and becomes the father of a family. When the Reformation breaks out he turns a listening ear. He cordially welcomes the Holy Scripture, which had already endeared itself to him as a poet, and he no longer searches it for images and hymns, but for the light of truth. To this truth he consecrates his lyre. From a humble stall in front of one of the gates of the imperial city of Nuremberg, come forth notes which re-echo over Germany, and everywhere excite a deep interest in the great revolution which is going forward. The spiritual songs of Hans Sachs, and his Bible turned into verse, greatly aided the work. Indeed, it would be difficult to say which of the two did most for it—the elector of Saxony, vicegerent of the empire, or the shoemaker of Nuremberg.

Thus, then, there was something in all classes which announced a Reformation. On all sides signs appeared, and events pressed forward threatening to overthrow the work of ages of darkness, and introduce men to a period in which “all things were to become new.” The hierarchical form, which several ages had been employed in stamping upon the world, was on the eve of being effaced. The light which had just been discovered had, with inconceivable rapidity, introduced a number of new ideas into all countries, and all classes of society gave signs of new life. “O age!” exclaims Hütten, “studies flourish, and minds awake: Mere life is joy!” … The human intellect, which had been slumbering for so many generations, seemed desirous, by its activity, to redeem the time which it had lost. To have left it in idleness, without nourishment, or to have given it no better food

than that which had long maintained its languid existence, would have been to mistake the nature of man. The human mind having at length perceived what it was, and what it ought to be, looked boldly at these two states, and scanned the immense abyss which lay between them. Great princes were on the throne, the ancient colossus of Rome was tottering under its own weight, and the old spirit of chivalry was taking leave of the earth to make way for a new spirit, which breathed at once on the sanctuaries of knowledge, and on the dwellings of the poor. The printed Word had taken wing, and been carried, as the wind does certain seeds, to the most distant regions. The discovery of the two Indies had enlarged the world … Every thing announced that a great revolution was at hand. But whence will the blow come which is to strike down the ancient edifice, that a new edifice may arise out of its ruins? Nobody could say. Who had more wisdom than Frederick? More science than Reuchlin? More talent than Erasmus? More spirit and versatility than Hütten? More valour than Seckingen? More virtue than Cronberg? And yet, neither Frederick, nor Reuchlin, nor Erasmus, nor Seckingen, nor Hütten, nor Cronberg.… Learned men, princes, warriors, the Church herself, had sapped some of the foundations; but there they had stopped. The powerful hand which God had designed to employ was nowhere to be seen.

All, however, felt that it must soon make its appearance, while some even pretended to have seen indications of it in the stars. One class, seeing the miserable state of religion predicted the near approach of Antichrist. Another class, on the contrary, predicted a speedy Reformation. The world was waiting … Luther appeared.

BOOK SECOND Youth, Conversion, and First Labours of Luther

1483–1517

CHAP. I

Luther’s Descent—His Parents—His Birth—Poverty—The Paternal Roof—Strict Discipline—First Lessons—The School of Magdebourg—Wretchedness—Isenach—The Shunammite—The House of Cotta—The Arts—Remembrance of those Times—His Studies—Trebonius—The University.

All was ready. God takes ages to prepare his work, but when the hour is come, accomplishes it by the feeblest instruments. To do great things by small means, is the law of God. This law, which appears in every department of nature, is found also in history. God took the Reformers of the Church, where he had taken the Apostles. He selected them from that humble class which, without containing the meanest of the people, is scarcely the length of citizenship. Every thing must manifest to the world that the work is not of man, but of God. The Reformer Zuinglius comes forth from the hut of a shepherd of the Alps, Melancthon, the Theologian of the Reformation, from the workshop of an armourer, and Luther from the cottage of a poor miner. The first stage in a man’s life, that in which he is formed and moulded under the hand of God, is always important, and was so especially in the case of Luther. There, even at that period, the whole Reformation existed. The different phases of that great work succeeded each other in the soul of him who was the instrument of accomplishing it, before it was actually accomplished. The knowledge of the Reformation which took place in Luther’s heart is the only key to the Reformation of the Church. We must study the particular work, if we would attain to a knowledge of the general work. Those who neglect the one will never know more than the form and exterior of the other. They may acquire a knowledge of certain events and certain results, but the intrinsic nature of the revival

they cannot know, because the living principle which formed the soul of it, is hidden from them. Let us then study the Reformation in Luther, before studying it in events which changed the face of Christendom. In the village of Mora, towards the forests of Thuringia, and not far from the spot where Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, began to proclaim the gospel, there existed, and, undoubtedly, had existed for ages, an ancient and numerous family of the name of Luther. The eldest son, as usual with the peasantry of Thuringia, always succeeded to the house and the paternal plot, while the younger members of the family set out in quest of a livelihood. John Luther having married Margaret Lindemann, daughter of an inhabitant of Neustadt, in the bishopric of Warzburg, the married couple removed from the plains of Isenach, and fixed their residence in the little town of Eisleben, in Saxony, in order to gain their bread by the sweat of their brow.

Seckendorff relates, on the testimony of Robhan, superintendant of Isenach in 1601, that Luther's mother, thinking she was still far from her time, had gone to the fair of Eisleben, and there, unexpectedly, gave birth to a son. Notwithstanding of the credit due to such a man as Seckendorff, this account appears not to be correct. In fact, none of the older biographers of Luther make any mention of it. Besides, Mora is more than twenty-four leagues distant from Eisleben, and persons in the circumstances in which Luther's mother then was seldom are disposed to take such long journeys to go to the fair. In fine, the account seems quite at variance with Luther's own statement.

John Luther was an upright, straightforward, hard-working man, with a firmness of character bordering on obstinacy. Of a more cultivated mind than usual with persons of his class, he was a great reader. Books were then rare. But he never let pass any opportunity of procuring them. They were his relaxation in the intervals of repose from hard and long-continued labour. Margaret possessed the virtues which adorn honest and pious women. She was remarked, in particular, for her modesty, her fear of God, and her spirit of prayer. The mothers of the place regarded her as a model whom they ought to imitate.

It is not exactly known how long this couple had been fixed at Eisleben, when, on the 10th November, an hour before midnight, Margaret gave birth to a son. Melancthon often questioned the mother of his friend as to the period of his birth. "I remember the day and the hour very well," would she reply; "but for the year, I am not certain of it." Luther's brother, James, an honest and upright man, has stated, that, in the opinion of all the family, Martin was born in the year of Christ 1483, on the 10th November, being St. Martin's eve. The first thought of the pious parents was to take the infant which God had given them, and dedicate it to God in holy baptism. On the following day, which happened to be a Tuesday, the father, with gratitude and joy, carried his son to St. Peter's church, where he received the seal of his dedication to the Lord. He was named Martin in honour of the day.

Young Martin was not six months old when his parents quitted Eisleben for Mansfeld, which is only five leagues distant. The mines of Mansfeld were then much famed, and John Luther, a labouring man, feeling that he might perhaps be called to rear a numerous family, hoped he might there more easily gain a livelihood. It was in this town that the intellect and powers of young Luther received their first development; here his activity began to be displayed, and his disposition to be manifested by what he said and did. The plains of Mansfeld, the banks of the Wipper, were the scenes of his first sports with his playmates. The commencement of their residence at Mansfeld was attended with painful privations to honest John and his wife; for they lived some time in great

poverty. “My parents,” says the Reformer, “were very poor. My father was a poor wood-cutter, and my mother often carried his wood on her back to procure subsistence for us children. The toil they endured for us was severe, even to blood.” The example of parents whom he respected, and the habits in which they trained him, early accustomed Luther to exertion and frugality. Often, doubtless, he accompanied his mother to the wood, and made up his little faggot also.

Promises are given to the just man’s labour, and John Luther experienced the reality of them. Having become somewhat more easy in his circumstances, he established two smelting furnaces at Mansfeld. Around these furnaces young Martin grew up; and the return which they yielded enabled his father, at a later period, to provide for his studies. “The spiritual founder of Christendom,” says worthy Mathesius, “was to come forth from a family of miners, an image of what God purposed, when he employed him to cleanse the sons of Levi, and purify them in his furnaces like gold.” Universally respected for his integrity, his blameless life, and good sense, John Luther was made a counsellor of Mansfeld, the capital of the county of that name. Too great wretchedness might have weighed down the spirit of the child, but the easy circumstances of the paternal roof expanded his heart, and elevated his character.

John availed himself of his new situation to cultivate the society which he preferred. He set great value on educated men, and often invited the clergymen and teachers of the place to his table. His house presented an example of one of those societies of simple citizens which did honour to Germany at the commencement of the sixteenth century, and, as a mirror, reflected the numerous images which succeeded each other on the troubled stage of that time. It was not lost on the child. The sight of men to whom so much respect was shown in his father’s house must, doubtless, on more than one occasion, have awakened in young Martin’s heart an ambitious desire one day to become a schoolmaster or a man of learning. As soon as he was of an age to receive some instruction, his parents sought to give him the knowledge and inspire him with the fear of God, and train him in Christian virtues. Their utmost care was devoted to his primary domestic education. This, however, was not the sole object of their tender solicitude. His father, desirous of seeing him acquire the elements of knowledge for which he himself had so much esteem, invoked the Divine blessing on his head, and sent him to school. As Martin was still a very little boy, his father or Nicolas Emler, a young man of Mansfeld, often carried him in their arms to the house of George Emilius, and went again to fetch him. Emler afterwards married one of Luther’s sisters. The piety of the parents, their activity and strict virtue, gave a happy impulse to the boy, making him of a grave and attentive spirit. The system of education which then prevailed employed fear and punishment as its leading stimulants. Margaret, though sometimes approving the too strict discipline of her husband, often opened her maternal arms to Martin, to console him in his tears. She herself occasionally carried to excess that precept of Divine wisdom, which says, “He that spareth the rod hateth his son.” The impetuous temper of the child often led to frequent reproof and correction. “My parents,” says Luther, in after life, “treated me harshly, and made me very timid. My mother one day chastised me about a filbert till the blood came. They believed with all their heart they were doing right, but they could not discriminate between dispositions, though this is necessary in order to know when and how punishments should be inflicted.” The poor child’s treatment at school was not less severe. His master one morning beat him fifteen times in succession. “It is necessary,” said Luther, when mentioning the fact, “it is necessary to chastise children; but it is necessary, at the same time, to love them.” With such an education, Luther early learned to

despise the allurements of a sensual life. “He who is to become great must begin with little,” justly remarks one of his earliest biographers; “and if children are brought up with too much delicacy and tenderness, it does them harm all the rest of their life.”

Martin learned something at school. He was taught the heads of the Catechism, the Ten Commandments, the Apostles’ Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, hymns, forms of prayer, and the Donat. This last was a Latin grammar, composed in the fourth century by Donatus, St. Jerome’s master; and having been improved in the eleventh century by a French monk, named Remigius, was long in high repute as a school-book. He moreover conned the Ciseo-Janus, a very singular almanac, composed in the tenth or eleventh century. In short, he learned all that was taught in the Latin school of Mansfeld. But the child seems not to have been brought to God. The only religious sentiment which could be discovered in him was that of fear. Whenever he heard Jesus Christ mentioned he grew pale with terror; for the Saviour had been represented to him as an angry Judge. This servile fear, so foreign to genuine religion, perhaps predisposed him for the glad tidings of the gospel, and for the joy which he afterwards experienced when he became acquainted with him who is meek and lowly in heart.

John Luther longed to make his son a learned man. The new light, which began to radiate in all directions, penetrated even the cottage of the miner of Mansfield, and there awakened ambitious thoughts. The remarkable disposition, and persevering application of his son, inspired John with the most brilliant hopes. Accordingly, in 1497, when Martin had completed his fourteenth year, his father resolved to part with him, and send him to a school of the Franciscans at Magdebourg. Margaret behoved, of course, to consent, and Martin prepared to quit the paternal roof.

Magdebourg was like a new world to Martin. Amid numerous privations, (for he had scarcely the means of subsistence,) he read and attended lectures; André Prolés, provincial of the Augustine Order, was then preaching with great fervour on the necessity of reforming religion and the Church. He, however, was not the person who deposited in the yonng man’s soul the first germ of those ideas which afterwards expanded in it. This period was a kind of severe apprenticeship to Luther. Launched upon the world at fourteen, without friend or patron, he trembled in presence of his masters, and, during the hours of recreation, painfully begged his food with children as poor as himself. “I and my comrades,” says he, “begged a little food for our subsistence. One day, at the season when the Church celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, we were in a body scouring the neighbouring villages, going from house to house, and, in four parts, singing the ordinary hymns on the Babe at Bethlehem. We stopped before a peasant’s cottage, which stood by itself at the extremity of a village. The peasant, hearing us singing our Christmas carols, came out with some provisions which he meant to give us, and asked, in a gruff voice, and a harsh tone, ‘Where are you, boys?’ His tones frightened us, and we took to our heels. We had no cause for fear; for the peasant was sincere in his offer of assistance: but our hearts were, no doubt, made timid by the menaces and tyranny with which masters at this period oppressed their scholars; hence the sudden fright which seized us. At last, however, the peasant still continuing to call us, we stopped, laid aside our fear, and, running up to him, received the food which he intended for us.” “In the same way,” adds Luther, “are we wont to tremble and flee when our conscience is guilty and alarmed. Then we are afraid even of the assistance which is offered to us, and of those who are friendly to us, and would do us all sorts of kindness.” A year had scarcely passed, when John and Margaret, on being made aware of the difficulties which their son had in living in Magdebourg, sent

him to Isenach, where there was a celebrated school, and they had a number of relations. They had other children; and though their circumstances had improved, they were unable to maintain their son in a strange town. The forges and late hours of John Luther did no more than keep the family at Mansfield. It was hoped that Martin would find a livelihood more easily at Isenach, but he was not more successful. His relations in the town did not trouble themselves about him. Perhaps their own poverty made them unable to give him any assistance. When the scholar felt the gnawings of hunger he had no resource but to do as at Magdebourg,—to join his fellow-students, and sing with them before the houses for a morsel of bread. This custom of the time of Luther has been preserved, even to our day, in several towns of Germany, where the voices of the boys sometimes produce a most harmonious chant. Instead of bread, poor modest Martin often received only hard words. Then, overcome with sadness, he shed many tears in secret, unable to think of the future without trembling.

One day, in particular, he had been repulsed from three houses, and was preparing, without having broken his fast, to return to his lodging, when, on arriving at St. George's Square, he halted, and, absorbed in gloomy thoughts, stood motionless before the house of an honest burgher. Will it be necessary, from want of bread, to give up study, and go and work with his father in the mines of Mansfeld? Suddenly a door opens, and a female is seen on the threshold,—it was the wife of Conrad Cotta, the daughter of the burgomaster of Ilefeld. Her name was Ursula. The Chronicles of Isenach call her "the pious Shunammite," in allusion to her who so earnestly pressed the prophet Elisha to eat bread with her. Previous to this the Christian Shunammite had more than once observed young Martin in the assemblies of the faithful, and been touched by the sweetness of his voice, and his devout behaviour.4 She had just heard the harsh language addressed to the poor scholar, and seeing him in sadness before her door, she came to his assistance, beckoned him to enter, and set food before him to appease his hunger.

Conrad approved of the benevolence of his wife, and was even so much pleased with the society of young Luther, that some days after he took him home to his house. From this moment his studies were secure. He will not be obliged to return to the mines of Mansfeld, and bury the talent with which God has entrusted him. When he no longer knew what was to become of him God opened to him the heart and the home of a Christian family. This event helped to give him that confidence in God which in after life the strongest tempests could not shake. In the house of Cotta, Luther was introduced to a mode of life very different from that which he had hitherto known. He there led an easy existence, exempt from want and care. His mind became more serene, his disposition more lively, and his heart more open. His whole being expanded to the mild rays of charity, and began to beat with life, joy, and happiness. His prayers were more ardent, and his thirst for knowledge more intense. He made rapid progress. To literature and science he added the charms of art. Those who are designed by God to act upon their contemporaries are themselves, in the first instance, seized and carried along by all the tendencies of their age. Luther learned to play on the flute and the lute. The latter instrument he often accompanied with his fine counter voice, thus enlivening his heart in moments of sadness. He took pleasure also in employing his notes to testify his gratitude to his adopted mother, who was very fond of music. His own love of it continued to old age, and both the words and the music of some of the finest anthems which Germany possesses are his composition. Some have even been translated into our language.

Happy time for the young man! Luther always remembered it with emotion. Many years after, a son of Conrad having come to study at Wittemberg, when the poor scholar of Isenach had become the doctor of his age, he gladly received him at his table and under his roof. He wished to pay back to the son part of what he had received from the parents. It was while thinking of the Christian woman who gave him food when all besides repulsed him, that he gave utterance to this fine expression, “Earth has nothing gentler than the female heart in which piety dwells.”

Luther was never ashamed of the days when, pressed by hunger, he was under the necessity of begging for his studies and his maintenance. So far from this, he, on the contrary, reflected with gratitude on the great poverty of his youth. He regarded it as one of the means which God had employed to make him what he afterwards became, and he felt thankful for it. The poor youths who were obliged to follow the same course touched his heart. “Do not,” said he, “despise the boys who sing before your houses, and ask ‘panem propter Deum,’ bread for the love of God; I have done it myself. It is true that at a later period, my father, with great love and kindness, kept me at the University of Erfurt, maintaining me by the sweat of his brow; still I once was a poor beggar. And now by means of my pen, I am come thus far, that I would not change situations with the Grand Turk himself. Nay, more, were all the goods of the world piled up one above another, I would not take them in exchange for what I have. And yet, I should not be where I am, if I had not been at school and learned to write.” Thus, in these first humble beginnings this great man traced the origin of his fame. He fears not to remind us that that voice whose accents made the empire and the world to tremble, had once begged a morsel of bread in the streets of a poor city. The Christian takes pleasure in such recollections, as reminding him that it is in God he must glory. The strength of his intellect, and the liveliness of his imagination, soon enabled him to outstrip all his fellow-students. His progress was particularly rapid in ancient languages, eloquence, and poetry. He wrote essays and made verses. Lively, complaisant, and what is called good-hearted, he was a great favourite with his masters and his comrades.

Among the professors, he attached himself particularly to John Trebonius, a learned man of pleasing manners, who showed youth those attentions which are so well fitted to encourage them. Martin had remarked, that when Trebonius entered the class, he took off his hat, and bowed to the students;—great condescension in those pedantic times! This had pleased the young man, and made him feel that he was not a mere cipher. The respect of the master had made the pupil rise in his own estimation. The colleagues of Trebonius, who had not the same custom of taking off their hats, having one day expressed their astonishment at his extreme condescension, he replied, (and the reply made no less impression on young Luther,) “Among these youths are men whom God will one day make burgomasters, chancellors, doctors, and magistrates; and though you do not yet see them with their badges of office, it is right, however, to show them respect.” No doubt, the young student listened with pleasure to these words, and even then, perhaps, saw himself with a doctor’s cap on his head.

CHAP. II

Scholasticism and the Classics—Luther’s Piety—Discovery—The Bible—Sickness—Master of Arts—Conscience—Death of Alexis—Thunderstorm—Providence—Adieus—Entrance into a Convent.

Luther had attained his eighteenth year. He had tasted the pleasures of literature, and burning with eagerness to learn, he sighed after a university, and longed to repair to one of those fountains of science, at which he might quench his thirst for knowledge. His father wished him to study law, and already saw him filling an honourable station among his fellow-citizens, gaining the favour of princes, and making a figure on the theatre of the world. It was resolved that the young student should repair to Erfurt.

Luther arrived at this university in the year 1501. Jadocus, surnamed the Doctor of the Isenach, was then teaching the scholastic philosophy with much success. Melancthon regrets that the only thing then taught at Erfurt should have been a dialectics bristling with difficulties. He thinks that if Luther had found other professors there, if he had been trained in the milder and calmer discipline of true philosophy, it might have moderated and softened the vehemence of his nature. The new scholar began to study the philosophy of the middle ages in the writings of Occam, Scotus, Bonaventura, and Thomas Aquinas. At a later period he had a thorough disgust for all this scholasticism. The very name of Aristotle, pronounced in his hearing, filled him with indignation; and he even went the length of saying, that if Aristotle was not a man, he would have no hesitation in taking him for the devil. But his mind, in its eagerness for learning, stood in need of better nourishment, and he began to study the splendid monuments of antiquity, the writings of Cicero and Virgil, and the other classics. He was not contented, like the common run of students, with committing the productions of these writers to memory. He endeavoured, above all, to enter into their thoughts; to imbue himself with the spirit which animated them; to appropriate their wisdom; to comprehend the end of their writings; and enrich his understanding with their weighty sentiments and brilliant images. He often put questions to his professors, and soon outstripped his fellow students. Possessed of a retentive memory and a fertile imagination, whatever he read or heard remained ever after present to his mind, as if he had actually seen it. “So shone Luther in his youth. The whole university,” says Melancthon, “admired his genius.”2 But even at that period this young man of eighteen did not confine his labours to the cultivation of his intellect. He had that serious thought, that uplifted heart, which God bestows on those whom he destines to be his most faithful servants. Luther felt that he was dependent on God—a simple, yet powerful, conviction—the source at once of profound humility and great achievements. He fervently invoked the Divine blessing on his labours. Each morning he began the day with prayer, then he went to church, and on his return set to study, losing not a moment during the course of the day. “To pray well,” he was wont to say, “is more than the half of my study.”

Every moment which the young student could spare from his academical labours was spent in the library of the university. Books were still rare, and he felt it a great privilege to be able to avail himself of the treasures amassed in this vast collection. One day (he had then been two years at Erfurt, and was twenty years of age) he opens several books of the library, one after the other, to see who their authors were. One of the volumes which he opens in its turn attracts his attention. He has never before seen one like it. He reads the title, … it is a Bible! a rare book, at that time unknown. His interest is strongly excited; he is perfectly astonished to find in this volume any thing more than those fragments of gospels and epistles which the Church has selected to be read publicly in the churches every Sabbath day. Hitherto he had believed that these formed the whole word of God. But here are so many pages, chapters, and books, of which he had no idea! His heart beats as he holds in his hand all this divinely-inspired Scripture, and he turns over all these

divine leaves with feelings which cannot be described. The first page on which he fixes his attention tells him the history of Hannah and young Samuel. He reads, and his soul is filled with joy to overflowing. The child whom his parents lend to Jehovah for all the days of his life; the song of Hannah, in which she declares that the Lord lifts up the poor from the dust, and the needy from the dunghill, that he may set him with princes; young Samuel growing up in the presence of the Lord; the whole of this history, the whole of the volume which he has discovered, make him feel in a way he has never done before. He returns home, his heart full. “Oh!” thinks he, “would it please God one day to give me such a book for my own!” Luther as yet did not know either Greek or Hebrew; for it is not probable that he studied these languages during the first two or three years of his residence at the university. The Bible which had so overjoyed him was in Latin. Soon returning to his treasure in the library, he reads and re-reads, and in his astonishment and joy returns to read again. The first rays of a new truth were then dawning upon him. In this way God has put him in possession of His word. He has discovered the book of which he is one day to give his countrymen that admirable translation in which Germany has now for three centuries perused the oracles of God. It was perhaps the first time that any hand had taken down this precious volume from the place which it occupied in the library of Erfurt. This book, lying on the unknown shelves of an obscure chamber, is to become the book of life to a whole people. The Reformation was hid in that Bible. This happened the same year that Luther obtained his first academical degree, viz., that of Bachelor. The excessive fatigue which he had undergone in preparing for his trials brought on a dangerous illness. Death seemed to be approaching, and solemn thoughts occupied his mind. He believed that his earthly course was about to terminate. There was a general lamentation for the young man. What a pity to see so many hopes so soon extinguished! Several friends came to visit him in his sickness; among others a priest, a venerable old man, who had with interest followed the student of Mansfeld in his labours and academic life. Luther was unable to conceal the thought which agitated him. “Soon,” said he, “I will be called away from this world.” But the old man kindly replied, “My dear bachelor, take courage; you will not die of this illness. Our God will yet make you a man, who, in his turn, will console many other men. For God lays his cross on him whom he loves, and those who bear it patiently acquire much wisdom.” These words made a deep impression on the sick youth. When so near death he hears the lips of a priest reminding him that God, as Samuel’s mother had said, lifts up the miserable. The old man has poured sweet consolation into his heart and revived his spirits; he will never forget him. “This was the first prediction the Doctor heard,” says Mathesius, Luther’s friend, who relates the fact; “and he often mentioned it.” It is easy to understand what Mathesius means by calling it a prediction. When Luther recovered, something within him had undergone a change. The Bible, his illness, and the words of the old priest, seemed to have made a new appeal to him. As yet, however, there was nothing decided in his mind. He continued his studies, and, in 1505, took his degree of Master of Arts, or Doctor in Philosophy. The University of Erfurt was then the most celebrated in Germany,—the others in comparison with it being only inferior schools. The ceremony was, as usual, performed with great pomp. A procession with torches came to do homage to Luther. The fête was superb, and all was joy. Luther, encouraged, perhaps, by these honours, was disposed to devote himself entirely to law, agreeably to his father’s wish. But God willed otherwise. While Luther was occupied with other studies, while he began to teach the physics and ethics of Aristotle, and other branches of philosophy, his heart ceased not to cry to him that piety was the one thing needful, and that he ought above all to make sure of his salvation. He was aware of the

displeasure which God testifies against sin; he remembered the punishments which he denounces against the sinner; and he asked himself in fear, whether he was sure of possessing the Divine favour. His conscience answered, No! His character was prompt and decided; he resolved to do all that might be necessary to give him a sure hope of immortality. Two events, which happened in succession, shook his soul, and precipitated his determination.

Among his friends at the university was one named Alexis, with whom he was very intimate. One morning it was rumoured in Erfurt that Alexis had been assassinated. Deeply moved at the sudden loss of his friend, he puts the question to himself—What would become of me were I called thus suddenly? The question fills him with the greatest dismay. This was in the summer of 1505. Luther, left at liberty by the ordinary recess of the university, resolved on a journey to Mansfeld, to revisit the loved abodes of his infancy, and embrace his parents. Perhaps he also wished to open his heart to his father, and sound him as to the design which was beginning to form in his mind, and obtain a consent to his embracing another calling. He foresaw all the difficulties which awaited him. The indolent habits of the majority of priests displeased the active miner of Mansfeld. Besides, ecclesiastics were little esteemed in the world; most of them had but scanty incomes, and the father, who had made many sacrifices to maintain his son at the university, and who saw him at twenty a public teacher in a celebrated school, was not disposed to renounce the hopes which his pride was cherishing.

We know not what passed during Luther's visit at Mansfeld. Perhaps the decided wish of his father made him afraid to open his heart to him. He again quitted the paternal roof to go and take his seat on the benches of the university, and had reached within a short distance of Erfurt, when he was overtaken by one of those violent storms which are not unfrequent among these mountains. The thunder bursts, and strikes close by his side. Luther throws himself on his knees. It may be his hour is come, Death, judgment, and eternity, surround him with all their terrors, and speak to him with a voice which he can no longer resist. "Wrapt in agony, and in the terror of death," as he himself describes it, he makes a vow, if he is delivered from this danger to abandon the world, and give himself entirely to God. After he had risen from the ground, still continuing to see that death which must one day overtake him, he examines himself seriously, and asks what he ought to do.3 The thoughts which formerly agitated him return with full force. He has endeavoured, it is true, to fulfil all his duties. But in what state is his soul? Can he appear with a polluted heart before the tribunal of a God so greatly to be feared? He must become holy, and, accordingly, he now thirsts for holiness as he had thirsted for science. But where is it to be found? How shall he acquire it? The university has furnished him with the means of satisfying his desire of knowledge. Who will extinguish the agony, the flame which is consuming him? To what school of holiness must he bend his steps? He will go into a cloister; the monastic life will save him. How often has he heard tell of its power to transform a heart, to sanctify a sinner, to make a man perfect! He will enter a monastic order. He will then become holy, and in that way secure eternal life.

Such was the event which changed the calling and all the destinies of Luther. We here recognise the finger of God. It was his mighty hand which threw down on the high road this young Master of Arts, this candidate for the bar, this future lawyer, in order to give an entirely new direction to his life. Rubianus, one of Luther's friends, wrote to him at a later period:—"Divine Providence had a view to what you were one day to become, when, as you were returning from your parents, the fire of heaven made you fall to the ground like another Paul, near the town of Erfurt, and carrying you

off from our society, threw you into the Order of Augustine." Analogous circumstances thus signalised the conversion of Paul and Luther, the two greatest instruments which Divine Providence has employed in the two greatest revolutions which have taken place upon the earth.

Luther again enters Erfurt. His resolution is immovable, and yet it is not without a pang he is going to break ties which are dear to him. He gives no hint to any one of his intentions. But one evening he invites his friends in the university to a cheerful and frugal repast. Music once more enlivens their social intercourse. It is Luther's adieu to the world. Henceforth, instead of those loved companions of pleasure and toil—monks; instead of those cheerful and intellectual conversations—the silence of the cloister; instead of that enchanting music—the grave notes of the tranquil chapel. God demands it; all must be sacrificed. Yet, for this last time, once more the joys of youth. His friends are full of glee. Luther even leads them on. But at the moment when they are abandoning themselves to mirth and frolic, the young man becomes unable any longer to restrain the serious thoughts which occupy his heart. He speaks … He makes known his intention to his astonished friends, who endeavour, but in vain, to combat it. That same night, Luther, afraid perhaps of importunate solicitation, quits his lodgings, leaving behind him all his effects and all his books, with the exception of Virgil and Plautus, (as yet he had no Bible.) Virgil and Plautus! Epic and Comedy! singular representation of Luther's mind. In fact, there was in him a whole epic, a beautiful, splendid, and sublime poem; but being naturally inclined to gayety, pleasantry, and broad humour, he mingled more than one familiar trait with the solemn and magnificent groundwork of his life.

Furnished with these two books he proceeds alone, in the dark, to the convent of the Eremites of St. Augustine, and asks to be received. The door opens and closes, and he is separated for ever from his parents, his fellow-students, and the world. This took place on the 17th August 1505, when Luther's age was twenty-one years and nine months.

CHAP. III His Father's Anger—Pardon—Servile Employments—The Bag and the Cell—Courage—St. Augustine—D'Ailly—Oceam—Gerson—The Bible—Hebrew and Greek—The Hours—Asceticism—Agony—Luther during Mass—Agony—Useless Observances—Luther in a Faint. At length he was with God. His soul was in safety. This holiness, so earnestly longed for, he was now to find. At the sight of this young doctor, the monks were all admiration, and extolled him for his courage and contempt of the world. Luther, meanwhile, did not forget his friends. He wrote to take leave of them and the world, and the next day despatched these letters, with the clothes he had hitherto worn, and his diploma of Master of Arts, which he returned to the university, that nothing might in future remind him of the world which he had abandoned. His friends at Erfurt were thunderstruck. Must so distinguished a genius go and hide himself in this monastic life—more properly, a kind of death? In deep sorrow they hastened to the convent, in the hope of inducing Luther to retrace the distressing step which he had taken; but all was useless. The gates were closed, and a month passed before any one was permitted to see or speak to the new monk.

Luther had hastened to acquaint his parents with the great change which had just occurred in his life. His father was thunderstruck. He trembled for his son,—so Luther himself informs us in his book on Monastic Vows, which he dedicated to his father. His weakness, his youth, the ardour of his passions, everything, in short, made him fear that after the first moment of enthusiasm, the indolence of the cloister would make the youth fall either into despair, or into grievous faults. He

knew that this mode of life had proved fatal to many. Besides, the counsellorminer of Mansfield had other views for his son. He was proposing a rich and honourable marriage for him—and, lo! all his ambitious projects are in one night overthrown by this imprudent action.

John wrote his son a very angry letter, in which, as Luther himself tells us, he thou'd him whereas he had you'd him ever since he had taken his degree of Master of Arts. He withdrew all his favour from him, and declared him disinherited of a father's affection. In vain did the friends of John Luther, and doubtless his wife also, endeavour to mollify him; in vain did they say to him, "If you are willing to make some sacrifice to God, let it be the best and dearest thing that you have—your son—your Isaac." The inexorable counsellor of Mansfeld would hear nothing.

Some time after, (the statement is given by Luther in a sermon which he preached at Wittemberg, 20th January 1544,) the plague broke out, and deprived John Luther of two of his sons. On the back of these bereavements, while the father's heart was torn with grief, some one came and told him, "The monk of Erfurt also is dead!" His friends took advantage of the circumstance to bring back the father's heart to the novice. "If it is a false alarm," said they, "at least sanctify your affliction by consenting sincerely to your son's being a monk." "Well, well!" replied John Luther, his heart broken, and still half rebellious; "and God grant him all success." At a later period, when Luther, who had been reconciled to his father, told him of the event which had led him to rash into monastic orders,—"God grant," replied the honest miner, "that what you took for a sign from heaven may not have been only a phantom of the devil!" At this time Luther was not in possession of that which was afterwards to make him the Reformer of the Church. His entrance into the convent proves this. It was an action done in the spirit of an age out of which he was soon to be instrumental in raising the Church. Though destined to become the teacher of the world, he was still its servile imitator. A new stone was placed on the edifice of superstition by the very hand which was soon to overturn it. Luther was seeking salvation in himself, in human practices and observances, not knowing that salvation is wholly of God. He was seeking his own righteousness and his own glory, and overlooking the righteousness and glory of the Lord. But what he as yet knew not he soon afterwards learned. That immense change which substituted God and His wisdom in his heart for the world and its traditions, and which prepared the mighty revolution of which he was the most illustrious instrument, took place in the cloister of Erfurt.

Martin Luther, on entering the convent, changed his name to that of Augustine. The monks had received him with joy. It was no small satisfaction to their self-love to see the university abandoned for a house of their order, and that by one of the most distinguished teachers. Nevertheless, they treated him harshly, and assigned him the meanest tasks. They wished to humble the doctor of philosophy, and teach him that his science did not raise him above his brethren. They thought, moreover, they would thus prevent him from spending his time in studies from which the convent could not reap any advantage. The ci-devant Master of Arts behoved to perform the functions of watchman, to open and shut the gates, wind up the clocks, sweep the church, and clean up the rooms. Then when the poor monk, who was at once porter, sacristan, and house-hold servant to the cloister, had finished his task—"Cum sacco per civitatem"—"To the town with the bag," exclaimed the friars; and then, with his bread-bag on his shoulders, he walked up and down over all the streets of Erfurt, begging from house to house, obliged, perhaps, to present himself at the doors of those who had been his friends or inferiors. On his return, he had either to shut himself up in a low narrow cell, looking out on a plot only a few yards in extent, or to resume his menial

offices. But he submitted to all. Disposed by temperament to give himself entirely to whatever he undertook, when he turned monk he did it with his whole soul. How, moreover, could he think of sparing his body, or of having regard to what might satisfy the flesh? That was not the way to acquire the humility and holiness in quest of which he had come within the walls of the cloister. The poor monk, worn out with fatigue, was eager to seize any moment which he could steal from his servile occupations, and devote it to the acquisition of knowledge. Gladly did he retire into a corner, and give himself up to his beloved studies. But the friars soon found him out, gathered around him, grumbled at him, and pushed him away to his labours, saying, “Along! along! it is not by studying, but by begging bread, corn, eggs, fish, flesh, and money, that a friar makes himself useful to his convent.” Luther submitted, laid aside his books, and again took up his bag. Far from repenting of having subjected himself to such a yoke, his wish was to bring it to a successful result. At this period, the inflexible perseverance with which he ever after followed out the resolutions which he had once formed, began to be developed. The resistance which he made to rude assaults gave strong energy to his will. God exercised him in small things that he might be able to stand firm in great things. Besides, in preparing to deliver his age from the miserable superstitions under which it groaned, it was necessary that he should feel the weight of them. In order to empty the cup he behoved to drink it to the dregs. This severe apprenticeship, however, did not last so long as Luther might have feared. The prior of the convent, on the intercession of the university of which Luther was a member, relieved him from the mean functions which had been imposed on him, and the young monk resumed his studies with new zeal. The writings of the Fathers, particularly those of Augustine, engaged his attention; the Commentary of this illustrious doctor on the Psalms, and his treatise “On the Letter and the Spirit,” being his special favourites. Nothing struck him more than the sentiments of this Father on the corruption of the human will, and on Divine grace. His own experience convincing him of the reality of this corruption, and the necessity of this grace, the words of Augustine found a ready response in his heart; and could he have been of any other school than that of Jesus Christ, it had doubtless been the school of the doctor of Hippo. The works of Peter D’Ailly and Gabriel Biel he almost knew by heart. He was struck with a remark of the former—that had not the Church decided otherwise, it would have been much better to admit that in the Lord’s Supper bread and wine are truly received, and not mere accidents.

He likewise carefully studied the theologians, Occam and Gerson, who both express themselves so freely on the authority of the popes. To this reading he joined other exercises. In public discussions he was heard unravelling the most complicated reasonings, and winding his way through labyrinths where others could find no outlet. All who heard him were filled with admiration. But he had entered the cloister, not to acquire the reputation of a great genius, but in quest of the food of piety. These labours he accordingly regarded as supernumerary. But the thing in which he delighted above all others was to draw wisdom at the pure fountain of the word of God. In the convent he found a Bible fastened to a chain, and was ever returning to this chained Bible. He had a very imperfect comprehension of the Word, but still it was his most pleasant reading. Sometimes he spent a whole day in meditating on a single passage; at other times he learned passages of the Prophets by heart. His great desire was, that the writings of the apostles and prophets might help to give him a knowledge of the will of God, increase the fear which he had for his name, and nourish his faith by the sure testimony of the Word.

Apparently at this period he began to study the Scriptures in the original tongues, and thereby lay the foundation of the most perfect and the most useful of his labours, the translation of the Bible. He used a Hebrew Lexicon which Reuchlin had just published. His first guide was probably John Lange, a friar of the convent, versed in Greek and Hebrew, and with whom he always maintained a close intimacy. He also made great use of the learned Commentaries of Nicolas Lyra, who died in 1340, and hence the saying of Pflug, afterwards Bishop of Naumbourg, “Had not Lyra played the lyre, Luther had never danced. Si Lyra non lyrasset, Lutherus non saltasset.” The young monk studied so closely and ardently that he often omitted to say his Hours during two or three weeks. Then becoming alarmed at the thought of having transgressed the rules of his order, he shut himself up to make amends for his negligence, and commenced conscientiously repeating all the omitted Hours, without thinking of meat or drink. On one occasion his sleep went from him for seven weeks.

Earnestly intent on acquiring the holiness in quest of which he had entered the cloister, Luther addicted himself to the ascetic life in its fullest rigour, seeking to crucify the flesh by fastings, macerations, and vigils. Shut up in his cell as in a prison, he struggled without intermission against the evil thoughts and evil propensities of his heart. A little bread and a herring were often all his food. Indeed, he was naturally very temperate. Often when he had no thought of purchasing heaven by abstinence, have his friends seen him content himself with the coarsest provisions, and even remain four days in succession without eating or drinking.2 We have this on the testimony of a very credible witness, Melancthon, and we may judge from it what opinion to form of the fables which ignorance and prejudice have circulated concerning Luther’s intemperance. At the period of which we treat there is no sacrifice he would have declined to make, in order to become holy and purchase heaven. When Luther, after he had become Reformer, says that heaven is not purchased, he well knew what he meant. “Truly,” wrote he to George, Duke of Saxony, “truly I was a pious monk, and followed the rules of my order more strictly than I can tell. If ever monk had got to heaven by monkery, I had been that monk. In this all the monks of my acquaintance will bear me witness. Had the thing continued much longer I had become a martyr unto death, through vigils, prayer, reading, and other labours.”4

We are touching on the period which made Luther a new man, and which, revealing to him the immensity of the Divine love, fitted him for proclaiming it to the world. The peace which Luther had come in search of he found neither in the tranquillity of the cloister nor in monastic perfection. He wished to be assured of his salvation; it was the great want of his soul, and without it he could have no repose. But the fears which had agitated him when in the world, followed him into his cell. Nay, they were even increased; the least cry of his heart raising a loud echo under the silent vaults of the cloister. God had brought him thither that he might learn to know himself, and to despair of his own strength and virtue. His conscience, enlightened by the Divine word, told him what it was to be holy; but he was filled with alarm at not finding, either in his heart or his life, that image of holiness which he had contemplated with admiration in the word of God; a sad discovery made by every man who is in earnest! No righteousness within, no righteousness without, everywhere omission, sin, defilement.… The more ardent Luther’s natural disposition was the more strongly he felt the secret and unceasing resistance which human nature opposes to goodness. This threw him into despair. The monks and theologians of the day invited him to do works in order to satisfy the Divine justice. But what works, thought he, can proceed from such a heart as mine! How

should I be able with works polluted in their very principle, to stand in presence of my holy Judge? “I felt myself,” says he, “to be a great sinner before God, and deemed it impossible to appease him by my merits.”

He was agitated, and, at the same time, gloomy, shunning the silly and coarse conversation of the monks, who, unable to comprehend the tempests of his soul, regarded him with astonishment, and reproached him for his gloom and taciturnity. It is told by Cochlœus, that one day, when they were saying mass in the chapel, Luther had come with his sighs, and stood amid the friars in sadness and anguish. The priest had already prostrated himself, the incense had been placed on the altar, the Gloria had been chanted, and they were reading the Gospel, when the poor monk, no longer able to contain his agony, exclaimed, in a piercing tone, while throwing himself on his knees, “Not I! not I!” Every one was in amazement, and the service was for a moment interrupted. Perhaps Luther thought he had heard himself reproached with something of which he knew he was innocent; perhaps he meant to express his unworthiness to be one of those to whom the death of Christ brought eternal life. Cochlœus says that they were reading the passage of Scripture which tells of the dumb man out of whom Christ expelled a demon. If this account is correct, Luther’s cry might have a reference to this circumstance. He might mean to intimate that though dumb like the man, it was owing to another cause than the possession of a demon. In fact, Cochlœus informs us that the friars sometimes attributed the agonies of their brother to occult commerce with the devil, and he himself is of the same opinion. A tender conscience led Luther to regard the smallest fault as a great sin. No sooner had he discovered it than he strove to expiate it by the severest mortifications. This, however, had no other effect than to convince him of the utter inefficacy of all human remedies. “I tormented myself to death,” says he, “in order to procure peace with God to my troubled heart and agitated conscience; but, surrounded with fearful darkness, I nowhere found it.” The acts of monastic holiness which lulled so many consciences, and to which he himself had recourse in his agony, soon appeared to Luther only the fallacious cures of an empirical and quack religion. “At the time when I was a monk, if I felt some temptation assail me, I am lost! said I to myself, and immediately resorted to a thousand methods, in order to suppress the cries of my heart. I confessed every day, but that did me no good. Thus oppressed with sadness, I was tormented by a multiplicity of thoughts. ‘Look!’ exclaimed I, ‘there you are still envious, impatient, passionate! It is of no use then, for you, O wretch, to have entered this sacred order.’” And yet Luther, imbued with the prejudices of his day, had from his youth up considered the acts, whose impotence he now experienced, as sure remedies for diseased souls. What was he to think of the strange discovery which he had just made in the solitude of the cloister? It is possible, then, to dwell in the sanctuary, and still carry within oneself a man of sin! He has received another garment, but not another heart. His hopes are disappointed. Where is he to stop? Can it be that all these rules and observances are only human inventions? Such a supposition appears to him at one time a suggestion of the devil, and at another time an irresistible truth. Struggling alternately with the holy voice which spoke to his heart, and with venerable institutions which had the sanction of ages, Luther’s life was a continual combat. The young monk, like a shade, glided through the long passages of the cloister, making them echo with his sad groans. His body pined away and his strength left him; on different occasions he remained as if he were dead.

Once, overwhelmed with sadness, he shut himself up in his cell, and for several days and nights allowed no one to approach him. Lucas Edemberger, one of his friends, feeling uneasy about the

unhappy monk, and having some presentiment of the state in which he actually was, taking with him several boys, who were accustomed to chant in choirs, went and knocked at the door of his cell. No one opens or answers. Good Edemberger, still more alarmed, forces the door. Luther is stretched on the floor insensible, and showing no signs of life. His friend tries in vain to revive him, but he still remains motionless. The young boys begin to chant a soft anthem. Their pure voices act like a charm on the poor monk, who had always the greatest delight in music, and he gradually recovers sensation, consciousness, and life. But if music could for some moments give him a slight degree of serenity, another and more powerful remedy was wanted to cure him effectually—that soft and penetrating sound of the gospel, which is the voice of God himself. He was well aware of this, and, accordingly, his sorrows and alarms led him to study the writings of the apostles and prophets with renewed zeal.3

CHAP. IV

Pious Men in Cloisters—Staupitz—His Piety—His Visitation—Conversation—The Grace of Christ—Repentance—Power of Sin—Sweetness of Repentance—Election—Providence—The Bible—The Old Monk—The Remission of Sins—Consecration Dinner—The Fête Dieu—Call to Wittemberg.

Luther was not the first monk who had passed through similar struggles. The cloisters often shrouded within the obscurity of their walls abominable vices, at which if they had been brought to light, every honest mind would have shuddered; but they often also concealed Christian virtues which were there unfolded in silence, and which, if they had been placed before the eyes of the world, would have excited admiration. These virtues, possessed by those who lived only with themselves and with God, attracted no attention, and were often even unknown to the modest convent within which they were contained. Leading a life known to God only, these humble solitaries fell occasionally into that mystical theology, sad malady of noblest minds, which formerly constituted the delight of the first monks on the banks of the Nile, and which uselessly consumes those who fall under its influence.

Still, when one of these men happened to be called to an eminent station, he there displayed virtues whose salutary influence was long and widely felt. The candle being placed on the candlestick gave light to all the house. Several were awakened by this light, and hence those pious souls, propagated from generation to generation, kept shining like solitary torches at the very time when cloisters were often little better than impure receptacles of the deepest darkness. A young man had in this way attracted notice in one of the convents of Germany. He was named John Staupitz, and was of a noble family in Misnia. From his earliest youth, having a taste for science and a love of virtue, he longed for retirement, in order to devote himself to literature; but soon finding that philosophy and the study of nature could do little for eternal salvation, he began to study theology, making it his special object to join practice with knowledge. For, says one of his biographers, it is vain to deck ourselves with the name of theologian, if we do not prove our title to the honourable name by our life.2 The study of the Bible, and of the theology of St. Augustine, the knowledge of himself, and the war which he, like Luther, had to wage against the wiles and lusts of his heart, led him to the Redeemer, through faith in whom he found peace to his soul. The doctrine of the election of grace had, in particular, taken a firm hold of his mind. Integrity of life, profound science and eloquence, combined with a noble appearance and a dignified address,

recommended him to his contemporaries. The Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, made him his friend, employed him on different embassies, and under his direction founded the University of Wittemberg. This disciple of St. Paul and St. Augustine was the first Dean of the Faculty of Theology in that school which was one day to send forth light to enlighten the schools and churches of so many nations. He attended the council of Lateran, as deputy from the Archbishop of Salzbourg, became provincial of his order in Thuringia and Saxony, and ultimately vicar-general of the Augustins all over Germany.

Staupitz lamented the corruption of manners and the errors in doctrine which were laying waste the Church. This is proved by his writings on the love of God, on Christian faith, on resemblance to Christ in his death, and by the testimony of Luther. But he considered the former of these evils as greatly the worse of the two. Besides, the mildness and indecision of his character, and his desire not to go beyond the sphere of action which he thought assigned to him, made him fitter to be the restorer of a convent than the Reformer of the Church. He could have wished to confer important stations only on distinguished men, but not finding them, he was contented to employ others. “We must plough with horses,” said he, “if we can find them; but if we have no horses, we must plough with oxen.”

We have seen the anguish and inward wrestlings to which Luther was a prey in the convent of Erfurt. At this time a visit from the vicar-general was announced, and Staupitz accordingly arrived to make his ordinary inspection. The friend of Frederick, the founder of the University of Wittemberg, the head of the Augustins, took a kind interest in the monks under his authority. It was not long ere one of the friars of the convent attracted his attention. This was a young man of middle stature, whom study, abstinence, and vigils, had so wasted away, that his bones might have been counted. His eyes, which at a later period were compared to those of the falcon, were sunken, his gait was sad, and his looks bespoke a troubled soul, the victim of numerous struggles, yet still strong and bent on resisting. His whole appearance had in it something grave, melancholy, and solemn. Staupitz, whose discernment had been improved by long experience, easily discovered what was passing in the soul of the young friar, and singled him out from those around him. He felt drawn towards him, had a presentiment of his high destiny, and experienced the interest of a parent for his subaltern. He, too, had struggled like Luther, and could therefore understand his situation. Above all, he could show him the way of peace, which he himself had found. The information he received of the circumstances which had brought the young Augustin to the convent increased his sympathy. He requested the prior to treat him with great mildness, and availed himself of the opportunities which his office gave him to gain the young friar’s confidence. Going kindly up to him, he took every means to remove his timidity, which was moreover increased by the respect and reverence which the elevated rank of Staupitz naturally inspired. The heart of Luther, till then closed by harsh treatment, opened at last, and expanded to the mild rays of charity. “As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.” The heart of Staupitz answered to the heart of Luther. The vicar-general understood him; and the monk, in his turn, felt a confidence in Staupitz which no one had hitherto inspired. He revealed to him the cause of his sadness, depicted the fearful thoughts which agitated him, and then in the cloister of Erfurt commenced a conversation full of wisdom and instruction.

“In vain,” said Luther despondingly to Staupitz; “in vain do I make promises to God; sin has always the mastery.”

“O my friend,” replied the vicar-general, thinking how it had been with himself, “more than a thousand times have I sworn to our holy God to live piously, and I have never done so. Now I no longer swear; for I know I should not perform. Unless God be pleased to be gracious to me for the love of Christ, and to grant me a happy departure when I leave this world, I shall not be able with all my vows and all my good works to stand before him. I must perish.” The young monk is terrified at the thought of the Divine justice, and lays all his fears before the vicar-general. The ineffable holiness of God, and his sovereign majesty, fill him with alarm. Who will be able to support the day of his advent—who to stand when he appeareth?

Staupitz resumes. He knows where he has found peace, and his young friend will hear it. “Why torment thyself,” said he to him, “with all these speculations and high thoughts? Look to the wounds of Jesus Christ, to the blood which he has shed for thee; then thou shalt see the grace of God. Instead of making a martyr of thyself for thy faults, throw thyself into the arms of the Redeemer. Confide in him, in the righteousness of his life, and the expiation of his death. Keep not back; God is not angry with thee; it is thou who art angry with God. Listen to the Son of God, who became man in order to assure thee of the Divine favour. He says to thee, ‘Thou art my sheep; thou hearest my voice; none shall pluck thee out of my hand.’” But Luther does not here find the repentance which he believes necessary to salvation. He replies, and it is the ordinary reply of agonised and frightened souls, “How dare I believe in the favour of God, while there is nothing in me like true conversion? I must be changed before he can receive me.” His venerable guide shows him that there can be no true conversion while God is dreaded as a severe Judge. “What will you say then,” exclaims Luther, “of the many consciences, to which a thousand unsupportable observances are prescribed as a means of gaining heaven?”

Then he hears this reply from the vicar-general, or rather his belief is, that it comes not from man, but is a voice sounding from heaven. “No repentance,” says Staupitz, “is true, save that which begins with the love of God and of righteousness.3 What others imagine to be the end and completion of repentance is, on the contrary, only the commencement of it. To have a thorough love of goodness, thou must, before all, have a thorough love of God. If thou wouldest be converted, dwell not upon all these macerations and tortures; ‘Love him who first loved thee.’ ”

Luther listens and listens again. These consoling words fill him with unknown joy, and give him new light. “It is Jesus Christ,” thinks he in his heart. “Yes, it is Jesus Christ himself who consoles me so wonderfully by these sweet and salutary words.”

These words, in fact, penetrated to the inmost heart of the young monk, like the sharp arrow of a mighty man. In order to repent, it is necessary to love God. Illumined with this new light, he proceeds to examine the Scriptures, searching out all the passages which speak of repentance and conversion. These words, till now so much dreaded, become, to use his own expressions, “an agreeable sport, and the most delightful recreation. All the passages of Scripture which frightened him seem now to rise up from all sides, smiling, and leaping, and sporting with him.”

“Hitherto,” exclaims he, “though I carefully disguised the state of my heart, and strove to give utterance to a love which was only constrained and fictitious, Scripture did not contain a word which seemed to me more bitter than that of repentance. Now, however, there is none sweeter and more agreeable. Oh! how pleasant the precepts of God are, when we read them not only in books, but in the precious wounds of the Saviour.”3

Meanwhile, Luther, though consoled by the words of Staupitz was still subject to fits of depression. Sin manifested itself anew to his timorous conscience, and then the joy of salvation was succeeded by his former despair. “O my sin! my sin! my sin!” one day exclaimed the young monk in presence of the vicar-general, in accents of the deepest grief. “Ah!” replied he, “would you only be a sinner on canvass, and also have a Saviour only on canvass?” Then Staupitz gravely added, “Know that Jesus Christ is the Saviour even of those who are great, real sinners, and every way deserving of condemnation.”

What agitated Luther was not merely the sin which he felt in his heart. The upbraidings of his conscience were confirmed by arguments drawn from reason. If the holy precepts of the Bible frightened him, some of its doctrines likewise increased his terror. Truth, which is the great means by which God gives peace to man, must necessarily begin by removing the false security which destroys him. The doctrine of election, in particular, disturbed the young man, and threw him into a field which it is difficult to traverse. Must he believe that it was man who, on his part, first chose God? or that it was God who first chose man? The Bible, history, daily experience, and the writings of Augustine, had shown him that always, and in every thing, in looking for a first cause, it was necessary to ascend to the sovereign will by which every thing exists, and on which every thing depends. But his ardent spirit would have gone farther. He would have penetrated into the secret counsel of God, unveiled its mysteries, seen the invisible, and comprehended the incomprehensible. Staupitz interfered, telling him not to pretend to fathom the hidden purposes of God, but to confine himself to those of them which have been made manifest in Christ. “Look to the wounds of Christ,” said he to him, “and there see a bright display of the purposes of God towards man. It is impossible to comprehend God out of Jesus Christ. In Christ you will find what I am, and what I require, saith the Lord. You can find him nowhere else, either in heaven or on the earth.” The vicar-general went farther. He convinced Luther of the paternal designs of Providence, in permitting the various temptations and combats which the soul has to sustain. He exhibited them to him in a light well fitted to revive his courage. By such trials God prepares those whom he destines for some important work. The ship must be proved before it is launched on the boundless deep. If this education is necessary for every man, it is so particularly for those who are to have an influence on their generation. This Staupitz represented to the monk of Erfurt; “It is not without cause,” said he to him, “that God exercises you by so many combats; be assured he will employ you in great things as his minister.”

These words, which Luther hears with astonishment and humility, fill him with courage, and give him a consciousness of powers, whose existence he had not even suspected. The wisdom and prudence of an enlightened friend gradually reveal the strong man to himself. Nor does Staupitz rest here. He gives him valuable directions as to his studies, exhorting him in future to lay aside the systems of the school, and draw all his theology from the Bible. “Let the study of the Scriptures,” said he, “be your favourite occupation.” Never was good advice better followed. But what, above all, delighted Luther, was the present of a Bible from Staupitz. Perhaps it was the Latin Bible bound in red leather, which belonged to the convent, and which it was the summit of his desire to possess, that he might be able to carry it about with him wherever he went, because all its leaves were familiar to him, and he knew where to look for every passage. At length this treasure is his own. From that time he studies the Scriptures, and especially the Epistles of St. Paul, with always increasing zeal. The only author whom he admits along with the Bible is St.

Augustine. Whatever he reads is deeply imprinted on his soul, for his struggles had prepared him for comprehending it. The soil had been ploughed deep, and the incorruptible seed penetrates far into it. When Staupitz left Erfurt, a new day had dawned upon Luther.

Nevertheless, the work was not finished. The vicar-general had prepared it, but its completion was reserved for a humbler instrument. The conscience of the young Augustin had not yet found repose, and, owing to his efforts and the stretch on which his soul had been kept, his body at length gave way. He was attacked by an illness which brought him to the gates of death. This was in the second year of his residence in the convent. All his agonies and terrors were awakened at the approach of death. His own pollution and the holiness of God anew distracted his soul. One day, when overwhelmed with despair, an old monk entered his cell, and addressed him in consoling terms. Luther opened his heart to him, and made him aware of the fears by which he was agitated. The respectable old man was incapable of following him into all his doubts as Staupitz had done; but he knew his Credo, and having found in it the means of consoling his own heart, he could apply the same remedy to the young friar. Leading him back to the Apostles' Creed, which Luther had learned in infancy at the school of Mansfield, the old monk good-naturedly repeated the article, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." These simple words, which the pious friar calmly repeated at this decisive moment, poured great consolation into the soul of Luther. "I believe," oft repeated he to himself on his sick-bed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." "Ah!" said the monk, "the thing to be believed is not merely that David's or Peter's sins are forgiven; this the devils believe: God's command is, to believe that our own sins are forgiven." How delightful this command appeared to poor Luther! "See what St. Bernard says in his sermon on the annunciation," added the old friar; "the witness which the Holy Spirit witnesseth with our spirit is, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.'" From this moment light sprung up in the heart of the young monk of Erfurt. The gracious word has been pronounced, and he believes it. He renounces the idea of meriting salvation, and puts implicit confidence in the grace of God through Jesus Christ. He does not see all the consequences of the principle which he has admitted; he is still sincere in his attachment to the Church, and yet he has no longer need of her. He has received salvation immediately from God himself; and from that moment Roman Catholicism is virtually destroyed in him. He goes forward and searches the writings of the apostles and prophets, for every thing that may strengthen the hope which fills his heart. Each day he invokes help from above, and each day also the light increases in his soul. The health which his spirit had found soon restores health to his body, and he rises from his sick-bed, after having, in a double sense, received a new life. During the feast of Noel, which arrived shortly after, he tasted abundantly of all the consolations of faith. With sweet emotion he took part in the holy solemnities, and when in the middle of the gorgeous service of the day, he came to chant these words:—"O beata culpa, quœ talem meruisti Redemptorem!" his whole being said Amen, and thrilled with joy.

Luther had been two years in the cloister, and must now be consecrated priest. He had received much, and he looked forward with delight to the prospect which the priesthood presented of enabling him freely to give what he had freely received. Wishing to avail himself of the occasion to be fully reconciled to his father, he invited him to be present, and even asked him to fix the day. John Luther, though not yet entirely appeased, nevertheless accepted the invitation, and named Sabbath the 2nd May, 1507. In the list of Luther's friends was the vicar of Isenach, John Braun, who had been his faithful adviser when he resided in that town. Luther wrote him on the 22nd

April. It is the Reformer's earliest letter, and bears the following address:—"To John Braun, Holy and Venerable Priest of Christ and Mary." It is only in the two first letters of Luther that the name of Mary occurs.

"God, who is glorious and holy in all his works," says the candidate for the priesthood, "having designed to exalt me exceedingly,—me, a miserable and every way unworthy sinner, and to call me solely out of his abundant mercy, to his sublime ministry, it is my duty in order to testify my gratitude for a goodness so divine and so magnificent, (as far at least as dust can do it,) to fulfil with my whole heart the office which is entrusted to me." At length the day arrived. The miner of Mansfield failed not to be present at the consecration of his son.… He even gave him an unequivocal mark of his affection and generosity, by making him a present of twenty florins on the occasion. The ceremony took place, Jerome, Bishop of Brandebourg, officiating. At the moment of conferring on Luther the right to celebrate mass, he put the chalice into his hand, uttering these solemn words, "Accipe potestatem sacrificandi pro vivis et mortuis"—"Receive power to sacrifice for the living and the dead." Luther then listened complacently to these words, which gave him the power of doing the very work appropriated to the Son of God; but they afterwards made him shudder. "That the earth did not swallow us both," said he, "was more than we deserved, and was owing to the great patience and long-suffering of the Lord." The father afterwards dined at the convent with his son, the friends of the young priest and the monks. The conversation turned on Martin's entrance into the cloister, the friars loudly extolling it as one of the most meritorious of works. Then the inflexible John, turning towards his son, said to him, "Hast thou not read in Scripture to obey thy father and thy mother?" These words struck Luther; they gave him quite a different view of the action which had brought him into the convent, and for a long time continued to echo in his heart. By the advice of Staupitz, Luther, shortly after his ordination, made short excursions on foot into the neighbouring parishes and convents, both for relaxation, to give his body the necessary exercise, and to accustom himself to preaching. The Fête Dieu was to be celebrated with splendour at Eisleben, where the vicar-general was to be present. Luther repaired thither. He had still need of Staupitz, and missed no opportunity of meeting with this enlightened conductor who was guiding him into the way of life. The procession was numerous and brilliant. Staupitz himself carried the holy sacrament, and Luther followed in his sacerdotal dress. The thought that it was truly Jesus Christ that the vicar-general was carrying—the idea that Christ was there in person actually before him—suddenly struck Luther's imagination, and filled him with such amazement that he could scarcely move forward. The perspiration fell from him in drops; he shook, and thought he would have died with agony and terror. At length the procession ceased. This host which had so awakened the fears of the monk was solemnly deposited in the sanctuary, and Luther, as soon as he was alone with Staupitz, threw himself into his arms, and told him of his consternation. Then the worthy vicar-general, who had long known that Saviour who breaketh not the bruised reed, said to him mildly, "It was not Jesus Christ, my brother. Jesus Christ does not alarm—he consoles merely."

Luther was not to remain hid in an obscure convent. The time had arrived for his being transported to a larger theatre. Staupitz, with whom he was in constant correspondence, was well aware that the soul of the young monk was too active to be confined within so narrow a circle. He mentioned him to Frederick of Saxony, and this enlightened prince, in 1508, probably towards the close of the year, invited him to a chair in the university of Wittemberg. Wittemberg was a field on which he

was to fight hard battles; and Luther felt that his vocation was there. Being required to repair promptly to his new post, he answered the appeal without delay; and, in the hurry of his removal, had not even time to write him whom he called his master and beloved father—John Braun, curate of Isenach. Some months after, he wrote—“My departure was so sudden, that those I was living with scarcely knew of it. I am far away, I confess: but the better part of me is still with you.” Luther had been three years in the cloister of Erfurt.

CHAP. V The University of Wittemberg—First Employment—Biblical Lectures—Sensation—Preaching at Wittemberg—The Old Chapel—Impression. In the year 1502, the Elector Frederick had founded a new university at Wittemberg, declaring, in the act by which he confirmed it, that he and his people would turn to it as towards an oracle. He thought not at the time that these words would be so magnificently realised. Two men belonging to the opposition which had been formed against the scholastic system, viz., Pollich of Mellerstadt, doctor of medicine, law, and philosophy, and Staupitz, had great influence in founding this school. The university declared St. Augustine its patron; and even this choice was a presage of good. In possession of great freedom, and regarded as a tribunal to which, in cases of difficulty, the supreme decision belonged, this new institution, which was in every way fitted to become the cradle of the Reformation, powerfully contributed to the development of Luther and his work. On his arrival at Wittemberg, Luther repaired to the convent of Augustins, where a cell was alloted him; for though professor, he ceased not to be monk. He was appointed to teach philosophy and dialectics. In assigning him these departments, regard had, no doubt, been had to the studies which he had prosecuted at Erfurt, and to his degree of Master of Arts. Thus Luther, who was hungering and thirsting for the word of life, saw himself obliged to give his almost exclusive attention to the scholastic philosophy of Aristotle. He had need of the bread of life which God gives to the world, and he must occupy himself with human subtleties. How galling! How much he sighed! “I am well, by the grace of God,” wrote he to Braun, “were it not that I must study philosophy with all my might. Ever since I arrived at Wittemberg, I have eagerly desired to exchange this study for that of theology: but,” added he, lest it should be thought he meant the theology of the time, “the theology I mean is that which seeks out the kernel of the nut, the heart of the wheat, and the marrow of the bone. Howbeit God is God,” continues he, with that confidence which was the soul of his life, “man is almost always deceived in his judgment; but he is our God, and will conduct us by his goodness for ever and ever.” The studies in which Luther was at this time obliged to engage were afterwards of great service to him in combating the errors of the schoolmen.

Here, however, he could not stop. The desire of his heart must be accomplished. The same power which formerly pushed him from the bar into the monastic life now pushed him from philosophy towards the Bible. He zealously commenced the study of ancient languages, especially Greek and Hebrew, that he might be able to draw science and learning at the fountain-head. He was all his life an indefatigable student. Some months after his arrival at the university he applied for the degree of Bachelor in Divinity, and obtained it in the end of March 1509, with a special injunction to devote himself to biblical theology, ad Biblia.

Every day at one, Luther had to lecture on the Bible,—a precious employment both for the professor and his pupils—giving them a better insight into the divine meaning of those oracles which had so long been lost both to the people and the school.

He began his lectures with an exposition of the Psalms, and shortly after proceeded to the Epistle to the Romans. It was especially when meditating upon it that the light of truth entered his heart. After retiring to his quiet cell he spent hours in the study of the Divine Word—the Epistle of St. Paul lying open before him. One day, coming to the seventeenth verse of the first chapter, he read these words of the prophet Habakkuk, “The just shall live by faith.” He is struck with the expression. The just, then, has a different life from other men, and this life is given by faith. These words, which he receives into his heart as if God himself had there deposited them, unveils the mystery of the Christian life to him, and gives him an increase of this life. Long after, in the midst of his numerous labours, he thought he still heard a voice saying to him, “The just shall live by faith.”

Luther’s lectures, thus prepared, had little resemblance to those which had hitherto been delivered. It was not a declamatory rhetorician, or a pedantic schoolman that spoke; it was a Christian who had felt the power of revealed truth—truth which he derived from the Bible, and presented to his astonished hearers, all full of life, as it came from the treasury of his heart. It was not a lesson from man, but a lesson from God. This novel exposition of the truth was much talked of. The news spread far and wide, and attracted a great number of foreign students to the recently founded university. Even some of the professors attended the lectures of Luther, among others, Mellerstadt, often surnamed, “The Light of the World.” He was the first rector of the university, and had previously been at Leipsic, where he had vigorously combated the ridiculous lessons of the schoolmen, and denying that “the light of the first day of creation could be theology,” had maintained that this science ought to be based on the study of literature. “This monk,” said he, “will send all the doctors to the right about. He will introduce a new doctrine, and reform the whole Church, for he founds upon the word of God; and no man in the world can either combat or overthrow this word, even though he should attack it with all the weapons of philosophy, the sophists, Scotists, Albertists, Thomists, and the whole fraternity.”

Staupitz, who was the instrument in the hand of Providence to unfold the gifts and treasures hidden in Luther, invited him to preach in the church of the Augustins. The young professor recoiled at this proposal. He wished to confine himself to his academic functions, and trembled at the thought of adding to them that of preacher. In vain did Staupitz urge him. “No, no,” replied he, “it is no light matter to speak to men in the place of God.” Touching humility in this great Reformer of the Church! Staupitz insisted; but the ingenious Luther, says one of his biographers, found fifteen arguments, pretexts, and evasions, to excuse himself from this calling. The chief of the Augustins, still continuing his attack, Luther exclaimed, “Ah! doctor, in doing this, you deprive me of life. I would not be able to hold out three months.” “Very well,” replied the vicar-general, “so be it in God’s name. For up yonder, also, our Lord has need of able and devoted men.” Luther behoved to yield. In the middle of the public square of Wittemberg was a wooden chapel, thirty feet long by twenty wide, whose sides, propped up in all directions, were falling to decay. An old pulpit made of fir, three feet in height, received the preacher. In this miserable chapel the preaching of the Reformation commenced. God was pleased that that which was to establish his glory should have the humblest origin. The foundation of the church of the Augustins had just been laid, and until it should be finished this humble church was employed. “This building,” adds the contemporary of Luther who relates these circumstances, “may well be compared to the stable in which Christ was born. It was in this miserable inclosure that God was pleased, so to speak, to make his beloved Son be born a second time. Among the thousands of cathedrals and parish churches with which

the world abounded, there was then one only which God selected for the glorious preaching of eternal life."

Luther preaches, and every thing is striking in the new preacher His expressive countenance, his noble air, his clear and sonorous voice, captivate the hearers. The greater part of preachers before him had sought rather to amuse their auditory than to convert them. The great seriousness which predominates in Luther's preaching, and the joy with which the knowledge of the gospel has filled his heart, give to his eloquence at once an authority, a fervour, and an unction which none of his predecessors had. "Endowed," says one of his opponents, "with a keen and acute intellect, and a retentive memory, and having an admirable facility in the use of his mother tongue, Luther, in point of eloquence, yielded to none of his age. Discoursing from the pulpit as if he had been agitated by some strong passion, and suiting his action to his words, he produced a wonderful impression on the minds of his hearers, and like a torrent, carried them along whithersoever he wished. So much force, gracefulness, and eloquence, are seldom seen in the people of the north." "He had," says Bossuet, "a lively and impetuous eloquence, which hurried people away and entranced them." In a short time the little chapel could not contain the hearers who crowded to it. The council of Wittemberg then made choice of Luther for their preacher, and appointed him to preach in the town church. The impression which he produced here was still greater. The power of his genius, the eloquence of his diction, and the excellence of the doctrines which he announced, equally astonished his hearers. His reputation spread far and wide, and Frederick the Wise himself once came to Wittemberg to hear him.

Luther had commenced a new life. The uselessness of the cloister had been succeeded by great activity. The liberty, the labour, the constant activity to which he could devote himself at Wittemberg, completely restored his internal harmony and peace. He was now in his place, and the work of God was soon to exhibit its majestic step.

CHAP. VI

Journey to Rome—A Convent on the Pô—Sickness at Bologna—Remembrances in Rome—Superstitious Devotion—Profaneness of the Clergy—Conversation—Disorders in Rome—Biblical Studies—Pilate's Stair—Influence on his Faith and on the Reformation—The Gate of Paradise—Luther's Confession.

Luther was teaching both in his academic chair and in the church, when his labours were interrupted. In 1510, or, according to some, not till 1511 or 1512, he was sent to Rome. Seven convents of his order having differed on certain points with the vicar-general, the activity of Luther's mind, the power of his eloquence, and his talent for discussion, made him be selected to plead the cause of these seven monasteries before the pope. This Divine dispensation was necessary to Luther, for it was requisite that he should know Rome. Full of the prejudices and illusions of the cloister, he had always represented it to himself as the seat of holiness.

He accordingly set out and crossed the Alps, but scarcely had he descended into the plains of rich and voluptuous Italy, than he found at every step subjects of astonishment and scandal. The poor German monk was received in a rich convent of Benedictines, situated upon the Pô in Lombardy. This convent had thirty-six thousand ducats of revenue. Of these, twelve thousand were devoted to the table, twelve thousand to the buildings, and twelve thousand to the other wants of the

monks. The gorgeousness of the apartments, the beauty of the dresses, and the rarities of the table, all astonished Luther. Marble and silk, and luxury under all its forms! How new the sight to the humble friar of the poor convent of Wittemberg! He was astonished and said nothing, but when Friday came, how surprised was he to see abundance of meat still covering the table of the Benedictines! Then he resolved to speak out. “The Church and the pope,” said he to them, “forbid such things.” The Benedictines were indignant at this reprimand from the rude German, but Luther having insisted, and perhaps threatened to make their disorders known, some of them thought that the simplest plan was to get rid of their troublesome guest. The porter of the convent having warned him that he ran a risk in staying longer, he made his escape from this epicurean monastery, and arrived at Bologna, where he fell dangerously sick.3 Some have seen in this sickness the effects of poison, but it is simpler to suppose that it was the effect which a change of living produced in the frugal monk of Wittemberg, whose principal food was wont to be bread and herrings. This sickness was not to be unto death, but for the glory of God. Luther’s constitutional sadness and depression again overpowered him. To die thus far from Germany, under this burning sky in a foreign land, what a fate! The agonies which he had felt at Erfurt returned with all their force. The conviction of his sins troubled, while the prospect of the judgment-seat of God terrified him. But at the moment when these terrors were at the worst, the passage of St. Paul which had struck him at Wittemberg, “The just shall live by faith,” (Romans 1:17) presented itself to his mind, and illumined his soul as with a ray of light from heaven. Revived and comforted, he soon recovered his health, and resumed his journey to Rome, expecting he should there find quite a different life from that of the Lombard convents, and impatient by the sight of Roman holiness to efface the sad impressions which had been left upon his mind by his residence on the Pô. At length, after a painful journey under the burning sky of Italy in the beginning of summer, he drew near to the city of the seven hills. His heart was moved, and his eyes looked for the queen of the world, and of the Church. As soon as he obtained a distant view of the eternal city, the city of St. Peter and St. Paul, and the metropolis of Catholicism, he threw himself on the ground, exclaiming, “Holy Rome, I salute thee.”

Luther is in Rome; the professor of Wittemberg is in the midst of the eloquent ruins of the Rome of the consuls and emperors—the Rome of the confessors and martyrs. Here lived that Plautus and Virgil, whose works he had taken with him into the cloister, and all those great men whose exploits had always caused his heart to beat. He perceives their statues, and the wrecks of monuments which attest their glory. But all this glory and all this power are past, and his foot treads on their dust. At every step he calls to mind the sad forebodings of Scipio shedding tears at the sight of Carthage in ruins, its burned palaces and broken walls, and exclaiming, “Thus, too, will it be with Rome!” “And in fact,” says Luther, “the Rome of the Scipios and Cæsars has been changed into a corpse. Such is the quantity of ruins, that the foundations of the modern houses rest upon the roofs of the old. “There,” added he, casting a melancholy look on the ruins, “there were the riches and treasures of the world.” All this rubbish, which he strikes with his foot, tells Luther, within the walls of Rome herself, that what is strongest in the eyes of men is easily destroyed by the breath of the Lord. But he remembers that with profane ashes holy ashes are mingled. The burial-place of the martyrs is not far from that of the generals and triumphing heroes of Rome, and Christian Rome, with her sufferings, has more power over the heart of the Saxon monk than Pagan Rome with her glory. It was here the letter arrived in which Paul wrote, “The just is justified by faith,” and not far off is the Appii Forum and the Three Taverns. There was the house of Narcissus—here the

palace of Cæsar, where the Lord delivered the apostle from the mouth of the lion. Oh, what fortitude these recollections give to the heart of the monk of Wittemberg!

Rome then presented a very different aspect. The pontifical chair was occupied by the warlike Julius II, and not by Leo X, as it has been said by some distinguished historians of Germany, no doubt through oversight. Luther often told an anecdote of this pope. When news was brought him of the defeat of his army by the French before Ravenna, he was reading his Hours. He dashed the book upon the ground, and said, with a dreadful oath, “Very well, so you have turned Frenchman. Is this the way in which you protect your Church?” Then turning in the direction of the country to whose aid he meant to have recourse, he exclaimed, “Holy Switzer, pray for us.” Ignorance, levity, and dissoluteness, a profane spirit, a contempt of all that is sacred, and a shameful traffic in divine things; such was the spectacle which that unhappy city presented, and yet the pious monk continued for some time in his illusions.

Having arrived about the feast of St. John, he hears the Romans about him repeating a proverb which was then common among the people: “Happy,” said they, “is the mother whose son says a mass on the eve of St. John.” “Oh! how I could like to make my mother happy!” said Luther. The pious son of Margaret accordingly sought to say a mass on that day, but could not; the press was too great.

Ardent and simple-hearted, he went up and down, visiting all the churches and chapels, believing all the lies that were told him, and devoutly performing the requisite acts of holiness; happy in being able to do so many pious works, which were denied to his countrymen. “Oh! how much I regret,” said the pious German to himself, “that my father and mother are still alive. What delight I should have had in delivering them from the fire of purgatory, by my masses, my prayers, and many other admirable works.” He had found the light, but the darkness was still far from being entirely banished from his understanding. His heart was changed, but his mind was not fully enlightened. He possessed faith and love, but not knowledge. It was work of no small difficulty to escape from the dark night which had for so many ages covered the earth.

Luther repeatedly said mass at Rome, taking care to do it with all the unction and dignity which the service seemed to him to require. But how grieved was the heart of the Saxon monk, at seeing the profane formality of the Roman priests in celebrating the sacrament of the altar. The priests, on their part, laughed at his simplicity. One day when he was officiating, he found that at the altar next to him seven masses bad been read before he got through a single one. “Get on, get on,” cried one of the priests to him; “make haste, and send Our Lady back her Son,” making an impious allusion to the transubstantiation of the bread into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. On another occasion, Luther had only got as far as the Gospel, when the priest beside him had finished the whole mass. “On, on,” said his companion; “make haste, make haste; are ye ever to have done?” His astonishment was still greater when, in the dignitaries of the Church, he discovered the same thing that he had found in common priests. He had hoped better of them.

It was fashionable at the papal court to attack Christianity, and, in order to pass for a complete gentleman, absolutely necessary to hold some erroneous or heretical opinion on the doctrines of the Church. When Erasmus was at Rome, they had attempted to prove to him, by passages from Pliny, that there was no difference between the soul of man and that of the brutes;3 and young courtiers of the pope maintained that the orthodox faith was merely the result of crafty inventions

by some saints.

Luther's employment, as envoy of the Augustins of Germany, caused him to be invited to several meetings of distinguished ecclesiastics. One day, in particular, he happened to be at table with several prelates, who frankly exhibited themselves to him in their mountebank manners and profane conversation, and did not scruple to commit a thousand follies in his presence, no doubt believing him to be of the same spirit as themselves. Among other things they related, in presence of the monk, laughing and making a boast of it, how when they were saying mass, instead of the sacramental words, which should transform the bread and wine into the Saviour's flesh and blood, they parodied them, and said, "Panis es, et panis manebis; vinum es, et vinum manebis:" Bread thou art, and bread wilt remain; wine thou art, and wine wilt remain. Then, continued they, we raise the ostensorium, and all the people worship it. Luther could scarcely believe his ears. His spirit, which was lively and even gay in the society of his friends, was all gravity when sacred things were in question. He was scandalised at the profane pleasantries of Rome. "I was," said he, "a young monk, grave and pious, and these words distressed me greatly. If they speak thus in Rome at table, freely and publicly, thought I to myself, what will it be if their actions correspond to their words, and if all, pope, cardinals, courtiers, say mass in the same style? And I, who have devoutly heard so large a number read, how must I have been deceived!"

Luther often mingled with the monks and the citizens of Rome. If some extolled the pope and his court, the great majority gave free utterance to their complaints and their sarcasms. What tales they told of the reigning pope, of Alexander VI, and of many others! One day his Roman friends told him how Cæsar Borgia, after having fled from Rome, was apprehended in Spain. When they were going to try him he pleaded guilty in prison, and requested a confessor. A monk having been sent, he slew him, and, wrapping himself up in his cloak, made his escape. "I heard that at Rome, and it is quite certain," said Luther. One day passing through a public street which led to St. Peter's, be stopped in amazement before a statue, representing a pope under the form of a woman holding a sceptre, clad in the papal mantle, and carrying an infant in her arms. It is a girl of Mentz, said they to him, whom the cardinals chose for pope, and who had a child at this spot. Hence no pope ever passes through this street. "I am astonished," said Luther, "how the popes allow the statue to remain."3

Luther had expected to find the edifice of the church in strength and splendour, but its gates were forced, and its walls consumed with fire. He saw the desolations of the sanctuary, and started back in dismay. He had dreamed of nothing but holiness, and he discovered nothing but profanation.

He was not less struck with the disorders outside the churches. "The Roman police," says he, "is strict and severe. The judge or captain every night makes a round of the town on horseback, with three hundred attendants, and arrests every person he finds in the streets. If he meets any one armed he hangs him up, or throws him into the Tiber; and yet the city is full of disorder and murder, whereas, when the word of God is purely and rightly taught, peace and order are seen to reign, and there is no need of law and its severities." "It is almost incredible what sins and infamous actions are committed at Rome," says he, on another occasion; "one would require to see it and hear it in order to believe it. Hence, it is an ordinary saying, that if there is a hell, Rome is built upon it. It is an abyss from whence all sins proceed."2 This sight made a strong impression on Luther's mind at the time, and the impression was deepened at a later period. "The nearer we

approach Rome the more bad Christians we find," said he several years after. "There is a common saying, that he who goes to Rome, the first time seeks a rogue, the second time finds him, and the third time brings him away with him in his own person; but now people are become so skilful, that they make all the three journeys in one." A genius, one of the most unhappily celebrated, but also one of the most profound of Italy, Machiavelli, who was living at Florence when Luther passed through it on his way to Rome, has made the same remark: "The strongest symptom," says he, "of the approaching ruin of Christianity, (he means Roman Catholicism,) is, that the nearer you come to the capital of Christendom the less you find of the Christian spirit. The scandalous examples and crimes of the court of Rome are the cause why Italy has lost every principle of piety and all religious sentiment. We Italians," continues the great historian, "are chiefly indebted to the Church and the priests for our having become a set of profane scoundrels." At a later period Luther was fully aware how much he had gained by his journey "I would not take a hundred thousand florins," said he, "not to have seen Rome."4 The journey was also of the greatest advantage to him in a literary view. Like Reuchlin, Luther availed himself of his residence in Italy to penetrate farther into the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. He took lessons in Hebrew from a celebrated rabbi named Elias Levita; and thus, at Rome, partly acquired the knowledge of that Divine word under whose blows Rome was destined to fall. But there was another respect in which the journey was of great importance to Luther. Not only was the veil torn away and the sardonic smile, and mountebank infidelity which lurked behind the Roman superstitions, revealed to the future Reformer, but, moreover, the living faith which God had implanted in him was powerfully strengthened.

We have seen how he at first entered devotedly into all the vain observances, to which, as a price, the Church has annexed the expiation of sins. One day, among others, wishing to gain an indulgence which the pope had promised to every one who should on his knees climb up what is called Pilate's Stair, the Saxon monk was humbly crawling up the steps, which he was told had been miraculously transported to Rome from Jerusalem. But while he was engaged in this meritorious act, he thought he heard a voice of thunder which cried at the bottom of his heart, as at Wittemberg and Bologna, "The just shall live by faith." These words, which had already on two different occasions struck him like the voice of an angel of God, resounded loudly and incessantly within him. He rises up in amazement from the steps along which he was dragging his body. Horrified at himself, and ashamed to see how far superstition has abased him, he flies far from the scene of his folly. In regard to this mighty word there is something mysterious in the life of Luther. It proved a creating word both for the Reformer and for the Reformation. It was by it that God then said, "Let light be, and light was."

It is often necessary that a truth, in order to produce its due effect on the mind, must be repeatedly presented to it. Luther had carefully studied the Epistle to the Romans, and yet, though justification by faith is there taught, he had never seen it so clearly. Now he comprehends the righteousness which alone can stand in the presence of God; now he receives from God himself, by the hand of Christ, that obedience which he freely imputes to the sinner as soon as he humbly turns his eye to the God-Man who was crucified. This is the decisive period in the internal life of Luther. The faith which has saved him from the terrors of death becomes the soul of his theology, his fortress in all dangers, the stamina of his discourse, the stimulant of his love, the foundation of his peace, the spur of his labours, his consolation in life and in death. But this great doctrine of a salvation which emanates from God and not from man, was not only the power of God to save the soul of Luther, it

also became the power of God to reform the Church; a powerful weapon which the apostles wielded, a weapon too long neglected, but at length brought forth in its primitive lustre from the arsenal of the mighty God. At the moment when Luther stood up in Rome, all moved and thrilling with the words which Paul had addressed fifteen centuries before to the inhabitants of this metropolis, truth, till then a fettered captive within the Church, rose up also, never again to fall.

Here we must let Luther speak for himself. “Although I was a holy and irreproachable monk, my conscience was full of trouble and anguish. I could not bear the words, ‘Justice of God.’ I loved not the just and holy God who punishes sinners. I was filled with secret rage against him and hated him, because, not satisfied with terrifying us, his miserable creatures, already lost by original sin, with his law and the miseries of life, he still further increased our torment by the gospel.… But when, by the Spirit of God, I comprehended these words; when I learned how the sinner’s justification proceeds from the pure mercy of the Lord by means of faith, then I felt myself revive like a new man, and entered at open doors into the very paradise of God.2 From that time, also, I beheld the precious sacred volume with new eyes. I went over all the Bible, and collected a great number of passages which taught me what the work of God was. And as I had previously, with all my heart, hated the words, ‘Justice of God,’ so from that time I began to esteem and love them, as words most sweet and most consoling. In truth, these words were to me the true gate of paradise.”

Accordingly, when called on solemn occasions to confess this doctrine, Luther always manifested his enthusiasm and rude energy. “I see,” said he on a critical occasion, “that the devil is incessantly attacking this fundamental article by the instrumentality of his doctors, and that, in this respect, he cannot rest or take any repose. Very well, I, Doctor Martin Luther, unworthy evangelist of our Lord Jesus Christ, hold this article—that faith alone, without works, justifies in the sight of God; and I declare that the emperor of the Romans, the emperor of the Turks, the emperor of the Tartars, the emperor of the Persians, the pope, all the cardinals, bishops, priests, monks, nuns, princes, and nobles, all men and all devils, must let it stand, and allow it to remain for ever. If they will undertake to combat this truth, they will bring down the flames of hell upon their heads. This is the true and holy gospel, and the declaration of me, Doctor Luther, according to the light of the Holy Spirit.… Nobody,” continues he, “has died for our sins but Jesus Christ the Son of God. I repeat it once more; should the world and all the devils tear each other, and burst with fury, this is, nevertheless, true. And if it be He alone who takes away sin, it cannot be ourselves with our works; but good works follow redemption, as the fruit appears on the tree. This is our doctrine; and it is the doctrine which the Holy Spirit teaches with all true Christians. We maintain it in the name of God. Amen.”

It was thus Luther found what all doctors and reformers, even the most distinguished, had, to a certain degree at least, failed to discover. It was in Rome that God gave him this clear view of the fundamental doctrine of Christianity. He had come to the city of the pontiffs seeking the solution of some difficulties relative to a monastic order, and he carried away in his heart the safety of the Church.

CHAP. VII

Return—Doctor’s Degree—Carlstadt—Luther’s Oath—Principle of Reform—Luther’s Courage—First Views of Reformation—The Schoolmen—Spalatin—Affair of Reuchlin.

Luther quitted Rome and returned to Wittemberg, his heart full of sadness and indignation. Turning away his eyes in disgust from the pontifical city, he directed them in hope to the Holy Scriptures, and to that new light of which the word of God seemed then to give promise to the world. This word gained in his heart all that the Church lost in it. He detached himself from the one and turned towards the other. The whole Reformation was in that movement. It put God where the priest had hitherto been.

Staupitz and the elector did not lose sight of the monk whom they had called to the university of Wittemberg. It would seem that the vicar-general had a presentiment of the work that was to be done in the world, and, feeling it too much for himself, wished to urge on Luther. There is nothing more remarkable, and perhaps more mysterious, than this personage, who is ever found hurrying on the monk into the path to which God calls him; and who himself ultimately goes and sadly ends his days in a convent. The preaching of the young professor had made an impression on the prince. He had admired the vigour of his intellect, the nervousness of his eloquence, and the exellence of his expositions. The elector and his friend, wishing to advance a man who gave such high hopes, resolved to make him take the honourable degree of Doctor of Divinity. Staupitz repairing to the convent, led Luther into the garden, and there alone with him, under a tree which Luther was afterwards fond of showing to his disciples,2 the venerable father said to him—"It is now necessary, my friend, that you become a doctor of the Holy Scriptures." Luther recoiled at the idea; the high honour frightened him. "Look out," replied he, "for a more worthy person; as for me, I cannot consent to it." The vicar-general insisted, "The Lord God has much to do in the Church, and has need at present of young and vigorous doctors." These words, adds Melancthon, were perhaps used half in jest, and yet the event realised them. Many omens ordinarily precede great revolutions. It is not necessary to suppose that Melancthon here speaks of miraculous predictions. The most incredulous age—that which preceded our own—saw this sentiment verified. There was no miracle; and yet how many presages announced the revolution with which it closed?

"But I am weak and sickly," replied Luther, "and have not long to live. Seek a strong man." "The Lord," replied the vicar-general, "has work in heaven as well as on the earth; dead or alive, God has need of you in his counsel."

"None but the Holy Spirit can make a doctor of theology," exclaimed the monk, still more alarmed. "Do what your convent asks," said Staupitz, "and what I, your vicar-general, command. You promised to obey us." "But my poverty," replied the friar. "I have no means of paying the expences attendant on such promotion." "Give yourself no trouble about them," said his friend. "The prince has been graciously pleased to take all the expences on himself." Luther, thus urged, saw it his duty to yield. This was towards the end of the summer of 1512. Luther set out for Leipsic to receive the money necessary for his promotion from the elector's treasures. But according to the usages of courts, the money came not. The friar getting impatient would have left, but monastic obedience detained him. At length, on the 4th of October, he received fifty florins from Pfeffinger and John Doltzig, and gave them his receipt for it, in which he designates himself merely as a monk. "I, Martin," says he, "friar of the order of Eremites." Luther hastened back to Wittemberg.

Andrew Bodenstein was then Dean of the Faculty of Theology, and is best known under the name of Carlstadt, being that of his native town. He was also called A. B. C. It was Melancthon who first gave him this designation, which is taken from the three initial letters of his name. Bodenstein

acquired the first elements of literature in his native place. He was of a grave and gloomy temper, perhaps inclined to jealousy, and of a restless intellect, eagerly bent, however, on acquiring knowledge, and endowed with great ability. He attended different universities in order to increase his acquirements, and studied theology even at Rome. On his return from Italy into Germany he established himself at Wittemberg, and became doctor in divinity. “At this period,” says he himself afterwards, “I had not read the Holy Scriptures.” This account gives a very just idea of what the theology of that day was. Carlstadt, besides being a professor, was a canon and archdeacon. This is the person who was at a later period to make a rent in the Reformation. In Luther at that time, he only saw an inferior, but the Augustin soon became an object of jealousy to him. “I am not willing,” said he one day, “to be a smaller man than Luther.”3 When Carlstadt conferred the highest university degree on his future rival, he was far from foreseeing the celebrity which the young professor was destined to obtain. On the 18th of October, 1512, Luther was admitted a licentiate in theology, and took the following oath:—“I swear to defend evangelical truth by every means in my power.” The following day, Bodenstein, in presence of a numerous assembly, formally delivered to him the insignia of doctor of theology. He was made Biblical doctor, not doctor of sentences, and in this way was called to devote himself to the study of the Bible, and not to that of human tradition.5 The oath, then, which he took was, as he relates, to his well-beloved Holy Scripture. He promised to preach it faithfully, to teach it purely, to study it during his whole life, and to defend it by discussion and by writing, as far as God should enable him to do so. This solemn oath was Luther’s call to be the Reformer. In laying it upon his conscience freely to seek, and boldly to announce Christian truth, this oath raised the new doctor above the narrow limits to which his monastic vow might perhaps have confined him. Called by the university and by his sovereign, in the name of the emperor, and of the See of Rome itself, and bound before God, by the most solemn oath, he was thenceforth the intrepid herald of the word of life. On this memorable day, Luther was dubbed knight of the Bible.

Accordingly, this oath taken to the Holy Scriptures, may be regarded as one of the causes of the renovation of the Church. The infallible authority of the word of God alone was the first and fundamental principle of the Reformation. All the reformations in detail which took place at a later period, as reformations in doctrine, in manners, in the government of the Church, and in worship, were only consequences of this primary principle. One is scarcely able at the present time to form an idea of the sensation produced by this elementary principle, which is so simple in itself, but which had been lost sight of for so many ages. Some individuals of more extensive views than the generality, alone foresaw its immense results. The bold voices of all the Reformers soon proclaimed this powerful principle, at the sound of which Rome is destined to crumble away:—“Christians, receive no other doctrines than those which are founded on the express words of Jesus Christ, his apostles, and prophets. No man, no assembly of doctors, are entitled to prescribe new doctrines.” The situation of Luther was changed. The call which the Reformer had received became to him like one of these extraordinary calls which the Lord addressed to the prophets under the Old Dispensation, and to the apostles under the New. The solemn engagement which he undertook made so deep an impression on his mind, that, in the sequel, the remembrance of this oath was sufficient to console him amid the greatest dangers and the sharpest conflicts. And when he saw all Europe agitated and shaken by the word which he had announced; when it seemed that the accusations of Rome, the reproaches of many pious men, and the doubts and fears of his own easily agitated heart, would make him hesitate, fear, and give

way to despair, he called to mind the oath which he had taken, and remained firm, tranquil, and full of joy. “I have advanced in the name of the Lord,” said he, on a critical occasion, “and I have put myself into his hands. His will be done. Who asked him to make me a doctor? If He made me, let him sustain me; or if he repents of having made me, let Him depose me!… This tribulation terrifies me not. I seek one thing only, and it is to have the Lord favourable to me in all that he calls me to do.” Another time he said, “He who undertakes any thing without a divine call, seeks his own glory; but I, Doctor Martin Luther, was compelled to become a doctor. Papism sought to stop me in the discharge of my duty, and you see what has happened to it; and still worse will happen. They will not be able to defend themselves against me. I desire, in the name of the Lord, to tread upon the lions, and trample under foot the dragons and vipers. This will commence during my life, and be finished after my death.” From the hour when he took the oath Luther sought the truth solely for itself and for the Church. Still deeply impressed with recollections of Rome, he saw indistinctly before him a course which he determined to pursue with all the energy of his soul. The spiritual life which had hitherto been manifested within him was now manifested outwardly. This was the third period of his development. His entrance into the convent had turned his thoughts towards God: the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and of the righteousness of faith, had emancipated his soul; and his doctor’s oath gave him that baptism of fire by which he became the Reformer of the Church. His thoughts were soon directed in a general way to the subject of reformation. In a discourse which he had written apparently with a view to its being announced by the Provost of Litzkau, at the Council of Lateran, he affirmed that the corruption of the world was occasioned by the priests, who, instead of preaching the pure word of God, taught so many fables and traditions. According to him the word of life alone had power to accomplish the spiritual regeneration of man. Hence, even at this period, he made the salvation of the world depend on the re-establishment of sound doctrine, and not on a mere reformation of manners. Luther was not perfectly consistent with himself; he entertained contradictory opinions; but a powerful intellect was displayed in all his writings. He boldly broke the links by which the systems of the schools chained down human thought, passed beyond the limits to which past ages had attained, and formed new paths for himself. God was in him. The first opponents whom he attacked were those famous schoolmen whom he had so thoroughly studied, and who then reigned as sovereigns in all universities. He accused them of Pelagianism; and, forcibly assailing Aristotle, the father of the school, and Thomas Aquinas, undertook to tumble both of them from the throne on which they sat, the one ruling philosophy, and the other theology. “Aristotle, Porphyry, the theologians of sentences,” (the schoolmen,) wrote he to Lange, “are the lost studies of our age.2 There is nothing I more ardently long for than to expose this player, who has sported with the Church by wrapping himself up in a Greek mask, and to make his disgrace apparent to all.” In all public disputations he was heard to say, “the writings of the apostles and prophets are more certain and more sublime than all the sophisms and all the theology of the school.” Such sayings were new, but people gradually became accustomed to them. About a year after he could triumphantly write—“God works. Our theology and St. Augustine make wonderful progress, and reign in our university. Aristotle is on the decline, and is already tottering to his speedy and eternal overthrow. The lessons on the sentences are admirable for producing a yawn. No man can hope to have an audience if he does not profess Biblical theology.” Happy the university to which such a testimony can be given. At the same time that Luther attacked Aristotle, he took the part of Erasmus and Reuchlin against their enemies. He entered into communication with these great men and others of the learned, such as

Pirckheimer, Mutian, and Hütten, who belonged more or less to the same party. At this period he formed another friendship also, which was of great importance to him during his whole life.

There was then at the court of the elector a man distinguished for wisdom and candour, named George Spalatin. Born at Spalatus or Spalt, in the bishopric of Eichstadt, he had at first been curate of the village of Hohenkirch, near the forest of Thuringia, and was afterwards selected by Frederick the Wise to be his secretary and chaplain, and also tutor to his nephew, John Frederick, who was one day to wear the electoral crown. Spalatin retained his simplicity in the midst of the court. He appeared timid on the eve of great events, circumspect and prudent like his master, when contrasted with the impetuous Luther, with whom he was in daily correspondence. Like Staupitz he was made for peaceful times. Such men are necessary, somewhat resembling those delicate substances in which we wrap up jems and trinkets to protect them from injury in travelling. They seem useless, and yet without them the precious jewels would have been broken and destroyed. Spalatin was not fitted to do great things, but he faithfully and unostentatiously acquitted himself of the task which had been assigned to him. He was at first one of the principal assistants of his master in collecting those relics of saints, of which Frederick was long an amateur, but gradually, along with the prince, turned toward the truth. The faith which was then re-appearing in the Church did not take the firm hold of him that it did of Luther. He proceeded at a slower pace. He became Luther's friend at court, the minister through whom all affairs between the Reformer and the princes were transacted, the mediator between the Church and the State. The elector honoured Spalatin with his friendship; when on a journey they always travelled in the same carriage.2 In other respects, the air of the court often half suffocated the good chaplain. He took fits of melancholy, and would have liked to quit all his honours, and be again a simple pastor in the woods of Thuringia; but Luther consoled him, and exhorted him to remain firm at his post. Spalatin acquired general esteem; the princes and the learned of his time testifying the sincerest regard for him. Erasmus said, "I inscribe the name of Spalatin not only among those of my principal friends, but also amongst those of my most venerated patrons; and this not on paper but on my heart." The affair of Reuchlin and the monks was then making a great noise in Germany. The most pious men were often at a loss as to the party which they ought to embrace; for the monks wished to destroy Jewish books which contained blasphemies against Christ. The doctor of Wittemberg being now in high repute, the elector ordered his chaplain to consult him on this subject. The following is Luther's reply. It is the first letter which he addressed to the preacher of the court.

"What shall I say? These monks pretend to drive out Beelzebub, but not by the finger of God. For this I cease not to lament and groan. We Christians begin to be wise abroad, and we are void of sense at home. On all the places of Jerusalem are blasphemies a hundred times worse than those of the Jews. The world is filled with spiritual idols. Inspired with a holy zeal, we should put away and destroy these internal enemies, whereas we leave the matter which is most pressing; the devil himself persuading us to abandon our own business at the same time that he prevents us from amending what belongs to others."

CHAP. VIII

Faith—Popular Declamations—Academical Instruction—Moral Purity of Luther—German Theology or Mysticism—The Monk Spenlein—Justification by Faith—Luther on Erasmus—Faith and Works—Erasmus—Necessity of Works—Practice of Works.

Luther did not lose himself in this quarrel. Living faith in Christ filled his heart and his life. “In my heart,” said he, “faith in my Lord Jesus Christ reigns sole, and sole ought to reign. He alone is the beginning, the middle, and the end, of all the thoughts which occupy my mind night and day.” He was always heard with admiration when he spoke of this faith in Christ, whether in the professor’s chair or in the church. His lessons diffused light, and men were astonished at not having sooner perceived truths which in his mouth appeared so evident. “The desire of justifying ourselves,” said he, “is the source of all anguish of heart, whereas he who receives Jesus Christ as a Saviour has peace, and not only peace, but purity of heart. Sanctification of the heart is entirely a fruit of faith; for faith is in us a Divine work, which changes us, and gives us a new birth, emanating from God himself. It kills Adam in us by the Holy Spirit, which it communicates to us, giving us a new heart, and making us new men. “It is not by hollow speculation,” exclaimed he again, “but by this practical method that we obtain a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.”2 At this time Luther preached discourses on the Ten Commandments, which have come down to us under the name of Popular Declamations. Undoubtedly there are errors in them; for Luther himself was enlightened only by degrees. “The path of the just is like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” But in these discourses what truth! what simplicity! what eloquence! How easy to conceive the effect which the new preacher must have produced upon his audience and his age! We will quote only one passage taken from the commencement.

Luther goes up into the pulpit of Wittemberg, and gives out these words, “Thou shalt have no other god before me.” Then addressing himself to the people who filled the church, he says, “All the sons of Adam are idolators, and guilty of violating this First Commandment.” This strange assertion no doubt surprises his hearers. He must therefore justify it, and accordingly proceeds:—“There are two kinds of idolatry, the one without, the other within.

“The one without is, when man worships wood and stone, beasts and stars.

“The one within is, when man, fearing punishment or seeking his ease, does not give worship to the creature, but loves it internally, and confides in it.

“What religion is this? You do not bend the knee before riches and honours, but you offer them your heart, the noblest part of you. Ah! you worship God with the body, and with the spirit you worship the creature.

“This idolatry reigns in every man until he is cured of it freely by the faith which is in Jesus Christ.

“And how is this cure performed?

“In this way. Faith in Christ strips you of all confidence in your own wisdom, your own righteousness, your own strength. It tells you that if Christ had not died for you, and so saved you, neither yourself nor any creature could have done it. Then you learn to despise all those things which remained useless to you.

“There now remains to you only Jesus; Jesus alone; Jesus fully sufficient for your soul. No longer having any hopes in the creatures, you have now Christ only, in whom you hope all, and whom you love above all. Now Jesus is the sole, the only, the true God. When you have him for God you have no longer other gods.”

It is thus Luther shows how, by the gospel, the soul is brought back to God its sovereign good, agreeably to the words of Jesus Christ, “I am the way; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.” The man who speaks thus to his age is not merely desirous to overthrow some abuses; he is first of all desirous to establish true religion. His work is not negative merely—it is primarily positive.

Luther afterwards directs his discourse against the superstitions with which Christendom then abounded, against signs and mysterious characters, observations of certain days and certain months, familiar demons, ghosts, the influence of the stars and wizards, metamorphoses, incubuses and succubuses, the patronage of saints, etc. etc. He attacks these idols one after the other, and vigorously casts down these false gods. But it was at the university especially, in presence of enlightened youths, eager for truth, that Luther laid open all the treasures of the word of God. “His mode of explaining the Scriptures,” says his illustrious friend, Melancthon, “was such, that in the judgment of all pious and enlightened men it was as if a new light had risen upon doctrine after a long dark night. He pointed out the difference between the Law and the Gospel. He refuted the error then prevalent in churches and schools, that men merit the forgiveness of sins by their own works, and are rendered righteous before God by means of external discipline. He thus brought back the hearts of men to the Son of God. Like John the Baptist, he pointed to the Lamb of God, who had taken away the sins of the world. He explained how sins are pardoned freely for the sake of the Son of God, and how man receives the blessing through faith. He made no change in ceremonies; on the contrary, the established discipline had not, in his order a more faithful observer and defender. But he laboured more and more to make all comprehend the great and essential doctrines of conversion, of the forgiveness of sins, of faith, and the true consolation which is to be found in the cross. The pious were charmed and penetrated with the sweetness of this doctrine, while the learned received it gladly.2 One would have said that Christ, the apostles and prophets, were coming forth from darkness and a loathsome dungeon.” The firmness with which Luther fortified himself by Scripture gave great authority to his teaching, while other circumstances added to his power. His life corresponded to his words—his discourses were not merely from the life, they came from the heart, and were exemplified in all his conduct. And when the Reformation burst forth many influential men, who were much grieved at seeing the rents that were made in the Church, won over by the Reformer’s purity of conduct, and his admirable talents, not only did not oppose him, but even embraced the doctrine to which his works bore testimony. The more they loved Christian virtue the more they inclined to the Reformer. All honest theologians were in his favour.2 Such is the testimony of those who knew him, in particular of Melancthon, the wisest man of his age, and Erasmus, Luther’s celebrated opponent. Yet prejudice has dared to speak of his debauchery. Wittemberg was changed by this preaching of faith, and became the focus of a light which was soon to illumine Germany, and diffuse itself over all the Church. In 1516, Luther published a treatise by an anonymous mystic theologian, (probably Ebland, priest at Frankfort,) entitled German Theology, wherein the author shows how man may attain perfection by the three methods of purification, illumination, and communion. Luther never plunged into mystical theology, but he received a salutary impression from it. It confirmed him in the disgust which he felt for dry scholastics—in his contempt for the works and observances so much dwelt upon by the Church—in his conviction of man’s spiritual impotence, and of the necessity of grace, and in his attachment to the Bible. “To the schoolmen,” wrote he to Staupitz, “I prefer the Mystics and the Bible;” thus placing the Mystics by the side of the inspired writers. Perhaps the German Theology also assisted him in forming a sounder idea of the sacraments, and

especially of the mass. For the author of that work insists that the Eucharist gives Christ to man, but does not offer Christ to God. Luther accompanied this publication with a preface, in which he declared, that next to the Bible and St. Augustine, there was no book he had ever met with, from which he had learned more respecting God, Christ, man, and all things. Already several doctors had begun to inveigh against the Professors of Wittemberg, and to accuse them of innovation. “One would suppose,” continues Luther, “that there never were men before us who taught as we do; yea, verily, there were. But the wrath of God, which our sins have deserved, did not permit us to see them, and to hear them. For a long time the universities kept the word of God lying in a corner. Let them read this book, and then tell me if our theology is new; for this book is not new.” But if Luther took all the good that was in mystical theology, he took not the bad that was in it. The great error in mysticism is, to overlook a free salvation. We are going to see a remarkable example of the purity of Luther’s faith.

Luther, possessed of a tender and affectionate heart, was desirous to see those whom he loved in possession of the light which had guided him into the paths of peace; and availed himself of all the opportunities which he had, as professor, preacher, and monk, as well as of his extensive correspondence, to communicate his treasure to others. One of his old brethren of the convent of Erfurt, the monk George Spenlein, was then in the convent of Memmingen. After having spent some time at Wittemberg, Spenlein had asked the doctor to sell different articles which he had left, viz., a tunic of Brussels cloth, a work of a doctor of Isenach, and a monk’s frock. Luther carefully executed this commission. “I have received,” said he to Spenlein, in a letter, 7th April 1516, “a florin for the tunic, half a florin for the book, and a florin for the frock, and have remitted the whole to the father-vicar,” to whom Spenlein owed three florins. But Luther passes quickly from this account of monastic spoils to a more important subject.

“I should like much,” says he to friar George, “to know how it is with your soul. Is it not weary of its own righteousness? does it not breathe at length and confide in the righteousness of Christ? In our day pride seduces many, especially those who do their utmost to become righteous. Not comprehending the righteousness which is freely given us of God in Christ Jesus, they would stand before him by their merits. But that cannot be. When you lived with us you were in this error, as I also was. I am still constantly fighting with it; and have not yet completely triumphed.

“O my dear brother, learn to know Christ and Christ crucified Learn to sing unto him a new song; to despair of thyself, and say, ‘Thou, O Lord Jesus! thou art my righteousness, and I am thy sin! Thou hast taken what is mine, and given me what is thine. What thou wert not thou hast become, in order that what I was not I might become.’ Take care, O my dear George, not to pretend to such a purity as will make you unwilling to acknowledge yourself a sinner; for Christ dwells in sinners only. He came down from heaven, where he dwelt among the righteous, that he might dwell also among sinners. Meditate carefully on this love of Christ, and thou wilt derive ineffable blessing from it. If our labours and our afflictions could give us peace of conscience, why should Christ have died? Thou wilt find peace only in him, by despairing of thyself and of thy works, and learning with what love he opens his arms to thee, takes upon him all thy sins, and gives thee all his righteousness.”

Thus the powerful doctrine which had already saved the world in the days of the Apostles, and which was to save it a second time in the days of the Reformers, was expounded by Luther with

force and clearness. Stretching over numerous ages of ignorance and superstition, he here shook hands with St. Paul.

Spenlein was not the only person whom he sought to instruct in this fundamental doctrine. He felt uneasy at the little truth which he discovered in this respect in the writings of Erasmus. It was of importance to enlighten a man whose authority was so great, and whose genius was so admirable. But how was he to do it? His friend at court, the elector's chaplain, was respected by Erasmus; and it is to him Luther addresses himself. "My dear Spalatin, the thing which displeases me in Erasmus, that man of vast erudition, is, that by the righteousness of works or of the law, of which the apostle speaks, he understands the fulfilment of the ceremonial law. The justification of the law consists not in ceremonies only, but in all the works of the Decalogue. When these works are performed without faith in Christ, they may, it is true, make Fabriciuses, Reguluses, and other men of strict integrity in the eyes of the world, but then they as little deserve to be called righteousness, as the fruit of a medlar to be called a fig. For we do not become righteous, as Aristotle pretends, by doing works of righteousness; but when we have become righteous we do such works. The man must first be changed, and then the works. Abel was first pleasing to God, and then his sacrifice." Luther continues, "I pray you, fulfil the duty of a friend and of a Christian, by making Erasmus acquainted with those things." This letter is dated "In haste, from the corner of our convent, 19th Oct., 1516." It gives a true view of the footing on which Luther stood with Erasmus, and shows the sincere interest which he felt in whatever he thought truly advantageous to this distinguished writer. No doubt, at a later period, the opposition of Erasmus to the truth forced Luther to combat him openly, but it was only after he had sought to enlighten his opponent. At length those views on the nature of goodness were propounded which were at once clear and profound, and the great truth was distinctly proclaimed, that the real goodness of a work consists not in its external form, but in the spirit in which it is done. Thus giving a mortal blow to all the superstitious observances, which had for ages choked the Church, and prevented Christian virtues from growing and flourishing in it.

"I read Erasmus," again writes Luther, "but he is every day losing his credit with me. I like to see him, with so much skill and firmness, rebuking priests and monks for their loathsome ignorance, but I fear he will not do great service to the doctrine of Jesus Christ. What is of man has more hold on his heart than what is of God. We live in dangerous times. A man is not a good and judicious Christian because he understands Greek and Hebrew. Jerome, who knew five languages, is inferior to Augustine, who only knew one, though Erasmus thinks differently. I am very careful to conceal my sentiments concerning Erasmus, lest I should give an advantage to his opponents. It may be the Lord will give him understanding in his own time."2 The impotence of man, and the omnipotence of God, were the two truths which Luther wished to re-establish. It is a sad religion and a sad philosophy which throws man back upon his natural powers. Ages have made trial of these boasted powers, and while man has of himself succeeded wonderfully in things which concern his earthly existence, he has never been able to dissipate the darkness which hides the true knowledge of God from his mind, nor to change a single inclination of his heart. The highest degree of wisdom attained by ambitious intellects, or minds inflamed with ardent longings after perfection, has only plunged them into despair. The doctrine, therefore, which unveils to us our impotence, in order to acquaint us with a Divine power, which shall enable us to do all things, is a generous, consoling, and perfectly true doctrine; and the reformation which exhibits the glory of

heaven on the earth, and pleads the rights of Almighty God with men, is a great reformation. But nobody was better aware than Luther of the intimate and indissoluble tie which unites the gratuitous salvation of God with the free works of man. Nobody showed better than he that it is only by receiving all from Christ that man can give much to his brethren. He always presented the two acts, that of God and that of man, in the same picture. Thus, after having explained to friar Spenlein wherein saving righteousness consists, he adds “If you believe these things firmly as you ought to do, (for cursed is he who believeth not,) receive thy still ignorant and erring brethren as Jesus Christ has received thee. Bear with them patiently, make their sins thy own, and if thou hast any thing good, communicate it unto them. Receive one another, saith the Apostle, as Christ hath received us to the glory of God. It is a sad righteousness which will not bear with others, because it finds them wicked, and which thinks only of seeking the solitude of the desert, instead of doing them good by patience, prayer, and example. If thou art the lily and the rose of Christ, know that thy dwelling is among the thorns. Only take care that thou do not by thy impatience, thy rash judgments, and thy hidden pride, become thyself a thorn. Christ reigns in the midst of his enemies. Had he been pleased to live only among the good, and to die only for those who loved him, for whom, I ask, would he have died, and among whom would he have lived?”

It is touching to see how Luther himself carried these precepts of charity into practice. An Augustin of Erfurt, named George Leiffer, was subjected to severe trials. Luther learned it, and eight days after he had written the letter to Spenlein, went up to him kindly, and said—“I learn that you are agitated by many tempests, and that your spirit is tossed up and down upon the billows.… The cross of Christ is portioned out over all the earth, and each one receives his part. Do not you, then, reject that which is fallen to you. Rather receive it as a holy relic, not in a vessel of gold and of silver, but what is far better, in a heart of gold—a heart full of meekness. If the wood of the cross has been so sanctified by the blood and flesh of Christ, that we consider it to be the most venerable relic, how much more ought we to regard the injuries, persecutions, inflictions, and hatred of men as holy relics, since they have not only been touched by the flesh of Christ, but embraced, kissed, and blessed by his boundless love?”

CHAP. IX

First Theses—The Old Man and Grace—Visit to the Convents—Dresden—Erfurt—Tornator—Peace and the Cross—Results of the Journey—Labours—The Plague. The instructions of Luther bore fruit. Several of his disciples already felt themselves urged publicly to profess the truths which the lessons of their master had revealed to them. Among his hearers was a learned youth, named Bernard of Feldkirchen, professor of the physics of Aristotle in the university, and who, five years afterwards, was the first of the evangelical ecclesiastics who entered into the bond of matrimony.

Luther, while he was presiding, desired Feldkirchen to maintain theses in which his principles were expounded. The doctrines professed by Luther thus acquired new publicity. The disputation took place in 1516, and was Luther’s first attack on the reign of the sophists and the Papacy. However feeble it was, it gave him considerable uneasiness. “I allow these propositions to be printed,” said he, many years after, on publishing them in his works, “principally in order that the greatness of my cause, and the success with which God has crowned it, may not puff me up. For they fully manifest my shame; that is to say, the infirmity and ignorance, the fear and trembling, with which I

commenced this struggle. I was alone, and had imprudently plunged into this affair. Not being able to draw back, I conceded several important points to the pope, and even adored him." The following are some of these propositions:—

"The old man is vanity of vanities—he is wholly vanity, and renders all other creatures vain, how good soever they be.

"The old man is called the flesh, not only because he is led by sensual lusts, but also because, even though he were chaste, prudent, and just, he is not born anew of God by the Spirit.

"A man who is without the grace of God cannot observe the commands of God, nor prepare himself, in whole or in part, to receive grace, but necessarily remains under sin.

"The will of man without grace is not free, but enslaved, and that voluntarily.

"Jesus Christ, our strength and our righteousness, who trieth the hearts and reins, is alone the Searcher and Judge of our merits.

"Since everything is possible through Christ to him who believeth, it is superstitious to seek other aid, whether in the will of man or in the saints." This disputation made a great noise, and has been considered as the commencement of the Reformation. The moment approached when this reformation was to burst forth. God was hastening to prepare the instrument which he meant to employ. The elector having built a new church at Wittemberg, to which he gave the name of "All-Saints," sent Staupitz into the Netherlands to collect the relics with which he was desirous to enrich it. The vicar-general ordered Luther to take his place during his absence, and in particular to pay a visit to forty monasteries in Misnia and Thuringia.

Luther repaired first to Grimma, and thence to Dresden, everywhere labouring to establish the truths which he had ascertained, and to enlighten the members of his own order. "Don't attach yourself to Aristotle, or to other teachers of a deceitful philosophy," said he to the monks, "but diligently read the word of God. Seek not your salvation in your own strength, and your own good works, but in the merits of Christ, and in Divine grace." An Augustin monk of Dresden had run off from his convent, and was living at Mayence, where the prior of the Augustins had received him. Luther wrote to the prior to demand restitution of the lost sheep, and added these words, which are full of truth and charity, "I know that offences must come. It is no wonder that man falls; but it is a wonder he rises again, and stands erect. Peter fell, in order that he might know that he was a man; and we still see the cedar of Lebanon fall. Angels even (a thing which surpasses our comprehension) fell in heaven, and Adam fell in paradise. Why then be astonished when a reed is shaken by the wind, and the smoking flax is quenched?" From Dresden, Luther proceeded to Erfurt, to do the duties of vicar-general in the very convent where, eleven years before, he had wound up the clock, opened the door, and swept the Church. He appointed his friend, bachelor John Lange, a learned and pious, but austere man, prior of the convent, exhorting him to affability and patience. Shortly after he wrote him, "Show a spirit of meekness towards the prior of Nuremberg. This is fitting, inasmuch as the prior has put on a sour and bitter spirit. Bitter is not expelled by bitter, that is to say, devil by devil; but sweet expels bitter, that is to say, the finger of God casts out demons."3 It must perhaps be regretted, that on different occasions Luther did not remember this excellent advice. At Neustadt on Orla there was nothing but division. Quarrelling and disturbance reigned in the convent. All the monks were at war with the prior, and assailed

Luther with their complaints. The prior, Michael Dressel, or Tornator, as Luther calls him, translating his name into Latin, on his part explained all his grievances to the doctor. “Peace! peace!” said he. “You seek peace,” replied Luther, “but you seek the peace of the world, and not that of Christ. Know you not that our God has placed his peace in the midst of war? He whom nobody troubles has no peace. But he who, troubled by all men, and by all the things of life, bears all calmly and joyfully, possesses true peace. You say, with Israel, Peace, peace; and there is no peace. Say rather with Christ, The cross, the cross; and there will be no cross. For the cross ceases to be a cross as soon as we can sincerely say with joy, O blessed cross, there is no wood like thine!” After his return to Wittemberg, Luther, wishing to put an end to these divisions allowed the monks to elect another prior.

Luther returned to Wittemberg after an absence of six weeks. He was grieved at all that he had seen, but the journey gave him a better acquaintance with the Church and the world; gave him more confidence in his intercourse with men and furnished him with numerous opportunities of founding schools, and urging this fundamental truth, that “the Holy Scripture alone shows us the way to heaven,” and to exhort the brethren to live together holily, chastely, and peacefully. Doubtless, much seed was sown in the different Augustin convents during this journey of the Reformer. The monastic orders, which had long been the stay of Rome, perhaps did more for the Reformation than against it. This is true especially of the order of Augustins. Almost all pious men of a free and exalted spirit who were in cloisters, turned to the gospel, and a new and noble blood soon circulated in their orders, which were in a manner the arteries of German Catholicity. The world knew nothing of the new ideas of the Augustin of Wittemberg, after they had become the great subject of conversation in chapters and monasteries. In this way, more than one cloister was a seminary of reformers. At the moment when the great blow was struck, pious and brave men came forth from their obscurity, and abandoned the retreat of the monastic life, for the active career of ministers of the word of God. Even during the inspection of 1516, Luther by his words awoke many slumbering spirits, and hence this year has been called “the morning star of the gospel day.”

Luther resumed his ordinary avocations. At this period he was oppressed with work; it was not enough that he was professor, preacher, and confessor; he had, moreover, a variety of temporal business connected with his order and his convent. “I almost constantly require two clerks,” wrote he; “for I do little else the whole day than write letters. I am preacher to the convent, chaplain at table, pastor and parish minister, director of studies, vice-prior, which means prior eleven times over, inspector of the ponds of Litzkau, advocate of the inns of Herzberg at Torgau, reader of St. Paul, commentator on the Psalms.… I have seldom time to say my Hours and chant,—to say nothing of my combat with flesh and blood, the devil and the world.… See how lazy a man I am.”

About this time the plague broke out in Wittemberg, and a great part of the students and teachers left the town. Luther remained. “I don’t well know,” wrote he to his friend at Erfurt, “if the plague will allow me to finish the Epistle to the Galatians. Prompt and brisk, it makes great ravages, especially among the young. You advise me to flee. Whither shall I flee? I hope the world will not go to wreck though friar Martin fall. If the plague makes progress, I will disperse the friars in all directions, but for myself I am stationed here, and obedience permits me not to flee, till he who has called me recall me. Not that I do not fear death, (for I am not the Apostle Paul, I am only his commentator;) but I hope the Lord will deliver me from fear.” Such was the firmness of the doctor of Wittemberg.

Will he, whom the plague could not force to recoil one step, recoil before Rome? Will he yield to the power of the scaffold?

CHAP. X

Relations of Luther with the Elector—Luther and the Elector—Counsels to the Chaplain—Duke George—His Character—Luther before the Court—Dinner at Court—Emser's Supper. The same courage which Luther displayed in presence of most formidable evils, he displayed in presence of the great. The elector was much pleased with the vicar-general, who had made a good collection of relics in the Netherlands. Luther gives an account of it to Spalatin. There is something curious in this affair of relics occurring at the moment when the Reformation is about to commence. Assuredly the Reformers had little idea of the point at which they were to arrive. A bishopric seemed to the elector only a fit recompence to the vicar-general. Luther, to whom Spalatin wrote on the subject, strongly disapproved of it. "Many things," replied he, "please your prince, which, however, displease God. I deny not his ability in the affairs of the world, but in what concerns God and the salvation of souls, I account him seven-fold blind as well as his counsellor Pfeffinger. I say not this behind their backs like a slanderer; don't hide it from them, for I am ready to say it personally to both. Why," continues he, "would you environ this man with all the whirlwinds and tempests of episcopal cares?" The elector did not take Luther's frankness in bad part. "The prince," says Spalatin in a letter to him, "often speaks of you, and with much respect." Frederick sent the monk stuff to make a cassock of very fine cloth. "It would be too fine," said Luther, "were it not the gift of a prince. I am unworthy that any man should think of me, far less that a prince should, and so great a prince. The most useful persons to me are those who think the most ill of me. Return thanks to our prince for his favour; but know that I desire not to be praised by you, or by any man—all praise of man being vain, and the praise which cometh from God alone being true." The excellent chaplain did not wish to confine himself to his court functions. He desired to render himself useful to the people; but, like many of all times, he wished to do it without giving offence. He not only wished not to irritate any one, but, on the contrary, to conciliate general favour. "Point out," says he to Luther, "some work which I may translate into our mother tongue, a work which will please generally, and at the same time be useful." "Agreeable and useful!" replies Luther; "the request is beyond me. The better things are, the less they please. What is more salutary than Jesus Christ? And yet to most he is a savour of death. You will tell me that you wish to be useful to those who love what is good. In that case, just let the voice of Christ be heard. You will be agreeable and useful, depend upon it; but it will be to a very small number: for the sheep are rare in this region of wolves."

Luther, however, recommended to his friend the sermons of Tauler. "I have never seen," said he, "either in Latin or our own tongue a sounder theology, or one more agreeable to the gospel. Taste and see how sweet the Lord is; but be it after you have tasted and seen how bitter every thing is that is ours."

It was in the course of the year 1517 that Luther entered into communication with Duke George of Saxony. The House of Saxony had then two heads. The princes, Ernest and Albert, carried off in their youth from the castle of Altenbourg by Kunz of Kaufungen, had, by the treaty of Leipsic, become the founders of the two houses which still bear their name. The Elector Frederick, the son of Ernest, at the period of which we write, was the chief of the Ernestine branch, while his brother,

Duke George, was chief of the Albertine branch. Dresden and Leipsic were in the states of the duke, who had his residence in the former of these cities. His mother, Sidonia, was daughter of George Podiebrad, King of Bohemia. The long struggle which Bohemia had maintained with Rome, from the days of John Huss, had had some influence on the prince of Saxony, and he had often shown a desire for a reformation. “He has sucked it from his mother,” it was said: “he is by birth an enemy of the clergy.” He in various ways annoyed the bishops, abbots, canons, and monks, in so much that his cousin, the elector, was more than once obliged to interpose in their behalf. It might have been supposed that Duke George would be a warm partisan of the Reformation. Devout Frederick, on the contrary, who had once put on the spurs of Gregory in the Holy Sepulchre, girt himself with the great ponderous sword of the conqueror of Jerusalem, and taking an oath to combat for the Church, like a bold knight, might have been expected to prove one of the most eager champions of Rome. But when the gospel is in question, the anticipations of human wisdom are often at fault. The result was the opposite of what might have been supposed. The duke would have taken pleasure in humbling the Church, and those connected with it, and lowering the bishops, whose princely train far surpassed his own; but to receive into his heart the evangelical doctrine which must have humbled it, to acknowledge himself a guilty sinner, incapable of being saved, unless through grace, was quite a different matter. He would willingly have reformed others, but he had no desire to reform himself. He would, perhaps, have assisted in obliging the bishop of Mentz to be contented with a single bishopric, and have no more than fourteen horses in his stable, as he himself repeatedly expressed it;3 but when he saw another than himself appear as reformer,—when he saw a mere monk undertake the work,—and the Reformation gaining numerous adherents among the humbler classes,—the haughty grandson of the Hussite king became the most violent adversary of the reform of which he had at first promised to be a partisan. In July 1517, Duke George asked Staupitz to send him a learned and eloquent preacher. Staupitz sent Luther representing him as a man of great learning and irreproachable character. The prince invited him to preach at Dresden, in the chapel of the castle on the feast of St. James the Elder. On the day fixed the duke and his court proceeded to the chapel to hear the preacher of Wittemberg.

Luther gladly seized the occasion to bear testimony to the truth before such an assembly. He took for his text the gospel of the day, “Then came to him the mother of Zebedee’s children with her sons.” (Matthew 20:20-25) He preached on the wishes and rash prayers of men; then dwelt strongly on the assurance of salvation, making it rest on this foundation, viz., That those who hear the word of God with faith are the true disciples, whom Jesus Christ has elected unto eternal life. He next treated of eternal election, showing that this doctrine, when exhibited in connection with the work of Christ, is well fitted to calm the terrors of conscience, and so, instead of disposing men to flee from God, allures them to seek their refuge in Him. In conclusion, he brought forward a parable of three virgins, and drew a very instructive improvement from it. The word of truth made a deep impression on the hearers. Two in particular appeared to give earnest attention to the discourse of the monk of Wittemberg. The one was a respectable looking lady who sat in one of the court pews, and whose features bespoke deep emotion. It was Madam de la Sale, grand mistress to the duchess. The other was Jerome Emser, a licentiate in canon law, and secretary and counsellor to the duke. Emser was a man of talent and extensive information. A courtier and able politician, his wish would have been to please both parties at once; to pass at Rome for a defender of the papacy, and at the same time figure in Germany among the learned men of the

age. But under this flexible spirit a violent temper lay concealed. Thus Luther and Emser, who were afterwards repeatedly to break a lance, met for the first time in the chapel of the castle of Dresden. The dinner-bell having rung for the inmates of the castle, the ducal family and the persons attached to the court were soon seated at the table. The conversation naturally turned on the preacher of the morning. “How did you like the sermon?” said the duke to Madam de la Sale. “Could I again hear such another discourse,” replied she, “I could die in peace.” “And I,” replied George, angrily, “would give a good sum not to have heard it. Such discourses are good only to make people sin with confidence.” The master having thus stated his opinion, the courtiers proceded without restraint to express their dissatisfaction. Every one was ready with his remark. Some alleged, that in the parable of the three virgins, Luther had had three ladies of the court in his eye. On this the talk was endless. They rallied the three ladies whom they affirmed that Luther had intended. He is an ignorant blockhead, said one. He is a proud monk, said another. Each had his comment on the sermon, making the preacher say whatever he pleased. The truth had fallen into the midst of a court ill prepared to receive it. Every one tore it at pleasure. But while the word of God was to many an occasion of stumbling, to the grand mistress it was a stone “elect and precious.” Falling sick about a month after, she confidently embraced the grace of the Saviour, and died rejoicing.2 In regard to the duke, perhaps the testimony which he had heard given to the truth was not in vain. However much he opposed the Reformation during his life, it is known that in his last moments he declared, that his only hope was in the merits of Jesus Christ.

It naturally fell to Emser to do the honours to Luther in his master’s name. He accordingly invited him to supper. Luther refused; but Emser insisted and constrained him to come. Luther only expected to meet a few friends, but he soon perceived that a trap had been laid for him. A master of arts from Leipsic, and several Dominicans, were with the prince’s secretary. The master of arts, who had an overweening opinion of himself, and a deep hatred of Luther, accosted him with a bland and friendly air; but he soon broke out, and screamed at full pitch.4 The battle began. “The discussion,” says Luther, “turned on the absurdities of Aristotle and St. Thomas.” At last Luther challenged the master of arts, with all the erudition of the Thomists, to define what it was to fulfil the commandments of God. The master of arts, though embarrassed, put on a good countenance. “Pay me my fees,” says he, stretching out his hand, “da pastum.” One would have said, he was going to give a lesson in form, mistaking the guests for his pupils. “At this foolish reply,” adds the Reformer, “we all burst a laughing, and the party broke up.”

During the conversation, a Dominican had been listening at the door, and would fain have come in to spit in Luther’s face. He refrained, however, though he afterwards made a boast of it. Emser, who had been delighted at seeing his guests battling, while he seemed to hold a due medium, hastened to apologise to Luther for the manner in which the party had gone off.2 Luther returned to Wittemberg.

CHAP. XI

Return to Wittemberg—Theses—Nature of Man—Rationalism—Demand at Erfurt—Eck—Urban Regius—Luther’s Modesty.

Luther zealously resumed his labours. He was preparing six or seven young theologians, who were forthwith to undergo an examination in order to obtain a licence to teach. And what most delighted him was, that their promotion was to be to Aristotle’s disgrace. “I should like,” said he, “to

multiply his enemies as fast as possible." With that view, he at this time published Theses, which deserve attention. The leading topic which he discussed was liberty. He had already glanced at it in the theses of Feldkirchen, but now went deeper into it. Ever since Christianity began, there has been a struggle, more or less keen, between the opposite doctrines of the freedom and the slavery of man. Some schoolmen had taught, like Pelagius and others, that man possessed in himself the liberty or power of loving God and doing good. Luther denied this liberty, not to deprive man of it, but, on the contrary, to make him obtain it. The struggle, then, in this great question, is not, as is usually said, between liberty and servitude; but between a liberty proceeding from man, and a liberty proceeding from God. Some who call themselves the advocates of liberty, say to man, "You have the power of doing good, and require a greater liberty." Others, who have been called advocates of slavery, say to him, on the contrary, "You have no true liberty; but God offers it to you in the gospel." The one party speaks of liberty, but a liberty which must end in slavery; while the other speaks of slavery, in order to give liberty. Such was the struggle in the time of St. Paul, in the time of Augustine, and in the time of Luther. Those who say "Change nothing!" are champions of slavery. Those who say "Let your fetters fall!" are champions of liberty.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the whole Reformation can be summed up in this particular question. It is one of the many doctrines which the Wittemberg doctor maintained—that is all. It would, above all, be a strange illusion to hold, that the Reformation was fatalism, or an opposition to liberty. It was a magnificent emancipation of the human mind. Bursting the numerous bands with which thought had been bound by the hierarchy, and reviving the ideas of liberty, right, and examination, it delivered its own age, and with it ours also, and the remotest posterity. And let it not be said that the Reformation, while it freed man from human despotism, enslaved him by proclaiming the sovereignty of grace. No doubt, it wished to bring back the human will to the Divine, to subordinate the one, and completely merge it in the other; but what philosopher knows not that entire conformity to the will of God alone constitutes sovereign, perfect freedom; and that man will never be truly free, until supreme righteousness and truth have sole dominion over him? The following are some of the Ninety-nine Propositions which Luther sent forth into the Church, in opposition to the Pelagian rationalism of scholastic theology.

"It is true that man, who is become a corrupt tree, can only will and do what is evil.

"It is not true that the will, when left to itself, can do good as well as evil; for it is not free but captive.

"It is not in the power of the will of man to choose or reject whatever is presented to it.

"Man cannot naturally wish God to be God. His wish is that he himself were God, and that God were no God.

"The excellent, infallible, and sole preparation for grace, is the eternal election and predestination of God.

"It is false to say that when man does all he can, he clears away the obstacles to grace.

"In one word, nature possesses neither a pure reason nor a good will.

"On the part of man, there is nothing which precedes grace, unless it be impotence and even rebellion.

“There is no moral virtue without pride or sullenness, that is to say, without sin.

“From the beginning to the end we are not the masters of our actions, but the slaves of them.

“We do not become righteous by doing what is righteous, but having become righteous we do what is righteous.

“He who says that a theologian who is not a logician is a heretic and an adventurer, maintains an adventurous and heretical proposition.

“There is no form of reasoning (syllogism) which accords with the things of God.

“If the form of the syllogism could be applied to divine things, we should know the article of the Holy Trinity, and should not believe it.

“In one word, Aristotle is to theology as darkness to light.

“Man is more hostile to the grace of God than he is to the law itself.

“He who is without the grace of God sins incessantly, even though he neither kills, nor steals, nor commits adultery.

“He sins, for he does not fulfil the law spiritually.

“Not to kill, and not to commit adultery, externally, and in regard to action, merely, is the righteousness of hypocrites.

“The law of God and the will of man are two adversaries, who, without the grace of God, can never agree.

“What the law wishes the will never wishes; only from fear it may make a show of wishing.

“The law is the hangman of the will, and is subject only to the Child who has been born unto us. (Isaiah, 9:6.) “The law makes sin abound; for it irritates and repulses the will.

“But the grace of God makes righteousness abound, through Jesus Christ, who makes us love the law.

“Every work of the law appears good externally, but internally is sin.

“The will, when it turns toward the law without the grace of God, does so only for its own interest.

“Cursed are those who do the works of the law.

“Blessed are all those who do the works of the grace of God.

“The law, which is good, and in which we have life, is the law of the love of God, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, (Romans 5:5)

“Grace is not given in order that works may be done more frequently and more easily, but because without grace there cannot be any work of love.

“To love God is to hate oneself, and know nothing out of God.” In this way Luther attributes to God all the good that man can do. The thing to be done is not to repair, or, so to speak, to patch up the

will of man; an entirely new will must be given him. God alone could say this; for God alone could perform it. This is one of the greatest and most important truths that the will of man can acknowledge. But Luther, while proclaiming the impotence of man, did not fall into the opposite extreme. He says in the eighth thesis, “It follows not that the will is naturally bad, that is to say, that its nature is of the essence of evil, as the Manichees taught.” Originally the nature of man was essentially good; but it turned aside from goodness, that is, God, and is inclined to evil. Still its origin remains holy and glorious, and is capable, by the power of God, of regaining its original. The object of Christianity is to restore it. The gospel, it is true, exhibits man in a state of degradation and impotence, but as placed between two glories and two grandeurs,—a past glory, from which he has been precipitated, and a future glory, to which he is called. This is the truth, and man knows it to be the truth; and how little soever he thinks of it, he easily discovers that all which is told him of his actual purity, power, and glory, is only a lie, designed to cradle his pride and rock it asleep.

Luther, in his theses, attacked not only the pretended goodness of man’s will, but also the pretended light of his understanding in regard to divine things. In fact, scholasticism had exalted reason as well as the will. This theology, in the hands of some of its teachers, was, at bottom, only a species of rationalism. The propositions which we have enumerated indicate this; for they look as if directed against the rationalism of our own day. In the theses, which were the signal of the Reformation, Luther attacked the Church and the popular superstitions which to the gospel had added indulgences, purgatory, and numberless abuses. In those which we have just given he attacked the school and the rationalism which had robbed the gospel of the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, his revelation and his grace. The Reformation attacked rationalism before it attacked superstition. It proclaimed the rights of God before lopping off the excrescences of man. It was positive before it was negative. This has not been sufficiently attended to, and yet, without attending to it, it is impossible duly to appreciate the character of this religious revolution. Be this as it may, the truths which Luther thus expressed with so much energy were quite new. To maintain these theses at Wittemberg had been an easy matter. There his influence was paramount, and it would have been said that he had chosen a field of battle where he knew no combatant could appear. In offering battle in another university he gave them a greater publicity; and it was by publicity that the Reformation was effected. He turned his eyes towards Erfurt, where the theologians had shown themselves so exasperated against him.

He, accordingly, sent his theses to John Lange, prior of Erfurt, and wrote him as follows: “My anxiety for the decision which you will give as to these theses is great, extreme, too great, perhaps, and keeps me on the rack. I much suspect that your theologians will consider as paradoxical and kakodoxical, what I must henceforth regard as most orthodox. Tell me how it is, and as soon as you possibly can. Have the goodness to make known to the Faculty of Theology, and to all, that I am ready to come and publicly maintain these propositions either in the university or the monastery.” It does not seem that Luther’s challenge was accepted. The monks of Erfurt contented themselves with intimating that his theses had incurred their high displeasure. But he was desirous to send them to some other part of Germany; and with that view bethought him of a man who plays an important part in the history of the Reformation, and with whom the reader must be made acquainted. A distinguished professor, named John Meyer, was then teaching in the university of Ingolstadt, in Bavaria. He was a native of Eck, a village in Swabia, and was commonly

called Doctor Eck. He was a friend of Luther, who respected his talents and acquirements. Full of intellect, he had read much, and was possessed of a very retentive memory. To erudition he added eloquence. His voice and gesture bespoke the vivacity of his genius. In regard to talent, Eck was in the south of Germany what Luther was in the north. They were the two most distinguished theologians of the period, though of very different views. Ingolstadt was almost the rival of Wittemberg. The reputation of these two doctors attracted crowds of eager students from all quarters to the universities in which they taught; their personal qualities not less than their abilities endearing them to their pupils. The character of Doctor Eck has been assailed, but an anecdote in his history will show that at this period, at least, his heart was not closed against generous impressions.

Among the students whom his fame had attracted to Ingolstadt was a young man, named Urban Regius, from the banks of an Alpine lake. He had first studied at the university of Fribourg in Brisgau. On his arrival at Ingolstadt, to which he had been attracted by the fame of Doctor Eck, Urban engaged in his course of philosophy, and gained the favour of his master. Requiring to provide for his maintenance, he was under the necessity of taking charge of some young noblemen, and had not only to superintend their studies and their conduct, but also to purchase on his own account whatever books and clothes they required. The youths dressed in style, and kept a good able. Regius becoming embarrassed prayed the parents to recall their sons. “Never fear,” was the answer. His debts increased, his creditors became pressing, and he was at his wit’s end. The emperor was raising an army against the Turks, and a recruiting party having arrived at Ingolstadt, Urban in despair enlisted. Clothed in military attire, he appeared in the ranks at the time when the review took place, previous to their departure. Doctor Eck coming up at that instant with several of his colleagues, was greatly surprised to discover his student among the recruits. “Urban Regius!” said he, fixing his keen eye on him. “Here,” replied the recruit. “What, pray, is the cause of this?” The young man told his story. “I take the matter upon myself,” replied Eck, and setting his halberd aside, bought him off from the recruiting party. The parents, threatened by the Doctor with the displeasure of the prince, sent the necessary funds to defray the expences of their children, and Urban Regius was saved to become at a later period one of the pillars of the Reformation.

Doctor Eck occurred to Luther as the proper person to publish his theses on Pelagianism and scholastic rationalism in the south of the empire. He did not, however, send them to the professor of Ingolstadt directly, but employed a mutual friend, the excellent Christopher Scheurl, secretary to the town of Nuremberg, praying him to send them to Eck at Ingolstadt, which is at no great distance from Nuremberg. “I send you,” says he, “my paradoxical, and even kakistodoxical (κακιστ■δοξας) propositions, as many think them. Communicate them to our dear friend, the very learned and talented Eck, that I may learn and know what he thinks of them.” These were the terms in which Luther then spoke of Doctor Eck; such was the friendship then subsisting between them. It was not Luther who broke it off.

Ingolstadt, however, was not the field on which the battle was to be fought. The doctrines on which these theses turned were perhaps of greater importance than those which, two months after, set the Church in a blaze; and yet, notwithstanding of Luther’s challenges, they passed unnoticed. At most, they were read within the circle of the school, and produced no sensation beyond it. The reason was, because they were only university propositions and theological doctrines, whereas the subsequent theses related to an evil which had grown up in the midst of the people, and was

then causing devastation in all parts of Germany. So long as Luther was contented with reviving forgotten doctrines, all was silence; but when he attacked abuses which were universally felt, every one turned to listen.

Nevertheless, all that Luther proposed in either case was to produce one of those theological discussions which were then so common in universities. To this circle his views were confined. He was humble, and his humility amounted even to distrust and anxiety. “Considering my ignorance,” said he, “all I deserve is to be hid in a corner, without being known by any one under the sun.” But a mighty hand drew him out of this corner in which he wished to remain unknown to the world. A circumstance, independent of Luther’s will, threw him into the field of battle, and the war commenced. This providential circumstance we are now called upon to relate.

BOOK THIRD The Indulgences and Theses

1517, 1518

CHAP. I

Cortége—Tezel—Tezel’s Discourse—Confession—Four Graces—Sale—Public Penance—A Letter of Indulgences—Exceptions—Feasting and Debauchery. At this period the people of Germany were all in motion. The Church had opened a vast market on the earth. From the crowd of customers, and the noise and pleasantry of the sellers, one would have thought it a fair, only a fair held by monks. The merchandise which they were showing off, and selling a bargain, was, as they said, the salvation of souls. The merchants travelled the country in a fine carriage, accompanied by three mounted attendants, journeying in grand style, and living at great expence. One would have said it was some high Mightiness with his suite and officers, and not a vulgar dealer or mendicant monk. When the cortêge approached a town, a messenger was despatched to the magistrate to say, “The grace of God and of St. Peter is at your gates.” Immediately the whole place was in motion. Clergy, priests, nuns, the council, schoolmasters and their scholars, the incorporations with their colours, men and women, old and young, went out to meet the merchant with lighted tapers in their hand, amid the sound of music and the ringing of bells, “insomuch,” says a historian, “that God himself could not have been received with greater honour.” After the formalities were over the whole body proceeded to the church. The Bull of Grace by the pontiff was carried in front, on a velvet cushion or cloth of gold. Next came the chief of the indulgence merchants, carrying a large wooden cross, painted red. The whole procession moved forward, amid hymns, prayers, and the smoke of incense. The merchant monk and his attendants were received at the church by the pealing organ and thrilling music. The cross was placed in front of the altar, and over it the pope’s arms were suspended. All the time it remained there the clergy of the place, the penitentiaries and sub-commissaries, came each day after vespers or before the salute, to do obeisance to it with white wands in their hands. This grand affair produced a lively sensation in the quiet cities of Germany. At these sales one personage in particular drew the attention of the spectators. It was he who carried the great red cross, and played the principal character. He was clothed in the dress of a Dominican, and had an arrogant air. His voice was Stentorian, and though in his sixty-third year, he seemed still in full vigour. This man, the son of one Diez, a jeweller of Leipsic, was called John Diezel, or Tezel. He had studied in his native town, became bachelor in 1487, and two years after entered the Dominican order. Numerous honours had accumulated on his head. Bachelor in theology, prior of the dominicans, apostolic

commissary, inquisitor, hæreticæ pravitatis inquisitor, he had discharged the office of commissary of indulgences, without intermission, from 1502. The skill which he had acquired as subaltern soon raised him to the office of commissary-in-chief. He had eighty florins a month, and all his expences paid, together with a carriage and three horses; but his perquisites (it is easy to comprehend what they were) far exceeded his salary. In 1507 at Freiberg he gained two thousand florins in two days. If he discharged the functions, he had also the manners of a quack. Convicted of adultery and shameful misconduct at Inspruck, his vices had almost cost him his life. The Emperor Maximilian had ordered him to be put into a sack and thrown into the river; but the Elector Frederick happening to arrive, obtained his pardon. The lesson which he thus received had not given him more modesty; for he had two of his children along with him.

Miltitz, the pope's legate, mentions the fact in one of his letters. It would have been difficult to find in all the cloisters of Germany a man better fitted for the traffic with which he was entrusted. To the theology of a monk, to the zeal and temper of an inquisitor, he united the greatest effrontery; but the thing which, above all, made the task easy to him, was his skill in inventing extraordinary stories to captivate the minds of the people. To him all means were good that filled his coffers. Raising his voice, and giving free vent to his vulgar eloquence, he offered his indulgences to every comer, and knew better than any dealer at a fair how to set off his merchandise.

After the cross was erected, and the arms of the pope suspended over it, Tezel mounted the pulpit, and with a tone of assurance began to extol the value of the indulgences in presence of the crowd who had been attracted to the church by the ceremony. The people listened and stared on hearing the wondrous virtues of which he told them. A Jesuit historian, speaking of the Dominicans with whom Tezel was associated, says, "Some of these preachers failed not, as usual, to outrage the subject which they treated, and so to exaggerate the value of the indulgences as to make people suppose they were certain of their own salvation, and of the deliverance of souls from purgatory as soon as the money was paid." If such were the scholars, we may judge what the master was. Let us listen to one of his harangues after setting up the cross.

"Indulgences are the most precious and most sublime gift of God.

"This cross (pointing to the red cross) has the very same efficacy as the actual cross of Jesus Christ.

"Come, and I will give you letters under seal, by which even the sins which you may have a desire to commit in future will all be forgiven.

"I would not exchange my privileges for that of St. Peter in heaven; for I have saved more souls by my indulgences than the apostle by his sermons.

"There is no sin too great for an indulgence to remit; and even should any one (the thing, no doubt, is impossible) have done violence to the Holy Virgin Mary, mother of God, let him pay, let him only pay well, and it will be forgiven him.

"Think, then, that for each mortal sin you must, after confession and contrition, do penance for seven years, either in this life or in purgatory. Now, how many mortal sins are committed in one day, in one week? How many in a month, a year, a whole life? Ah! these sins are almost innumerable, and innumerable sufferings must be endured for them in purgatory. And now, by

means of these letters of indulgence, you can at once, for life, in all cases except four, which are reserved to the Apostolic See, and afterwards at the hour of death, obtain a full remission of all your pains and all your sins."

Tezel even made financial calculations on the subject.

"Do you not know," said he, "that when a man proposes to go to Rome, or to any other country where travellers are exposed to danger, he sends his money to the bank, and for every five hundred florins that he means to have, gives five, or six at most, in order that, by means of letters from the bank, he may receive the money safely at Rome or elsewhere … And, you, for the fourth of a florin, will not receive these letters of indulgence, by means of which you might introduce into the land of paradise, not worthless money, but a divine and immortal soul, without exposing it to the smallest risk."

Tezel next passed to another subject.

"But more than this," said he; "indulgences not only save the living: they also save the dead.

"For this repentance is not even necessary.

"Priest! noble! merchant! wife! young girls! young men! hear your departed parents and your other friends, crying to you from the bottom of the abyss, 'We are enduring horrible torments! A little alms would deliver us; you can give it, and yet will not!' "

These words, uttered by the formidable voice of the charlatan monk, made his hearers shudder.

"At the very instant," continued Tezel, "when the piece of money chinks on the bottom of the strong box, the soul comes out of purgatory, and, set free, flies upward into heaven."

"O imbecile and brutish people, who perceive not the grace which is so richly offered to you!… Now heaven is everywhere open!… Do you refuse at this hour to enter? When, then, will you enter? Now you can ransom so many souls! Hard-hearted and thoughtless man, with twelve pence you can deliver your father out of purgatory, and you are ungrateful enough not to save him! I will be justified on the day of judgment, but you, you will be punished so much the more severely, for having neglected so great salvation. I declare to you, that though you had only a single coat, you would be bound to take it off and sell it, in order to obtain this grace.… The Lord our God is no longer God. He has committed all power to the pope."

Then, trying to avail himself of other weapons still, he added, "Know you why our most holy Lord is distributing so great a grace? His object is to raise up the ruined church of St. Peter and St. Paul, so that it may not have its equal in the universe. That church contains the bodies of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and of a multitude of martyrs. Owing to the actual state of the building, these holy bodies are now, alas! beaten, flooded, soiled, dishonoured, and reduced to rottenness, by the rain and the hail.… Ah! are these sacred ashes to remain longer in mud and disgrace?" This picture failed not to make an impression on many who felt a burning desire to go to the help of poor Leo X, who had not wherewith to shelter the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul from the rain.

Then the orator opened on the arguers and traitors who opposed his work. "I declare them excommunicated," exclaimed he.

Afterwards addressing docile souls, and making a profane use of Scripture, “Happy are the eyes which see what you see; for I tell you, that many prophets and many kings have desired to see the things which you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things which you hear, and have not heard them.” And at last, showing the strong box in which the money was received, he usually concluded his pathetic discourse with this triple appeal to the people, “Bring! bring! bring!” “These words,” says Luther, “he uttered with such horrible bellowing, that one might have thought it was a mad bull making a rush at people, and striking them with his horns.” When his discourse was ended, he came down from the pulpit, ran towards the chest, and in presence of the people chucked a piece of money into it, taking care to make it give a very loud tinkle.3 Such were the discourses which astonished Germany, heard in the days when God was preparing Luther. At the termination of the discourse, the indulgence was understood “to have established its throne in the place in due form.” Confessionals were set up adorned with the pope’s arms. The sub-commissaries, and the confessors whom they selected, were considered to represent the apostolical penitentiaries of Rome at the jubilee, and on each of these confessionals were posted, in large characters, their names, surnames, and designations.

Then a crowd pressed forward to the confessor, each coming with a piece of money in his hand. Men, women, and children, the poor, even those who lived on alms, all found means of procuring money. The penitentiaries, after having anew explained the greatness of the indulgence to each individual, asked, “How much money can you afford to part with, in order to obtain so complete a forgiveness?” “This question,” says the Instruction of the Archbishop of Mentz to the commissaries; “this question ought to be put at this moment, that the penitents may thereby be the better disposed to contribute.”

Four valuable graces were promised to those who aided in building the basilisk of St. Peter. “The first grace which we announce to you,” said the commissaries, according to their Letter of Instruction, “is the complete pardon of all sins.” After this came three other graces,—first, the right of choosing a confessor, who, whenever the hour of death should seem to be at hand, would give absolution from all sins, and even from the greatest crimes reserved for the Apostolic See; second, a participation in all the blessings, works, and merits of the Catholic Church, in prayers, fastings, alms, and pilgrimages; and, third, the redemption of the souls which are in purgatory. To obtain the first of these graces, it was necessary to have contrition of heart and confession of the lips, or, at least, the intention of confessing. But for the three others, they could be obtained without contrition or confession, merely by paying. Previous to this, Christopher Columbus, extolling the value of gold, had said quite gravely, “He who possesses it may introduce souls into paradise.” Such was the doctrine taught by the Archbishop-Cardinal of Mentz, and the commissaries of the pope. “As to those,” said they, “who would deliver souls from purgatory, and procure for them pardon of all their offences, let them throw money into the chest. It is not necessary for them to have contrition of the heart or confession of the lips. Let them only hasten with their money; for they will thus do a work most useful to the souls of the departed, and to the erection of the Church of St. Peter.” Greater blessings could not be offered at a cheaper rate. When the confession was over, and it did not take long, the faithful hastened towards the seller. One only had charge of the sale, and kept his counter near the cross. He carefully eyed those who approached him, examining their air, bearing, and dress, and asked a sum proportioned to the appearance which each presented. Kings, queens, princes, archbishops, bishops, were, according to the regulation, to pay twenty-five

ducats for an ordinary indulgence. Abbots, counts, and barons, paid ten. Others of the nobility, rectors, and all who had an income of five hundred florins, paid six. Those who had two hundred florins a-year paid one; others, only a half. Moreover, when the tax could not be followed to the letter, full powers were given to the commissary-apostolic, who was to arrange everything in accordance with the dictates of “sound reason,” and the generosity of the donor. For particular sins, Tezel had a particular tax. Polygamy paid six ducats; theft in a church, and perjury, nine ducats; murder, eight ducats; magic, two ducats. Samson, who carried on the same traffic in Switzerland as Tezel in Germany, had a somewhat different tax. For infanticide he charged four livres tournois; for parricide or fratricide, a ducat. The apostolic commissaries sometimes encountered difficulties in carrying on their trade. It often happened, both in towns and villages, that husbands were opposed to the whole concern, and prohibited their wives from giving any thing to these merchants. What, then, were devout spouses to do? “Have you not your dowry, or some other property, at your own disposal?” asked the dealers. “In that case we may dispose of part for so sacred a purpose, even against the will of your husbands. The hand which had given the indulgence could not receive the money. This was prohibited under the severest penalties; for there might be good reason to suspect that that hand would not have been faithful. The penitent himself behoved to deposit the price of his pardon in the chest. Angry looks were given to those who were audacious enough not to open their purses.5

If among those who pressed forward to the confessionals, there happened to be any one whose crime was publicly known, though of a kind which the civil law could not reach, he behoved, first of all, to do public penance. For this purpose they first led him to a chapel or sacristy, where they stripped him of his clothes, and took off his shoes, leaving him nothing but his shirt. His arms were crossed upon his breast, a light placed in one hand, and a rod in the other. Then the penitent walked at the head of the procession which proceeded to the red cross. He remained on his knees till the chant and the collect was finished. Then the commissary gave out the Psalm, Miserere mei. The confessors immediately approached the penitent, and led him across the church towards the commissary, who, taking the rod from his hand, and gently striking him thrice on the back with it, said to him, “The Lord have pity on thee, and forgive thy sin.” He then gave out the Kyrie Eleison. The penitent was led back to the front of the cross, and the confessor gave him the apostolic absolution, and declared him restored to the company of the faithful. Sad mummery, concluded with a holy expression, which, at such a moment, was mere profanation!

It is worth while to know the contents of one of those diplomas of absolution which led to the Reformation of the Church. The following is a specimen:—“May our Lord Jesus Christ have pity on thee, N. N., and absolve thee by the merit of his most holy passion. And I, in virtue of the apostolic power entrusted to me, absolve thee from all ecclesiastical censures, judgments, and penalties, which thou mayest have deserved; moreover, from all the excesses, sins, and crimes, which thou mayest have committed, how great and enormous soever they may have been, and for whatever cause, even should they have been reserved to our most holy Father the pope, and to the apostolic see. I efface all the marks of disability, and all the notes of infamy which thou mayest have incurred on this occasion. I remit the pains which thou shouldest have to endure in purgatory. I render thee anew a partaker in the sacraments of the church. I again incorporate thee into the communion of saints, and re-establish thee in the innocence and purity in which thou wert at the hour of thy baptism; so that, at the moment of thy death, the gate of entrance to the place of pains

and torments will be shut to thee, and, on the contrary, the gate which leads to the heavenly paradise, will be opened to thee. If thou art not to die soon, this grace will remain unimpaired till thy last hour arrive. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“Friar John Tezel, commissary, has signed it with his own hand.”

How dexterously presumptuous and lying words are here intermingled with holy Christian expressions!

All the faithful required to come and confess at the place where the red cross was erected. The only exceptions were the sick, the aged, and pregnant women. If, however, there happened to be in the neighbourhood some noble in his castle, or some great personage in his palace, there was an exemption for him; for he might not care to mingle with the crowd, and his money was worth the going for.

If there happened to be a convent whose heads were opposed to the traffic of Tezel, and prohibited their monks from visiting the places where the indulgence had erected its throne, means were still found to remedy the evil by sending them confessors, who were commissioned to absolve them against the will of their order and the will of their heads. There was not a vein in the mine, however small, which they did not find means of working. At length they arrived at the object and end of the whole affair, the summing up of the cash. For greater security, the strong box had three keys—one in the hands of Tezel, the second in those of the treasurer, appointed by the firm of Fugger of Augsburg, who had been appointed agents in this vast enterprise, while the third was entrusted to the civil authority. When the moment arrived, the counters were opened in the presence of a notary-public, and the whole was duly counted and recorded. Must not Christ arise and drive these profane sellers from the temple? The mission being closed, the dealers relaxed from their labours. It is true the instructions of the commissary-general forbade them to frequent taverns and suspicious places; but they cared little for this prohibition. Sin must have appeared a very trivial matter to people who had such an easy trade in it. “The mendicants,” says a Roman Catholic historian, “led a bad life, expending in taverns, gaming-houses, and places of infamy, what the people retrenched from their necessities.”4 It is even averred, that in taverns they sometimes played at dice for the salvation of souls.

CHAP. II The Franciscan Confessor—The Soul in the Burying-Ground—The Shoemaker of Hagenau—The Students—Myconius—Conversation with Tezel—Stratagem by a Gentleman—Conversation of the Wise and of the People—A Miner of Schneeberg. But let us look at some of the scenes which then took place in Germany during this sale of the pardon of sins; for we here meet with anecdotes which, by themselves alone, give a picture of the times. As we proceed with our narrative we deem it best to let men speak for themselves. At Magdebourg Tezel refused to absolve a wealthy female, unless she would pay him one hundred florins in advance. She consulted her ordinary confessor, who was a Franciscan. “God,” replied he, “gives the remission of sins freely, and does not sell it.” However, he begged her not to tell Tezel what advice he had given her. But the merchant having somehow or other heard of words so injurious to his interest, exclaimed, “Such an adviser deserves to be banished or burned.”

Tezel rarely found men enlightened enough, and still more rarely men bold enough, to resist him. For the most part he had a good market from the superstitious crowd. He had erected the red

cross of indulgences at Zwickau, and the good parishioners had hastened to make the money which was to deliver them chink on the bottom of the chest. He was going away with a well-filled purse. The evening before his departure the chaplains and their attendants applied to him for a farewell entertainment. The request was reasonable; but how was it possible to comply with it? the money was already counted and sealed up. The next morning he orders the large bell to be rung. Crowds hastened to the church, every one thinking that something extraordinary must have happened, as the station was closed. “I had resolved,” said he, “to depart this morning, but last night was awoke by groans. On listening I found they came from the burying-ground. Alas! it was a poor soul calling and entreating me instantly to deliver it from the torment by which it was consumed. I have, therefore, remained one day more, in order to stir up the compassion of Christian hearts in favour of this unhappy soul. I am willing myself to be the first to give, and whosoever does not follow my example will deserve damnation.” What heart would not have responded to such an appeal? Who knew, moreover, whose soul it was that was crying in the burying-ground? The people contributed freely, and Tezel gave the chaplains and their attendants a jovial entertainment, defraying the expence by the offerings which he had received in favour of the soul of Zwickau. The indulgence merchants had fixed their station at Hagenau in 1517. A shoemaker’s wife, taking advantage of the authority of the instruction of the commissary-general, had, contrary to the will of her husband, procured a letter of indulgence, and paid a gold florin for it. She died shortly after. The husband not having caused mass to be said for the repose of her soul, the curate charged him with contempt of religion, and the judge of Hagenau summoned him to appear. The shoemaker put his wife’s indulgence in his pocket and repaired to the court. “Is your wife dead?” asked the judge. “Yes,” replied he. “What have you done for her?” “I have buried her body, and commended her soul to God.” “But have you caused a mass to be said for the salvation of her soul?” I have not; it was unnecessary. She entered heaven the moment of her death.” “How do you know that?” “Here is the proof.” So saying, he takes the indulgence out of his pocket, and the judge, in presence of the curate, reads in as many words that the woman who received it would not enter purgatory, but go straight to heaven. “If the reverend curate maintains that a mass is still necessary, my wife has been cheated by our most holy father the pope. If she was not cheated, then it is the reverend curate who is cheating me.” This was unanswerable, and the accused was acquitted. Thus the good sense of the people did justice to these pious frauds.

One day when Tezel was preaching at Leipsic, and introducing into his sermons some of those stories of which we have given a sample, two students feeling quite indignant, rose up and left the church, exclaiming, “It is impossible for us to listen longer to the drolleries and puerilities of this monk.” One of them, it is said, was young Camerarius, afterwards the intimate friend of Melancthon, and his biographer. But of all the young men of the period, he on whom Tezel made the strongest impression unquestionably was Myconius, afterwards celebrated as a Reformer, and historian of the Reformation. He had received a Christian education. His father, a pious man of Franconia, was wont to say to him, “My son, pray frequently, for all things are freely given to us by God alone. The blood of Christ,” added he, “is the only ransom for the sins of the whole world. O, my son! were there only three men that could be saved by the blood of Christ, believe, and believe with confidence, that thou art one of the three. It is an insult to the blood of the Saviour to doubt if it saves.” Then cautioning his son against the traffic which was beginning to be established in Germany—“The Roman indulgences,” said he to him, “are nets which fish for money, and deceive the simple. The forgiveness of sins and of eternal life are not things for sale.” At the age of thirteen

Frederick Myconius was sent to the school of Annaberg to finish his studies. Shortly after, Tezel arrived in the town, and remained in it for two years. The people flocked in crowds to his sermon. “There is no other method,” exclaimed Tezel in his voice of thunder; “there is no other method of obtaining eternal life than the satisfaction of works; but this satisfaction is impossible for man, and, therefore, all he can do is to purchase it from the Roman pontiff.” When Tezel was about to quit Annaberg, his addresses became more urgent. “Soon,” exclaimed he, in a threatening tone, “soon will I take down the cross, shut the gate of heaven,2 and quench the lustre of that sun of grace which is now shining in your eyes.” Then resuming the gentle accent of persuasion, “Now,” said he, “is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.” Then raising his voice anew, the pontifical Stentor, who was addressing the inhabitants of a rich mineral district, loudly exclaimed, “Bring your money, burghers of Annaberg, contribute largely in behalf of the indulgences, and your mines and your mountains will be filled with pure silver.” In conclusion, he declared that at Pentecost he would distribute his letters to the poor gratuitously, and for the love of God.

Young Myconius being among the number of Tezel’s hearers, felt an eager desire to avail himself of this offer. Going up to the commissaries, he said to them in Latin, “I am a poor sinner, and need a gratuitous pardon!” The merchants replied, “Those alone can have part in the merits of Jesus Christ who lend a helping hand to the Church, in other words, who give money.” “What is the meaning then,” said Myconius, “of those promises of free gift, which are posted up on the walls and doors of the churches?” “Give at least a shilling,” said Tezel’s people who had gone to their master, and interceded with him for the young man, but without effect. “I am not able.” “Only Sixpence.” “I have not even so much.” The dominicans then began to fear that he wished to entrap them. “Listen,” said they to him, “we will make you a present of the sixpence.” The young man, raising his voice in indignation, answered, “I want no indulgences that are purchased. If I wished to purchase, I would only have to sell one of my school-books. I want a free pardon, given purely for the love of God, and you will have to give account to God for having allowed the salvation of a soul to be lost for a sixpence.” “Who sent you to entrap us?” exclaimed the merchants. “Nothing but the desire of receiving the grace of God could have tempted me to appear before such mighty lords,” replied the young man, and withdrew.

“I was much grieved,” said he, “at being sent thus pitilessly away; but I still felt within myself a Comforter, who told me that there was a God in heaven, who, without money and without price, pardons repenting sinners for the love of his Son Jesus Christ. As I was taking leave of those people, I melted into tears, and, sobbing, prayed, ‘O God! since these men have refused me the forgiveness of my sins, because I had no money to pay for it, do thou, O Lord, have pity on me, and forgive my sins in pure mercy! I went to my lodging, and taking up my crucifix, which was lying on my desk, laid it on my chair, and prostrated myself before it. I cannot describe what I felt. I asked God to be my Father, and to do with me whatsoever he pleased. I felt my nature changed, converted, and transformed. What formerly delighted me now excited my disgust. To live with God, and please him, was my strongest, my only desire.” Thus Tezel himself contributed to the Reformation. By crying abuses he paved the way for a purer doctrine, and the indignation which he excited in a generous youth was one day to break forth mightily. We may judge of this by the following anecdote. A Saxon gentleman, who had heard Tezel at Leipsic, felt his indignation aroused by his falsehoods, and going up to the monk, asked him whether he had power to pardon the sins which were intended to be committed? “Assuredly,” replied Tezel. “I have full power from

the pope to do so." "Well then," resumed the knight, "there is one of my enemies on whom I should like to take a slight revenge without doing him any deadly injury, and I will give you ten crowns in return for a letter of indulgence, which will completely acquit me." Tezel made some objections; at last, however, they came to an agreement for thirty crowns. Soon after the monk quits Leipsic. The gentleman accompanied by his servants, waited for him in a wood between Jüterboch and Treblin, and rushing out upon him, and giving him some blows with a stick, carried off the rich indulgence chest, which the inquisitor had with him. Tezel cries out robbery, and carries his complaint before the judges, but the gentleman shows the letter with Tezel's own signature, exempting him beforehand from all punishment. Duke George, who had at first been very angry, on seeing the document ordered the accused to be acquitted. This traffic everywhere occupied men's thoughts, and was everywhere talked of. It was the subject of conversation in castles, in academies, and at the firesides of the citizens, as well as in inns and taverns, and all places of public resort. Opinions were divided, some believing, and others expressing indignation. The sensible portion of the community rejected the whole system of indulgences with disgust. It was so contrary to Scripture and to morality, that all who had any knowledge of the Bible, or any natural light, condemned it in their hearts, and only waited for a signal to declare their opposition to it. On the other hand, scoffers found ample materials for raillery. The people, who had for many years been irritated by the misconduct of the priests, and whom nothing but the fear of punishment induced to keep up a certain show of respect, gave free vent to their hatred. Complaints and sarcasms were everywhere heard on the avarice of the clergy. Nor did they stop here. They even attacked the power of the keys, and the authority of the sovereign pontiff. "Why," said they, "does not the pope deliver all souls from purgatory at once from a holy charity, and in consideration of the sad misery of these souls, seeing he delivers so great a number for the love of perishable money, and of the cathedral of St. Peter? Why do feasts and anniversaries of the dead continue to be celebrated? Why does not the pope restore or allow others to resume the benefices and prebends which have been founded in favour of the dead, since it is now useless, and even reprehensible, to pray for those whom indulgences have for ever delivered?" "What kind of new holiness in God and the pope is this—from a love of money to enable a wicked profane man to deliver a pious soul beloved of the Lord from purgatory, rather than deliver it themselves gratuitously from love, and because of its great wretchedness." The gross and immoral conduct of the traffickers in indulgences was much talked of. "In paying carriers for transporting them with their goods, the innkeepers with whom they lodge, or any one who does any piece of work for them, they give a letter of indulgence for four, five, or any number of souls, as the case may be." In this way, the diplomas of salvation were current in inns and in markets like bank bills or paper money. "Bring! Bring!" said the common people, "is the head, the belly, the tail, and the whole body of the sermon." A miner of Schneeberg, meeting a seller of indulgences, asked, "Must we indeed give credit to what you have often said of the power of the indulgence, and of the authority of the pope, and believe it possible, by throwing a penny into the box, to ransom a soul from purgatory?" The merchant assured him it was true. "Ah!" resumed the miner, "what an unmerciful man the pope must be, for a paltry penny to leave a miserable soul so long crying in the flames. If he has no ready money, let him borrow some hundred thousand crowns, and deliver all these people at once. We poor folks will willingly pay him both the interest and the capital." Thus Germany was weary of the shameful traffic which was going on in the midst of her, and could no longer tolerate the impostures of these master-swindlers of Rome, as Luther calls them. Yet no bishop, no theologian, durst oppose their quackery and their

fraud. The minds of men were in suspense, and asked whether God would not raise up some mighty man for the work which required to be done? This man nowhere appeared.

CHAP. III

Leo X—Necessities of the Pope—Albert—His Character—Favours the Indulgences—The Franciscans and the Dominicans. The pope then on the pontifical throne was not a Borgia but Leo X, of the illustrious house of Medici. He was able, frank, kind, and gentle. His address was affable, his liberality without bounds, and his morals, superior to those of his court. Cardinal Pallavicini, however, acknowledges that they were not altogether irreproachable. To this amiable character he joined several of the qualities of a great prince. He showed himself friendly to science and art. The first Italian comedies were represented in his presence; and there are few of his day which he did not see performed. He was passionately fond of music. Musical instruments resounded every day in his palace; and he was often heard humming the airs which had been performed before him. He was fond of magnificence, and spared nothing when fêtes, games, theatricals, presents or rewards, were in question. No court surpassed that of the sovereign pontiff in splendour and gayety. Accordingly, when it was learned that Julian Medicis was proposing to reside at Rome with his young bride, “God be praised,” exclaimed Cardinal Bibliena, the most influential counsellor of Leo X, “the only thing we wanted was a female court.” A female court was necessary to complete the court of the pope. To religious sentiment Leo was completely a stranger. “His manners were so pleasing,” says Sarpi, “that he would have been perfect if he had had some acquaintance with religious matters, and been somewhat more inclined to piety, which seldom, if ever, gave him any concern.”2

Leo was greatly in want of money. He had to provide for his immense expenditure, supply all his liberalities, fill the purse of gold which he daily threw to the people, keep up the licentious exhibitions of the Vatican, satisfy the numerous demands of his relations and voluptuous courtiers, give a dowry to his sister, who had been married to Prince Cibo, a natural son of Pope Innocent VIII, and meet the expenditure occasioned by his taste for literature, arts, and pleasure. His cousin, Cardinal Pucci, as skilful in the art of hoarding as Leo in that of lavishing, advised him to have recourse to indulgences. Accordingly, the pope published a bull, announcing a general indulgence, the proceeds of which were, he said, to be employed in the erection of the church of St. Peter, that monument of sacerdotal magnificence. In a letter, dated at Rome, under the seal of the Fisherman, in November, 1517, Leo applies to his commissary of indulgences for one hundred and forty-seven gold ducats, to pay a manuscript of the thirty-third book of Livy. Of all the uses to which he put the money of the Germans, this was, doubtless, the best. Still it was strange to deliver souls from purgatory in order to purchase a manuscript history of the wars of the Roman people.

There was at this time in Germany a young prince who might be regarded as in many respects a living image of Leo X. This was Albert, a younger brother of the elector, Joachim of Brandenburg. At twenty-four years of age he had been appointed Archbishop and Elector of Mentz and of Magdeburg, and two years after made a cardinal. Albert had neither the virtues nor the vices which are often met with in the high dignitaries of the church. Young, fickle, worldly, but not without some generous feelings, he was perfectly aware of many of the abuses of Catholicism, and cared little for the fanatical monks by whom he was surrounded. His equity disposed him, in part at least, to

acknowledge the justice of what the friends of the gospel demanded. In his secret heart he was not much opposed to Luther. Capito, one of the most distinguished Reformers, was long his chaplain, counsellor, and confidant. Albert regularly attended his sermons. “He did not despise the gospel,” says Capito; “on the contrary, he highly esteemed it, and for a long time would not allow the monks to attack Luther.” But he would have liked Luther not to compromise him, and to take good care while exposing the doctrinal errors and vices of the inferior clergy, not to disclose the faults of bishops and princes. In particular, he was most anxious that his name should not be mixed up with the affair. His confidant, Capito, who had imposed upon himself, as men often do in situations similar to his, thus addressed Luther: “Look to the example of Jesus Christ and the apostles; they rebuked the Pharisees and the incestuous man of Corinth, but they never expressly named them. You know not what is passing in the hearts of the bishops; and, perhaps, there is more good in them than you suppose.” But the fickle and profane spirit of Albert, still more than the susceptibilities and fears of his self-love, estranged him from the Reformation. Affable, clever, handsome, extravagant, and wasteful, delighting in the pleasures of the table, in rich equipages, splendid buildings, licentious pleasures, and literary society, this young Archbishop-Elector was in Germany what Leo X was at Rome. His court was one of the most magnificent in the empire, and he was prepared to sacrifice to pleasure and grandeur all the sentiments of truth which, perhaps, might have insinuated themselves into his heart. Nevertheless, his better convictions continued even to the last to exercise some degree of influence over him, and he repeatedly gave indications of moderation and equity.

Albert, like Leo, was in want of money. The Fuggers, rich merchants in Augsburg, had made him advances which he behoved to repay, and hence, though he had managed to secure two archbishoprics and a bishopric, he was unable to pay Rome for his Pallium. This ornament of white wool, bespangled with black crosses and blessed by the pope, who sent it to the archbishops as a token of their dignity, cost them twenty-six, or, some say, thirty thousand florins. In order to obtain money, Albert, naturally enough, bethought himself of having recourse to the same methods as the pope. He accordingly applied to him for the general farming of the indulgences, or, as they expressed it at Rome, “of the sins of the Germans.” The popes sometimes kept the indulgences in their own hands, and at other times farmed them out, in the same way as some governments still do gaming-houses. Albert made an offer to Leo to share the profits with him, and Leo, in agreeing to the bargain, stipulated for immediate payment of the Pallium. Albert had been counting on paying it out of the indulgences, and therefore applied anew to the Fuggers, who, thinking the security good, agreed, on certain conditions, to make the advance required, and were appointed bankers to the concern. They were the bankers of the princes of this period, and were afterwards made counts in return for the services which they had rendered. The pope and the archbishop having thus, by anticipation, shared in the spoils of the good souls of Germany, the next matter was to select the persons who were to carry the affair into effect. It was first offered to the Franciscan order, whose guardian was conjoined with Albert. But, as it was already in bad odour with honest people, these monks were not anxious to have anything to do with it. The Augustins, who were more enlightened than the other religious orders, would have been less inclined to undertake it. The Franciscans, however, being afraid of offending the pope, who had just sent their chief, De Forli, a cardinal’s hat, a hat which had cost this poor mendicant order thirty thousand florins, the guardian deemed it more prudent not to refuse openly, but, at the same time, threw all sorts of difficulties in Albert’s way. They could never understand each other, and,

accordingly, when the proposal was made to the Elector to undertake the whole charge, he eagerly closed with it. The Dominicans, on the other hand, longed for a share in the general collection which was about to commence. Tezel, who was already famous in the trade, hastened to Mentz to offer his services to the Elector. In consideration of the talent which he had displayed in publishing the indulgences for the knights of the Teutonic order of Prussia and Livonia, his proposals were accepted, and in this way, the whole traffic passed into the hands of his order.

CHAP. IV

Tezel approaches—Luther at the Confessional—Tezel's Rage—Luther without a Plan—Jealousy among the Orders—Luther's Discourse—The Elector's Dream. In so far as we know, Luther heard of Tezel, for the first time, at Grimma, in 1516, when he was on the eve of beginning his visit to the churches. While Staupitz was still with Luther, it was told him that an indulgence merchant was making a great noise at Vürzen. Even some of his extravagant sayings were quoted. Luther's indignation was roused, and he exclaimed, "Please God, I'll make a hole in his drum."

Tezel, on his return from Berlin, where he had met with a most friendly reception from the elector Joachim, brother of the farmer-general, took up his head-quarters at Juterboch. Staupitz, availing himself of his influence with the elector Frederick, had often represented to him the abuses of the indulgences, and the scandalous proceedings of the mendicants, and the princes of Saxony feeling indignant at the shameful traffic, had forbidden the merchant to enter their territory. He was, accordingly, obliged to remain on those of the Archbishop of Magdeburg, but at the same time came as near to Saxony as he could, Juterboch being only four miles from Wittemberg. "This great thresher of purses," says Luther, "set about threshing3 the country in grand style, so that the money began to leap, tumble, and tinkle, in his chest." The people of Wittemberg went in crowds to the indulgence market of Juterboch. At this period Luther had the highest respect for the church and for the pope. "I was then," said he, "a monk, a most bigoted Papist, so intoxicated and imbued with the doctrines of Rome, that if I had been able I would willingly have lent a hand in killing any one audacious enough to refuse obedience to the pope in the minutest matter. I was a real Saul, as many still are." But, at the same time, his heart was ready to declare in favour of all that he believed to be truth, and against all that he believed to be error. "I was a young doctor just of the irons, ardent and rejoicing in the word of the Lord."5

One day when Luther had taken his seat in the confessional at Wittemberg, several citizens of the town came before him, and one after another confessed the grossest immoralities. Adultery, libertinism, usury, ill-gotten wealth, were the crimes with which the minister of the word was entertained by persons of whose souls he was one day to give account. He rebukes, corrects, and instructs them; but what is his astonishment when these people tell him that they don't choose to abandon their sins?… Quite amazed, the pious monk declares, that since they refuse to promise amendment, he cannot give them absolution. The wretched creatures then appealed to their letters of indulgence, exhibiting them and extolling their virtues. But Luther replied, that he cared little for the paper which they had shown him, and added, unless you repent, you will all perish. They made an outcry, and expostulated, but the doctor was immovable; "they must cease to do evil, and learn to do well, … otherwise no absolution." "Beware," added he, "of lending an ear to the harangues of the venders of indulgences; you might be better employed than in buying those licences which are sold you for the most paltry sum."

Much alarmed, these inhabitants of Wittemberg hastened back to Tezel to tell him how his letters were disregarded by an Augustin monk. Tezel, on hearing this, became red with fury, crying, and stamping, and cursing in the pulpit. To strike a deeper terror into the people, he repeatedly kindled a fire in the market-place, declaring he had received orders from the pope to burn all heretics who should dare to oppose his holy indulgences.

Such is the circumstance, which was not the cause, but the first occasion of the Reformation. A pastor seeing the sheep of his flock in a path which must lead them to destruction, makes an effort to deliver them. As yet, he has no thought of reforming the church and the world. He has seen Rome and its corruptions, but he declares not against Rome. He perceives some of the abuses under which Christianity is groaning, but has no thought of correcting these abuses. He has no desire to become Reformer. He has no plan for the reformation of the Church any more than he had had one for himself. God intends reform, and for reform selects Luther. The same remedy which had proved so powerful in curing his own wretchedness, the hand of God will employ by him to cure the miseries of Christendom. He remains quiet in the sphere which is assigned to him, walking merely where his Master calls him, and fulfilling his duties as professor, preacher, and pastor, at Wittemberg. While seated in the church, his hearers come and open their hearts to him. Evil makes an assault upon him, and error seeks him out, of her own accord. He is interfered with in the discharge of his duty, and his conscience, which is bound to the word of God, resists. Is it not God that calls him? To resist is a duty, and being a duty, is also a right. He has no alternative but to speak. In this way were events ordered by that God who was pleased, says Mathesius, “to restore Christendom by means of the son of a forge master, and to purify the impure doctrine of the church, by making it pass through his furnaces.”

Having given this detail, it must be unnecessary to refute a false imputation invented by some of Luther’s enemies, but not till after his death. Jealousy for his order, it has been said, grief at seeing a shameful and condemned traffic entrusted to the Dominicans in preference to the Augustins, who had hitherto enjoyed it, led the doctor of Wittemberg to attack Tezel and his doctrines. The well known fact that this traffic was first offered to the Augustins, who refused it, is sufficient to refute this fable, which has been repeated by writers who have copied each other; even Cardinal Pallavicini states that the Augustins never had discharged this office. Besides, we have seen the travail of Luther’s soul. His conduct needs no other explanation. It was impossible for him not to make open profession of the doctrine to which he owed his happiness. In Christianity, every man who finds a blessing longs to make others partakers in it. In our day it is time to abandon those puerile explanations which are unworthy of the great revolution of the sixteenth century. To lift a world, a more powerful lever was required. The Reformation existed not in Luther only; it was the offspring of his age.

Luther impelled equally by obedience to the truth of God, and by charity towards men, mounted the pulpit. He forewarned his hearers; but, as he himself says, he did it gently. His prince had obtained particular indulgences from the pope for the church of the castle of Wittemberg, and it was possible that some of the blows which he was going to level at the indulgences in question might fall on those of the Elector. No matter; he will run the risk. If he sought to please men, he would not be the servant of Christ.

“No man can prove by Scripture,” says the faithful minister of the Word to the people of Wittemberg, “that the justice of God exacts a penalty or satisfaction from the sinner; the only duty which it imposes upon him is true repentance, sincere conversion, a resolution to bear the cross of Jesus Christ, and to be diligent in good works. It is a great error to think we can ourselves satisfy the justice of God for our sins. He always pardons them gratuitously by his inestimable grace.

“The Christian Church, it is true, requires something from the sinner, and consequently has the power of remitting what she so requires, but that is all. Even these indulgences of the Church are tolerated, only on account of indolent and imperfect Christians, who will not zealously exercise themselves in good works. For they stimulate none to sanctification, but leave all in imperfection.”

Then adverting to the pretext under which the indulgences were published, he continues:—“It would be much better to contribute to the erection of St. Peter’s church from love to God, than to purchase indulgences in this view.… But you ask, Are we then never to purchase them? I have already said, and I repeat it; my advice is, Don’t purchase. Leave them to sleepy Christians, but do you walk apart in your own path. The faithful must be diverted from indulgences, and urged to do the works which they neglect.” At last, glancing at his adversaries, Luther concludes thus:—“If some cry out that I am a heretic, (for the truth which I preach is very hurtful to their strong box,) their clamour gives me little concern. They are dull and sickly brains, men who never felt the Bible, never read Christian doctrine, never comprehended their own teachers, and who turn to rottenness, wrapped up in the tatters of their vain opinions, … God grant them and us a sound mind. Amen.” After these words, the doctor descended from the pulpit, leaving his hearers in astonishment at his bold language. This sermon was printed, and made a deep impression on all who read it. Tezel answered it, and Luther replied; but these discussions did not take place till a later period, (1518). The feast of All Saints drew near. The chronicles of that day here relate a circumstance, which, though not important to the history of the period, may, however, serve to characterise it. It is a dream of the Elector, which in substance is unquestionably authentic, though several circumstances may have been added by those who have related it. It is mentioned by Seckendorf, who observes, that the fear of giving their adversaries ground to say that the doctrine of Luther was founded upon dreams, has perhaps prevented several historians from speaking of it. The Elector Frederick of Saxony, say the chronicles of the time, was at his castle of Schweinitz, six leagues from Wittemberg. On the morning of the 31st October, being in company with his brother Duke John, who was then co-regent, and became sole elector after his death, and with his chancellor, the Elector said to the Duke,

“Brother, I must tell you a dream which I had last night, and the meaning of which I should like much to know. It is so deeply impressed on my mind, that I will never forget it, were I to live a thousand years. For I dreamed it thrice, and each time with new circumstances.”

Duke John.—“Is it a good or a bad dream?” The Elector.—“I know not; God knows.”

Duke John.—“Don’t be uneasy at it; but be so good as tell it to me.” The Elector.—“Having gone to bed last night, fatigued and out of spirits, I fell asleep shortly after my prayer, and slept quietly for about two hours and a half; I then awoke, and continued awake till midnight, all sorts of thoughts passing through my mind. Among other things, I thought how I was to observe the feast of All Saints. I prayed for the poor souls in purgatory, and supplicated God to guide me, my counsels, and my people, according to truth. I again fell asleep, and then dreamed that Almighty God sent

me a monk, who was a true son of the Apostle Paul. All the saints accompanied him by order of God, in order to bear testimony before me, and to declare that he did not come to contrive any plot, but that all that he did was according to the will of God. They asked me to have the goodness graciously to permit him to write something on the door of the church of the castle of Wittemberg. This I granted through my chancellor. Thereupon the monk went to the church, and began to write in such large characters, that I could read the writing at Schweinitz. The pen which he used was so large that its end reached as far as Rome, where it pierced the ears of a lion that was couching there, and caused the triple crown upon the head of the pope to shake. All the cardinals and princes running hastily up, tried to prevent it from falling. You and I, brother, wished also to assist, and I stretched out my arm.… but at this moment I awoke, with my arm in the air, quite amazed, and very much enraged at the monk for not managing his pen better. I recollected myself a little: it was only a dream.

“I was still half asleep, and once more closed my eyes. The dream returned. The lion, still annoyed by the pen, began to roar with all his might, so much so that the whole city of Rome and all the states of the holy empire, ran to see what the matter was. The pope requested them to oppose this monk, and applied particularly to me, on account of his being in my country. I again awoke, repeated the Lord’s Prayer, entreated God to preserve his Holiness, and once more fell asleep.

“Then I dreamed that all the princes of the empire, and we among them, hastened to Rome, and strove one after another to break the pen; but the more we tried the stiffer it became, sounding as if it had been made of iron. We at length desisted. I then asked the monk (for I was sometimes at Rome and sometimes at Wittemberg) where he got this pen, and why it was so strong. ‘The pen,’ replied he, ‘belonged to an old goose of Bohemia, a hundred years old. I got it from one of my old school-masters. As to its strength, it is owing to the impossibility of depriving it of its pith or marrow, and I am quite astonished at it myself.’ Suddenly I heard a loud noise; a large number of other pens had sprung out of the long pen of the monk.… I awoke a third time; it was daylight.…”

Duke John.—“Chancellor, what is your opinion? Would we had a Joseph or a Daniel enlightened by God!”

Chancellor.—“Your Highnesses know the common proverb, that the dreams of young girls, learned men, and great lords, have usually some hidden meaning. The meaning of this dream, however, we will not be able to know for some time; not till the things to which it relates have taken place. Wherefore, leave the accomplishment to God, and place it wholly in his hand.”

Duke John.—“I am of your opinion, Chancellor; ’tis not fit for us to annoy ourselves in attempting to discover the meaning; the God will overrule all for his glory.”

Elector.—“May our faithful God do so; yet I will never forget this dream. I have indeed thought of an interpretation, but I keep it to myself. Time, perhaps, will show if I have been a good diviner.”

Thus, according to the manuscript of Weimar, the morning of 31st of October was spent at Schweinitz. Let us see how the evening was spent at Wittemberg. We again return to the province of History.

CHAP. V

Feast of All Saints—The Theses—Their Force—Moderation—Providence—Letter to Albert—Indifference of the Bishops—Dissemination of the Theses. The words of Luther had produced little effect. Tezel, without troubling himself, continued his traffic and his impious harangues. Will Luther submit to these crying abuses, and keep silence? As a pastor, he has earnestly exhorted those who have had recourse to his ministry, and, as a preacher, he has lifted his warning voice in the pulpit. It still remains for him to speak as a theologian—to address, not individuals in the confessional, not the assembly of the faithful in the church of Wittemberg, but all who, like himself, are teachers of the word of God. His resolution is taken.

He has no thought of attacking the Church, or of putting the pope on his defence. On the contrary, it is his respect for the pope that will not allow him to be any longer silent with regard to claims by which he is injured. He must take the part of the pope against audacious men, who dare to associate his venerable name with their disgraceful traffic. Far from thinking of a revolution which is to destroy the primacy of Rome, Luther expects to have the pope and Catholicism for his allies against impudent monks. The feast of All Saints was an important day for Wittemberg, and especially for the church which the Elector had there erected and filled with relics. On that day these relics, adorned with silver and gold, and precious stones, were brought out and exhibited to the eyes of the people, who were astonished and dazzled by their magnificence. Whoever on that day visited the church and confessed in it obtained a valuable indulgence. Accordingly, on this great occasion, pilgrims came in crowds to Wittemberg. On the 31st of October, 1517, Luther, who had already taken his resolution, walks boldly towards the church to which the superstitious crowds of pilgrims were repairing, and puts up on the door of this church ninety-five Theses or propositions against the doctrine of indulgences. Neither the Elector, nor Staupitz, nor Spalatin, nor any, even the most intimate of his friends, had been previously informed of this step. In these theses, Luther declares, in a kind of preamble, that he had written them with the express desire of setting the truth in the full light of day. He declares himself ready to defend them on the morrow at the university, against all and sundry. The attention which they excite is great; they are read and repeated. In a short time the pilgrims, the university, the whole town is ringing with them. The following are some of these Propositions, written with the pen of the monk, and fixed on the door of the church of Wittemberg.

1. “When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ says ‘repent,’ he means that the whole life of his followers on the earth is a constant and continual repentance.

2. “This expression cannot be understood of the sacrament of penitence, (that is to say, of confession and satisfaction,) as administered by the priest.

3. “Still the Lord intends not to speak merely of internal repentance. Internal repentance is null, if it does not manifest itself externally by the mortification of the flesh.

4. “Repentance and sorrow—that is to say, true penitence—continue so long as a man is displeased with himself—that is, until he passes from this life into life eternal.

5. “The pope is not able, and does not wish to remit any other penalty than that which he has imposed of his own good pleasure, or conformably to the canons, that is to say, the papal ordinances.

6. “The pope cannot remit any condemnation, but only declare and confirm the remission which God himself has given. At least he can only do it in cases which belong to him. If he does otherwise, the condemnation remains exactly as before.

8. “The laws of ecclesiastical penance ought to be imposed on the living only, and have nothing to do with the dead.

21. “The commissaries of indulgence are mistaken when they say that the pope’s indulgence delivers from all punishment and saves.

25. “The same power which the pope has over purgatory throughout the Church, each bishop has individually in his own diocese, and each curate in his own parish.

27. “It is the preaching of human folly to pretend, that at the very moment when the money tinkles in the strong box, the soul flies off from purgatory.

28. “This much is certain; as soon as the money tinkles, avarice and the love of gain arrive, increase, and multiply. But the aids and prayers of the Church depend only on the will and good pleasure of God.

32. “Those who imagine they are sure of salvation by means of indulgences will go to the devil, with those who teach them so.

35. “It is an antichristian doctrine to pretend, that, in order to deliver a soul from purgatory, or to purchase an indulgence, there is no need of either sorrow or repentance.

36. “Every Christian who truly repents of his sins has entire forgiveness of the penalty and the fault, and, so far, has no need of indulgence.

37. “Every true Christian, dead or alive, participates in all the blessings of Christ and of the Church by the gift of God and without a letter of indulgence.

38. “Still the dispensation and pardon of the pope must not be despised; for his pardon is a declaration of the pardon of God.

40. “Genuine sorrow and repentance seek and love punishment; but the mildness of indulgence takes off the fear of punishment, and begets hatred against it.

42. “Christians must be told that the pope has no wish and no intention that they should in any respect compare the act of purchasing indulgences with any work of mercy.

43. “Christians must be told that he who gives to the poor, or lends to the needy, does better than he who buys an indulgence:

44. “For the work of charity makes charity increase, and renders a man more pious; whereas the indulgence does not make him better, but only gives him more self-confidence, and makes him more secure against punishment.

45. “Christians must be told that he who sees his neighbour want, and, instead of helping him, purchases an indulgence, purchases not the indulgence of the pope, but incurs the Divine displeasure.

46. “Christians must be told that if they have no superfluity, they are bound to keep what they have, in order to procure necessaries for their families, and not to lavish it on indulgences.

47. “Christians must be told that to purchase an indulgence is optional, not obligatory.

48. “Christians must be told that the pope having more need of prayer offered up in faith than of money, desires the prayer more than the money when he dispenses indulgences.

49. “Christians must be told that the indulgence of the pope is good provided they do not place their confidence in it, but that nothing is more hurtful if it diminishes piety.

50. “Christians must be told that if the pope knew of the extortions of the preachers of indulgences, he would rather that the metropolis of St. Peter were burned and reduced to ashes, than see it built with the skin, flesh, and bones, of his sheep.

51. “Christians must be told that the pope, as is his duty, would dispense his own money to the poor people whom the preachers of indulgences are now robbing of their last penny, were he, for that purpose, even to sell the metropolis of St. Peter.

52. “To hope to be saved by indulgences is an empty and lying hope even should the commissary of indulgences, nay, the pope himself, be pleased to pledge his own soul in security of it.

53. “Those who, on account of the preaching of indulgences, forbid the preaching of the word of God, are enemies of the pope and of Jesus Christ.

55. “The pope cannot have any other thought than this:—If the indulgence, which is the lesser matter, is celebrated with bell, pomp, and ceremony, it is necessary, à fortiori, to honour and celebrate the gospel, which is the greater matter, with a hundred bells, a hundred pomps, and a hundred ceremonies.

62. “The true and precious treasure of the Church is the holy gospel of the glory and grace of God.

65. “The treasures of the gospel are nets, which once caught the rich, and those who were at ease in their circumstances:

66. “But the treasures of indulgence are nets, in which, now-a-days, they catch, not rich people, but the riches of people.

67. “It is the duty of bishops and pastors to receive the commissaries of apostolic indulgences with all respect:

68. “But it is still more their duty to use their eyes and their ears, in order to see that the said commissaries do not preach the dreams of their own imaginations instead of the orders of the pope.

71. “Cursed be he who speaketh against the indulgence of the pope.

72. “But blessed be he who speaks against the foolish and impudent words of the preachers of indulgences.

76. “The indulgence of the pope cannot take away the smallest daily sin, in regard to the fault or delinquency.

79. “To say that a cross adorned with the arms of the pope is as powerful as the cross of Christ is blasphemy.

80. “Bishops, pastors, and theologians, who allow such things to be said to the people, will be called to account for it.

81. “This shameful preaching, these impudent eulogiums on indulgences make it difficult for the learned to defend the dignity and honour of the pope against the calumnies of the preachers, and the subtile and puzzling questions of the common people.

86. “Why, say they, does not the pope, whose wealth is greater than that of rich Crœsus, build the metropolis of St. Peter with his own money rather than with that of poor Christians?

92. “Would, then, that we were discumbered of all the preachers who say to the church of Christ, Peace! Peace! when there is no peace!

94. “Christians should be exhorted to diligence in following Christ their head through crosses, death, and hell.

95. “For it is far better to enter the kingdom of heaven through much tribulation, than to acquire a carnal security by the flattery of a false peace.”

Here, then, was the commencement of the work. The germ of the Reformation was contained in these theses of Luther. The abuses of indulgence were attacked in them, (and this was their most striking feature,) but behind those attacks there was, moreover, a principle which although it attracted the attention of the multitude far less, was destined one day to overthrow the edifice of the papacy. The evangelical doctrine of a free and gratuitous remission of sins was here publicly professed for the first time. Henceforth the work must grow. In fact, it was evident that any man who had faith in the remission of sins as preached by the doctor of Wittemberg; any one who had this conversion and sanctification, the necessity of which, he urged, would no longer concern himself about human ordinances, but would escape from the swaddling-bands of Rome, and secure the liberty of the children of God. All errors behoved to give way before this truth. By it light had at first entered Luther’s own mind, and by it, in like manner, light is to be diffused in the Church. What previous reformers wanted was a clear knowledge of this truth; and hence the unfruitfulness of their labours. Luther himself was afterwards aware that, in proclaiming justification by faith, he had laid the axe to the root of the tree. “This is the doctrine,” said he, “which we attack in the followers of the papacy. Huss and Wickliff only attacked their lives, but in attacking their doctrine, we take the goose by the neck. All depends on the Word which the pope took from us and falsified. I have vanquished the pope, because my doctrine is according to God, and his is according to the devil.

We too have in our day forgotten the capital doctrine of justification by faith, though, in a sense, the reverse of that of our fathers. “In the time of Luther,” says one of our contemporaries, “the remission of sins at least cost money, but in our day every one supplies himself gratis.” These two extremes are very much alike. Perhaps there is even more forgetfulness of God in our extreme, than in that of the sixteenth century. The principle of justification by the grace of God, which brought the Church out of so much darkness at the time of the Reformation, is also the only principle which can renew our generation, put an end to its doubts and waverings, destroy the

canker of egotism, establish the reign of morality and justice, and, in one word reunite the world to God, from whom it has been separated. But if the theses of Luther were mighty in virtue of the truth which they proclaimed, they were not less so through the faith of their declared defender. He had boldly unsheathed the sword of the Word, and he had done it trusting to the power of truth. He had felt, that in leaning on the promises of God he could, in the language of the world, afford to risk something. Speaking of this bold attack, he says, “Let him who would begin a good enterprise undertake it, trusting to its own merits, and not (of this let him beware) to the help and countenance of man. Moreover, let not men, nor even the whole world, deter him. For these words will never deceive:—‘It is good to trust in the Lord; and none that trust in him shall be confounded.’ But let him who neither is able nor willing to hazard something through trust in God, beware of undertaking any thing.” Doubtless, Luther, after putting up his theses on the door of the church of All Saints, retired to his tranquil cell, in full possession of the peace and joy imparted by an action done in the name of the Lord, and for the sake of eternal truth.

These theses, notwithstanding of their great boldness, still bespeak the monk, who refuses to allow a single doubt as to the authority of the See of Rome. But in attacking the doctrine of indulgences, Luther had, without perceiving it, assailed several errors, the exposure of which could not be agreeable to the pope, seeing that they tended, sooner or later, to bring his supremacy in question. Luther, at the time, did not see so far; but he felt all the boldness of the step which he had just taken, and, consequently, thought himself bound to temper it in so far as was consistent with the respect due to truth. He, accordingly, presented his theses only as doubtful propositions on which he was anxious for the views of the learned; and, conformably to the established custom, annexed to them a solemn protestation, declaring that he wished not to say or affirm any thing not founded on Holy Scripture, the Fathers of the Church, and the rights and decretals of the See of Rome.

Often, in the sequel, on contemplating the immense and unlooked-for consequences of this courageous attack, Luther was astonished at himself, and could not understand how he had ventured upon it. An invisible hand, mightier than his own, held the leading reins, and pushed him into a path which he knew not, and from the difficulties of which he would, perhaps, have recoiled, if he had known them, and been advancing alone and of himself. “I engaged in this dispute,” says he, “without premeditated purpose, without knowing it or wishing it; and was taken quite unprepared. For the truth of this I appeal to the Searcher of hearts.”

Luther had become acquainted with the source of these abuses. He had received a little book, ornamented with the arms of the Archbishop of Mentz and Magdeburg, and containing the regulations to be observed in the sale of indulgences. It was this young prelate, therefore, this accomplished prince, who had prescribed, or at least sanctioned, all this quackery. In him Luther only sees a superior to whom he owes fear and reverence; and wishing not to beat the air, but to address those entrusted with the government of the Church, he sends him a letter, distinguished at once by its frankness and humility. Luther wrote this letter to Albert the same day on which he put up his theses.

“Pardon me, most reverend Father in Christ, and most illustrious Prince,” says he to him, “if I, who am only the dregs of mankind, have the presumption to write your High Mightiness. The Lord Jesus is my witness, that, feeling how small and despicable I am, I have long put off doing it.… Will

your Highness, however, be pleased to let fall a look on a grain of dust, and, in accordance with your episcopal meekness, graciously receive my petition.

“There are people who are carrying the papal indulgence up and down the country in the name of your Grace. I do not so much blame the declamation of the preachers, (I have not heard them,) as the erroneous ideas of unlearned and simple people, who imagine that by buying indulgences they secure their salvation …

“Good God! souls entrusted to your care, most venerable Father, are conducted to death, and not to life. The just and strict account which will be required of you grows and augments from day to day.… I have not been able to continue longer silent. Ah! man is not saved by works, or by the performances of his bishop.… Even the righteous scarcely is saved; and the way that leadeth unto life is strait. Why, then, do the preachers of indulgences by vain fables inspire the people with a false security?

“According to them, indulgence alone ought to be proclaimed, ought to be extolled.… What! Is it not the chief and only duty of bishops to instruct the people in the gospel and the love of Jesus Christ? Jesus Christ has nowhere ordered the preaching of indulgence; but has strongly enjoined the preaching of the gospel.2 How dreadful, then and how perilous, for a bishop to allow the gospel to be passed in silence, and nothing but the sound of indulgence to be incessantly dunned into the ears of his people.…

“Most worthy Father in God, in the Instruction of the commissaries, which has been published in name of your Grace, (doubtless without your knowledge,) it is said that the indulgence is the most precious treasure,—that it reconciles man to God, and enables those who purchase it to dispense with repentance.

“What then, can I, what ought I to do, most venerable Bishop, most serene Prince? Ah! I supplicate your Highness, by the Lord Jesus Christ, to turn upon this business an eye of paternal vigilance, to suppress the pamphlet entirely, and ordain preachers to deliver a different sort of discourses to the people. If you decline to do so, be assured you will one day hear some voice raised in refutation of these preachers, to the great dishonour of your most serene Highness.”

Luther at the same time sent his theses to the archbishop, and, in a postscript, asked him to read them, that he might be convinced how little foundation there was for the doctrine of indulgences.

Thus Luther’s whole desire was, that the watchmen of the Church should awake, and exert themselves in putting an end to the evils which were laying it waste. Nothing could be more noble and more respectful than this letter from a monk to one of the greatest princes of the Church and the empire. Never was there a better exemplification of the spirit of our Saviour’s precept—“Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things which are God’s.” This is not the course of violent revolutionists, who contemn powers and blame dignities. It is a cry proceeding from the conscience of a Christian and a priest, who gives honour to all, but in the first place fears God. However, all prayers and supplications were useless. Young Albert, engrossed by his pleasures and ambitious designs, made no reply to this solemn appeal. The Bishop of Brandebourg, Luther’s ordinary—a learned and pious man, to whom, also, he sent his theses—replied that he was attacking the power of the Church, that he would involve himself in great trouble and vexation, that the thing was beyond his strength, and that his earnest advice to

him was to keep quiet. The princes of the Church shut their ears against the voice of God, thus energetically and affectingly declared by the instrumentality of Luther. They would not comprehend the signs of the times; they were struck with that blindness which has been the ruin of so many powers and dignities. “Both thought,” says Luther afterwards, “that the pope would be too many for a miserable mendicant like me.” But Luther was better able than the bishops to perceive the disastrous effects which the indulgences had upon the manners and lives of the people; for he was in direct correspondence with them. He had constantly a near view of what the bishops learned only by unfaithful reports. If the bishops failed him, God did not fail him. The Head of the Church, who sits in heaven, and to whom has been given all power upon the earth, had himself prepared the ground, and deposited the grain in the hands of his servant. He gave wings to the seed of truth, and sent it in an instant over the whole length and breadth of his Church.

Nobody appeared at the university next day to attack the propositions of Luther. The traffic of Tezel was too much in discredit, and too disgraceful for any other than himself, or some one of his creatures, to dare to take up the gauntlet. But these theses were destined to be heard in other places than under the roof of an academical hall. Scarcely had they been nailed to the door of the castle church of Wittemberg, than the feeble strokes of the hammer were followed throughout Germany by a blow which reached even to the foundations of proud Rome, threatening sudden ruin to the walls, the gates, and the pillars of the papacy, stunning and terrifying its champions, and at the same time awakening thousands from the sleep of error.

These theses spread with the rapidity of lightning. A month had not elapsed before they were at Rome. “In a fortnight,” says a contemporary historian, “they were in every part of Germany, and in four weeks had traversed almost the whole of Christendom; as if the angels themselves had been the messengers, and carried them before the eyes of all men. Nobody can believe what a noise they made.” They were afterwards translated into Dutch and Spanish, and a traveller even sold them at Jerusalem. “Every one,” says Luther, “was complaining of the indulgences; and as all the bishops and doctors had kept silence, and nobody had ventured to bell the cat, poor Luther became a famous doctor, because, as they expressed it, one had at length come who dared to do it. But I liked not this glory; the music seemed to me too lofty for the words.”2

Some of the pilgrims, who had flocked from different countries to Wittemberg for the feast of All Saints, instead of indulgences carried home with them the famous theses of the Augustin monk, and thus helped to circulate them. All read, pondered, and commented on them. They occupied the attention of all convents and all universities. All pious monks who had entered the cloister to save their soul, all upright and honest men, rejoiced in this striking and simple confession of the truth, and wished with all their heart that Luther would continue the work which he had begun. At length a monk had had the courage to undertake this perilous contest. It was a reparation made to Christendom, and the public conscience was satisfied. In these theses piety saw a blow given to all kinds of superstition; the new theology hailed in them the defeat of the scholastic dogmas; princes and magistrates regarded them as a barrier raised against the encroachments of ecclesiastical power; while the nations were delighted at seeing the decided negative which this monk had given to the avarice of the Roman chancery. Erasmus, a man very worthy of credit, and one of the principal rivals of the Reformer, says to Duke George of Saxony, “When Luther attacked this fable, the whole world concurred in applauding him.” “I observe,” said he on another occasion to Cardinal Campeggi, “that those of the purest morals, and an evangelical piety, are the least

opposed to Luther. His life is lauded even by those who cannot bear his faith. The world was weary of a doctrine containing so many childish fables, and was thirsting for that living water, pure and hidden, which issues from the springs of the evangelists and the apostles. The genius of Luther was fitted to accomplish these things, and his zeal must have animated him to the noble enterprise."

CHAP. VI

Reuchlin—Erasmus—Flek—Bibra—The Emperor—The Pope—Myconius—The Monks—Apprehensions—Adelman—An Old Priest—The Bishop—The Elector—The Inhabitants of Erfurt—Luther's Reply—Trouble—Luther's Moving Principle.

We must follow these propositions wherever they penetrated; to the studies of the learned, the cells of monks, and the palaces of princes, in order to form some idea of the various but wonderful effects which they produced in Germany.

Reuchlin received them. He was weary of the hard battle which he had been obliged to fight against the monks. The power which the new combatant displayed in his theses revived the spirit of the old champion of letters, and gave joy to his saddened heart. "Thanks be to God," exclaimed he, after he had read them, "now they have found a man who will give them so much to do, that they will be obliged to let me end my old age in peace." The prudent Erasmus was in the Netherlands when the theses reached him. He was inwardly delighted at seeing his secret wishes for the reformation of abuses expressed with so much boldness, and commended their author, only exhorting him to more moderation and prudence. Nevertheless, some persons in his presence blaming Luther's violence, he said, "God has given men a cure which cuts thus deep into the flesh, because otherwise the disease would be incurable." And at a later period when the Elector of Saxony asked his opinion as to Luther's affair, he replied with a smile, "I am not at all astonished at his having made so much noise, for he has committed two unpardonable faults; he has attacked the tiara of the pope and the belly of the monks."

Dr. Flek, prior of the cloister of Steinlausitz, had for some time given up reading mass, but had not told any one his reason. He one day found the theses of Luther posted up in the refectory of his convent. He went up and began to read them, but had only perused a few, when unable to contain his joy, he exclaimed, "Well, well, he whom we have been so long looking for is come at last; and this you monks will see." Then reading in the future, says Mathesius, and playing upon the word Wittemberg, he said, "Everybody will come to seek wisdom at this mountain, and will find it." He wrote to the doctor to persevere courageously in his glorious combat. Luther calls him a man full of joy and consolation. The ancient and celebrated episcopal see of Würzburg was then held by Lowrence de Bibra, a man, according to the testimony of his contemporaries, pious, honest, and wise. When a gentleman came to intimate to him that he intended his daughter for the cloister, "Give her rather a husband," said he; and then added, "Are you in want of money for that purpose? I will lend you." The emperor and all the princes held him in the highest esteem. He lamented the disorders of the Church, and especially those of convents. The theses having reached his palace also, he read them with great delight, and publicly declared his approbation of Luther. At a later period he wrote to the Elector Frederick, "Don't part with pious Dr. Martin Luther; for he has been wronged." The Elector delighted at this testimony, wrote the Reformer with his own hand to acquaint him with it. The Emperor Maximilian, predecessor of Charles V, also read and admired

the theses of the monk of Wittemberg. He perceived his talents, and foresaw that this obscure Augustin might, indeed, become a powerful ally of Germany in her struggle with Rome. Accordingly, he instructed his envoy to say to the Elector of Saxony, “Take good care of the monk Luther, for the time may come when we shall have need of him;” and shortly after, being at a diet with Pfeffinger, the Elector’s confidential councillor, he said to him, “Well what is your Augustin doing? Assuredly his propositions are not to be despised; he will give the monks enough to do.”3 At Rome even, and in the Vatican, the theses were not so ill received as might have been supposed. Leo X judged of them as a friend of letters, rather than a pope. The amusement which they gave him made him overlook the severe truths which they contained; and when Sylvester Prierias, the master of the sacred palace, who had the office of examining new works, urged him to treat Luther as a heretic, he replied, “This Friar, Martin Luther, is a great genius; all that is said against him is mere monkish jealousy.”

There were few on whom the theses of Luther produced a deeper impression than on the scholar of Annaberg, whom Tezel had so pitilessly repulsed. Myconius had entered a convent, and the very first evening dreamed he saw an immense field quite covered with ripe corn. “Cut,” said the voice of his guide to him; and when he excused himself for want of skill, his guide showed him a reaper, who was working with inconceivable rapidity. “Follow, and do like him,” said the guide. Myconius, eager for holiness as Luther had been, devoted himself when in the convent to vigils, fasts, macerations, and all the works invented by men; but at length he despaired of ever attaining the objects of his efforts. He abandoned study, and spent his whole time in manual labour. Sometimes he bound books, sometimes used the turning-lathe, and sometimes did any other kind of work. Still, however, this external labour did not appease his troubled conscience. God had spoken to him, and he could not fall back into his former slumber. This state of agony lasted for several years. It is sometimes supposed that the paths of the Reformers were quite smooth, and that after they renounced the observances of the Church, their remaining course was easy and pleasant. It is not considered that they arrived at the truth by means of internal struggles, a thousand times more painful than the observances to which servile minds easily submitted. At length the year 1517 arrived. The theses of Luther were published, and, traversing Christendom, arrived also at the convent where the scholar of Annaberg was residing. He hid himself in a corner of the cloister, with John Voit, another monk, that they might be able to read them without interruption. They contained the very truth of which his father had told him. His eyes were opened, he felt a voice within him responding to that which was then sounding throughout Germany, and great consolation filled his heart. “I see plainly,” said he, “that Martin Luther is the reaper whom I saw in my dream, and who taught me to gather the ears of corn.” He immediately began to profess the doctrine which Luther had proclaimed. The monks, alarmed when they heard him, argued with him, and declaimed against Luther and against his convent. “That convent,” replied Myconius, “is like our Lord’s sepulchre; they wish to prevent Christ from rising again, but will not succeed.” At last his superiors, seeing they could not convince him, interdicted him for a year and a half from all intercourse with the world, not permitting him even to write or to receive letters, and threatening him with perpetual imprisonment. However, for him also the hour of deliverance arrived. Being afterwards appointed pastor at Zwickau, he was the first who declared against the papacy in the churches of Thuringia. “Then,” says he, “I could work with my venerable father Luther at the Gospel harvest.” Jonas describes him as a man as able as he was willing.

Doubtless, there were others also to whom Luther's theses were the signal of life. They kindled a new light in many cells, cottages, and palaces. "While those who had entered convents in quest of good fare and indolence, or rank and honours," says Mathesius, "began to load the name of Luther with reproaches, the monks who lived in prayer, fasting, and mortification, thanked God as soon as they heard the cry of the eagle, announced by John Huss, a century before." Even the people who did not well understand the theology of the question, and who only knew that Luther was assailing the empire of mendicants and lazy monks, received it with bursts of joy. An immense sensation was produced in Germany by his bold propositions. However, some of the Reformer's contemporaries, who foresaw the consequences to which they might lead, and the numerous obstacles which they were destined to encounter, loudly expressed their fears, or at most rejoiced with trembling.

"I am much afraid," wrote the excellent canon of Augsburg, Bernard Adelman, to his friend Pirckeimer, "that the worthy man must yield at last to the avarice and power of the partizans of indulgences. His representations have had so little effect, that the Bishop of Augsburg, our primate and metropolitan, has just ordered new indulgences, in the name of the pope, for St. Peter's at Rome. Let him hasten to seek the aid of princes. Let him beware of tempting God; for it were to show an absolute want of sense to overlook the imminent danger to which he is exposed." Adelman was greatly delighted when it was rumoured that Henry VIII had invited Luther to England. "There," thought he, "he will be able to teach the truth in peace." Several thus imagined that the doctrine of the gospel was to be supported by the power of princes, not knowing that it advances without this power, and is often trammelled and weakened by the possession of it. The celebrated historian, Albert Kranz, was at Hamburg on his deathbed, when Luther's theses were brought to him. "You are right, friar Martin," he exclaimed, "but you will not succeed … Poor monk! Go into your cell and cry, 'Lord, have mercy on me!'" An old priest of Hexter in Westphalia, having received and read the theses in his presbytery, said in Low German, shaking his head, "Dear friar Martin! if you succeed in overthrowing this purgatory and all these paper merchants, assuredly you are a mighty segnior!" Erbenius, a century later, wrote beneath these words the following stanza:—

"Quid vero nunc si viveret, Bonus iste clericus diceret?"

What then would the good clerk say, Were he alive to see this day. Not only did many of Luther's friends entertain fears as to the step which he had taken, but several even testified their disapprobation. The Bishop of Brandenburg, distressed at seeing his diocese the scene of so important a contest, was anxious to suppress it. He resolved to take the gentle method, and employed the Abbot of Lenin to say to Luther, in his name, "I don't find any thing in the theses contradictory of Catholic truth. I myself condemn these indiscreet proclamations; but for the love of peace and deference to your bishop, cease writing on the subject." Luther was confounded at being thus humbly addressed by so great an abbot and so great a bishop, and led away by the feelings of the moment, replied, "I consent. I would rather obey than work miracles, were it in my power." The Elector was grieved at the commencement of a contest which was no doubt legitimate, but the end of which it was impossible to foresee. No prince was more desirous than Frederick for the maintenance of public peace. Now, what an immense fire might this small spark not kindle? What discord, what rending of nations, might this quarrel of monks not produce? The Elector repeatedly made Luther aware how much he was annoyed.

Even in his own order and his own convent of Wittemberg, Luther met with disapprobation. The prior and sub-prior, terrified at the clamour of Tezel and his companions, repaired in fear and trembling to the cell of friar Martin, and said, “Do not, we entreat you, bring shame on our order. The other orders, and especially the Dominicans, are overjoyed to think that they are not to be alone in disgrace.” Luther was moved by these words, but soon recovering himself, he replied, “Dear fathers, if the thing is not done in the name of God it will fail, but if it is, let it proceed.” The prior and sub-prior said no more. “The thing proceeds even now,” adds Luther, after relating this anecdote, “and please God, always will proceed better and better, even to the end. Amen.”

Luther had many other attacks to sustain. At Erfurt he was accused of violence and pride in his manner of condemning the opinions of others—the charge usually brought against those who act under the strong conviction which the word of God gives. He was also charged with precipitation and fickleness.

“They call upon me for moderation,” replied Luther, “and they themselves, in the judgment which they pass upon me, trample it under foot!… We see the mote in our brother’s eye, and observe not the beam in our own … Truth will no more gain by my moderation than it will lose by my presumption. I desire to know,” continued he, addressing Lange, “what errors you and your theologians have found in my theses? Who knows not that a new idea is seldom advanced without an appearance of arrogance, and an accusation of disputatiousness? Were humility herself to undertake something new, those of an opposite opinion would charge her with pride. Why were Christ and all the martyrs put to death? Because they were deemed proud despisers of the wisdom of the time, and advanced new truths without previously taking counsel of the organs of ancient opinion.”

“Let not the wise of the present day, then, expect of me humility, or rather hypocrisy enough, to ask their opinion before publishing what duty calls me to say. What I do will be done, not by the prudence of men, but by the counsel of God. If the work is of God, who can arrest it? If it is not of God, who can advance it?… Not my will, nor theirs, nor ours, but Thy will be done, O Holy Father who art in heaven!” In these words what courage, what noble enthusiasm, what confidence in God, and, above all what truth, truth fitted to all times!

Still the reproaches and accusations which assailed Luther from all quarters, failed not to make some impression on his mind. His hopes were disappointed. He had expected to see the heads of the church, and the most distinguished scholars of the nation, publicly uniting with him; but it was otherwise. A word of approbation, allowed to escape at the first moment of enthusiasm, was all that the best disposed gave him, while several of those whom he had till then most highly venerated were loud in censuring him. He felt himself alone in the whole Church, alone against Rome, alone at the foot of that ancient and formidable edifice, whose foundations lay deep in the bowels of the earth, whose battlements reached the clouds, and at which he had just struck a daring blow. He was troubled and depressed. Doubts which he thought he had surmounted returned with new force. He trembled at the thought of having the authority of the whole Church against him, of withdrawing from that authority and resisting that voice which nations and ages had humbly obeyed, of setting himself in opposition to that church which he had from infancy been accustomed to venerate as the mother of the faithful.… He a paltry monk … the effort was too great for man.2 No step cost him more than this, and, accordingly, it was the step which decided

the Reformation. The struggle which took place in his soul cannot be better described than in his own words. “I began this affair,” says he, “with great fear and trembling. Who was I, a poor, miserable, despicable friar, liker a corpse than a living man;—who was I, to oppose the majesty of the pope, before whom not only the Kings of the earth and the whole world, but also, if I may so speak, heaven and hell trembled, compelled to yield obedience to his nod? Nobody can imagine what my heart suffered during those two first years, and into what depression, I might say what despair, I was often plunged. No idea of it can be formed by those proud spirits who afterwards attacked the pope with great boldness, although with all their ability they could not have done him the least harm, had not Jesus Christ, by me his feeble and unworthy instrument, given him a wound which never will be cured. But while they were contented to look on, and leave me alone in danger, I was not so joyful, so tranquil, or so sure about the business; for at that time I did not know many things which, thank God, I know now. It is true, several pious Christians were much pleased with my Propositions, and set a great value upon them, but I could not own and regard them as the organs of the Holy Spirit. I looked only to the pope, the cardinals, bishops, theologians, jurisconsults, monks, and priests. That was the direction from which I expected the Spirit to come. Still having, by means of Scripture, come off victorious over all contrary arguments, I have at length, by the grace of Christ, though after much pain, travail, and anguish, surmounted the only argument which arrested me, viz., that it is necessary to listen to the Church; for from the bottom of my heart I honoured the church of the pope as the true church, and did so with much more sincerity and veneration, than those shameless and infamous corrupters who are now so very forward in opposing me. Had I despised the pope as much as he is despised in the hearts of those who praise him so loudly with their lips, I would have dreaded that the earth would instantly open and swallow me up as it did Corah and his company!”

How honourable these misgivings are to Luther! How well they display the sincerity and uprightness of his soul! And how much more worthy of respect do those painful assaults which he had to sustain, both within and without, prove him to be, than mere intrepidity without any such struggle, could have done! The travail of his soul clearly displays the truth and divinity of his work. We see that their origin and principle were in heaven. After all the facts which we have stated, who will presume to say that the Reformation was an affair of politics? No, assuredly; it was not the effect of human policy, but of the power of God. Had Luther been urged by human passions only, he would have yielded to his fears; his miscalculations and scruples would have smothered the fire which had been kindled in his soul, and he would only have thrown a transient gleam upon the Church, in the same way as the many zealous and pious men, whose names have come down to us. But now God’s time had arrived; the work was not to be arrested; the emancipation of the Church was to be accomplished. Luther was destined at least to prepare that complete emancipation and those extensive developments which are promised to the kingdom of Christ. Accordingly, he experienced the truth of the magnificent promise, “The strong men shall faint and be weary, and the young men utterly fail; but they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles.” This Divine power which filled the heart of the doctor of Wittemberg, and which had engaged him in the combat, soon gave him back all his former resolution.

CHAP. VII

Tezel's Attack—Luther's Reply—Good Works—Luther and Spalatin—Study of Scripture—Scheurl and Luther—Doubts on the Theses—Luther for the People—A New Suit. The reproaches, timidity, or silence, of Luther's friends had discouraged him; the attacks of his enemies had the very opposite effect. This frequently happens. The adversaries of the truth, while thinking by their violence to do their own work, often do that of God himself. The gauntlet which had been thrown down was taken up by Tezel with a feeble hand. Luther's sermon, which had been to the people what his theses had been to the learned, was the subject of his first reply. He refuted it point by point, in his own way, and then announced that he was preparing to combat his adversary at greater length in theses which he would maintain at the university of Frankfort on the Oder. "Then," said he, adverting to the conclusion of Luther's sermon; "then every one will be able to judge who is heresiarch, heretic, schismatic, erroneous, rash, and calumnious. Then will it be manifest to the eyes of all who has a dull brain, who has never felt the Bible, read Christian doctrines, understood his own teachers.… In maintaining the propositions which I advance, I am ready to suffer all things, prison, cudgel, water, and fire."

One thing which strikes us in reading this production of Tezel is the difference between his German and that of Luther. One would say that an interval of several ages is between them. A foreigner, especially, sometimes finds it difficult to comprehend Tezel, whereas the language of Luther is almost the same as that of our day. A comparison of the two is sufficient to show that Luther is the creator of the German language. No doubt, this is one of his least merits, but still it is one.

Luther replied without naming Tezel; Tezel had not named him. But there was nobody in Germany who could not have placed at the head of their publications the name which they had judged it expedient to suppress. Tezel tried to confound the repentance which God demands with the penance which the Church imposes, in order to give a higher value to his indulgences. Luther made it his business to clear up this point.

"To avoid many words," said he, in his graphic style, "I give to the wind (which, besides, has more leisure than I have) his other words, which are only sheets of paper and withered leaves; and I content myself with examining the foundations of his house of bur-thistle.

"The penitence which the holy father imposes cannot be that which Jesus Christ demands; for whatever the holy father imposes he can dispense with; and if these two penitences were one and the same, it would follow that the holy father takes away what Jesus appoints, and thereby makes void the commandment of God.… Ah! if it so pleases him, let him maltreat me," continues Luther, after quoting other false interpretations of Tezel; "let him call me heretic, schismatic, calumniator, or anything he likes; I will not on that account be his enemy, but will pray for him as for a friend. But it is not possible to allow him to treat the Holy Scriptures, our consolation, (Romans 15:4) as a sow treats a sack of corn."

We must accustom ourselves to Luther's occasional use of expressions too harsh and homely for our age,—it was the custom of the time; and under those words which in our days would violate the proprieties of language, there is usually a force and justice which disposes us to pardon their rankness. He continues thus:—

“He who buys indulgences, say our adversaries, does better than he who gives alms to a poor man not absolutely in extremity. Now, let them tell us that the Turks are profaning our churches and crosses, we will be able to hear it without a shudder; for we have amongst ourselves Turks a hundred times worse, who profane and annihilate the only true sanctuary, the word of God, which sanctifies all things.… Let him who would follow this precept take good care not to give food to the hungry, nor clothing to the naked, before they give up the ghost, and, consequently, have no need of his assistance.”

It is important to contrast the zeal which Luther thus manifests for good works with what he says of justification by faith. Indeed, no man who has any experience, or any knowledge of Christianity, needs this new proof of a truth of which he is fully assured; viz., that the more we adhere to justification by faith, the more strongly we feel the necessity of works, and the more diligently we practise them; whereas lax views as to the doctrine of faith necessarily lead to laxity of conduct. Luther, as St. Paul before, and Howard after him, are proofs of the former; all men without faith (and with such the world is filled) are proofs of the latter.

Luther comes next to the insulting language of Tezel, and pays him back in his own way. “At the sound of these invectives methinks I hear a large ass braying at me. I am delighted at it, and would be very sorry that such people should give me the name of a good Christian.” We must give Luther as he is with all his foibles. This turn for pleasantry, coarse pleasantry, was one of them. The Reformer was a great man, undoubtedly a man of God; but he was a man, not an angel, and not even a perfect man. Who is entitled to call upon him for perfection?

“For the rest,” adds he, challenging his opponents to the combat, “although it is not usual to burn heretics for such points, here, at Wittemberg, am I, Doctor Martin Luther! Is there any inquisitor who pretends to chew fire, and make rocks leap into the air? I give him to know, that he has a safe-conduct to come here, an open door, and bed and board certain, all by the gracious care of our admirable Duke Frederick, who will never protect heresy.”

We see that Luther was not deficient in courage. He trusted to the word of God—a rock which never gives way in the tempest. But God in faithfulness gave him still further aid. The bursts of joy with which the multitude had hailed Luther’s theses were soon succeeded by a gloomy silence. The learned had timidly drawn back on hearing the calamities and insults of Tezel and the Dominicans. The bishops, who had previously been loud in condemnation of the abuses of indulgences, seeing them at length attacked, had not failed, with an inconsistency of which there are but too many examples, to find that at that time the attack was inopportune. The greater part of the Reformer’s friends were frightened. Several of them had fled. But when the first terror was over, the minds of men took an opposite direction. The monk of Wittemberg soon saw himself again surrounded with a great number of friends and admirers.

There was one who, although timid, remained faithful to him throughout this crisis, and whose friendship at once solaced and supported him. This was Spalatin. Their correspondence was not interrupted. “I thank you,” says he, when speaking of a particular mark of friendship which he had received from him; “but what do I not owe you?” It was on the 11th November, just fifteen days after the publication of the theses, and consequently when the minds of men were in a state of the greatest fermentation, that Luther thus delights to unbosom his gratitude to his friend. In the same letter to Spalatin, it is interesting to see the strong man, who had just performed a most daring

exploit, declaring from what source he derives his strength. “We can do nothing of ourselves; we can do everything by the grace of God. By us all ignorance is invincible, but no ignorance is invincible by the grace of God. The more we endeavour of ourselves to attain to wisdom, the nearer we approach to folly. It is not true that this invincible ignorance excuses the sinner; were it so there would be no sin in the world.”

Luther had not sent his propositions, either to the prince or to any of his courtiers. The chaplain seems to have expressed some surprise at this, and Luther answers:—“I did not wish my theses to reach our illustrious prince or any of his court, before those who think themselves specially addressed had received them, lest it should be thought that I had published them by order of the prince or to gain his favour, or from opposition to the Bishop of Mentz. I hear there are already several who dream such things. But now I can swear in all safety that my theses were published without the knowledge of Duke Frederick.”

If Spalatin solaced his friend, and supported him by his influence, Luther on his part was desirous to meet the requests of the modest chaplain. The latter, among other questions, asked one which is frequently repeated in our day, “What is the best method of studying the Holy Scriptures?”

“Till now, my dear Spalatin,” replied Luther, “you have asked questions which I could answer. But to direct you in the study of the Scriptures is more than I am able to do. However, if you would absolutely know my method, I will not hide it from you.

“It is most certain that we cannot succeed in comprehending the Scripture either by study or mere intellect. Your first duty, then, is to begin with prayer. Entreat the Lord that he will in his great mercy deign to grant you the true knowledge of his Word. There is no other interpreter of the word of God than the Author of that word according as it is said, ‘They will all be taught of God.’ Hope nothing from your works, nothing from your intellect. Trust only in God, and in the influence of his Spirit. Believe one who is speaking from experience.”

We here see how Luther attained possession of the truth of which he was a preacher. It was not, as some pretend, by confiding in a presumptuous reason, nor, as others maintain, by abandoning himself to hateful passions. The source from which he drew it was the purest, holiest, and most sublime—God himself consulted in humility, confidence, and prayer. Few in our day imitate him, and hence few comprehend him. To a serious mind these words of Luther are in themselves a justification of the Reformation.

Luther likewise found comfort in the friendship of respectable laymen. Christopher Scheurl, the excellent secretary of the imperial city of Nuremberg, gave him gratifying marks of his friendship. We know how pleasant expressions of sympathy are to the man who feels himself assailed from all quarters. The secretary of Nuremberg did more; he tried to make friends to his friend. He urged him to dedicate one of his works to a then celebrated lawyer of Nuremberg, named Jerome Ebner:—“You have a high idea of my studies,” modestly replied Luther; “but I have the poorest idea of them myself. Nevertheless, I was desirous to meet your wishes. I have searched …; but in all my store, which I never found so meagre, nothing presented itself which seemed at all worthy of being dedicated to so great a man by so little a man.” Striking humility! It is Luther who speaks thus, and the person with whom he contrasts himself is Doctor Ebner, who is altogether unknown to us. Posterity has not ratified Luther’s judgment.

Luther, who had done nothing to circulate his theses, had not sent them to Scheurl any more than to the Elector and his courtiers. The secretary of Nuremberg expressed his surprise. “I had no intention,” replies Luther, “to give my theses so much publicity. I wished only to confer on their contents with some of those who reside with us or near us; intending, if they condemned, to destroy, and if they approved, to publish them. But now they are printed, reprinted, and spread far and wide, beyond my expectation; so much so that I repent of their production.4 Not that I have any fear of the truth being known by the people, (for this was all I sought,) but this is not the way of instructing them. There are questions in the theses as to which I have still my doubts; and if I had thought that they were to produce such a sensation, there are things which I would have omitted, and others which I would have affirmed with greater confidence.” Luther afterwards thought differently. Far from fearing he had said too much, he declared that he ought to have said still more. But the apprehensions which Luther expresses to Scheurl do honour to his sincerity. They show that he had nothing like a premeditated plan, had no party spirit, no overweening conceit, and sought nothing but the truth. When he had fully discovered the truth, his language was different. “You will find in my first writings,” said he, many years after, “that I very humbly made many concessions to the pope, and on points of great importance; concessions which I now detest, and regard as abominable and blasphemous.”

Scheurl was not the only layman of importance who, at this time, testified his friendship for Luther. The celebrated painter, Albert Durer, sent him a present, (perhaps one of his pictures,) and the doctor expressed his sense of the obligation in the warmest terms.

Thus Luther had practical experience of the truth of that saying of Divine wisdom:—“A friend loveth at all times; and a brother is born for adversity.” These words he remembered for the sake of others also, and accordingly pleaded the cause of the whole population. The Elector had just levied a tax, and it was confidently alleged that he was going to levy another, probably on the advice of his counsellor Pfeffinger, against whom Luther often throws out cutting sarcasms. The doctor boldly placed himself in the breach. “Let not your Highness,” said he, “despise the prayer of a poor mendicant. In the name of God I entreat you not to order a new tax. My heart is broken, as well as that of several of your most devoted servants, at seeing how much the last has injured your fair fame, and the popularity which your Highness enjoyed. It is true that God has endowed you with profound intellect, so that you see much farther into things than I, or doubtless all your subjects, do. But, perhaps, it is the will of God that a feeble intellect instruct a great one, in order that no one may trust in himself, but only in the Lord our God. May be deign to keep your body in health for our good, and destine your soul to life eternal. Amen.” In this way it is that the gospel, while it makes us honour kings, makes us also plead the cause of the people. While it tells them of their duties, it, at the same time, reminds the prince of their rights. The voice of a Christian such as Luther, raised in the cabinet of a sovereign, might often supply the place of a whole assembly of legislators. In this letter, in which Luther addresses a harsh lesson to the Elector, he fears not to present a request to him, or rather to remind him of a promise, viz., to give him a new suit. This freedom of Luther, at a moment when he might have feared he had given offence to Frederick, is equally honourable to the prince and to the Reformer. “But,” adds he, “if it is Pfeffinger who has the charge of it, let him give it in reality, and not in protestations of friendship. He knows very well how to weave a web of good words, but no good cloth ever comes out of it.” Luther thought, that, by the faithful counsel which he had given to his prince, he had well deserved his court dress. Be this as it

may, two years later he had not received it, and renewed his request.2 This seems to indicate that Frederick was not so much under the influence of Luther as has been said.

CHAP. VIII

Disputation at Frankfort—Tezel's Theses—Menaces—Opposition of Knipstrow—Luther's Theses Burnt—The Monks—Luther's Peace—Tezel's Theses Burnt—Luther's Vexation. The minds of men had thus gradually recovered from their first alarm. Luther himself was disposed to declare that his words did not mean so much as had been imagined. New circumstances might divert public attention, and the blow struck at Roman doctrine might, as had been the case with so many others, spend itself in the air. The partisans of Rome prevented this result. They fanned the flame instead of smothering it.

Tezel and the Dominicans replied haughtily to the attack which had been made upon them. Burning with eagerness to crush the audacious monk who had disturbed their traffic, and to gain the favour of the Roman pontiff, they uttered cries of rage. They maintained that to attack the indulgence ordered by the pope was to attack the pope himself, and they called in the aid of all the monks and theologians of their school. In fact, Tezel felt that an opponent like Luther was too much for him single-handed. Quite disconcerted, but more especially enraged at the doctor's attack, he quitted the environs of Wittemberg, and repaired to Frankfort on the Oder, where he arrived as early as November, 1517. The university of that town, like that of Wittemberg, was of recent date. One of the professors was Conrad Wimpina, a man of much eloquence, an old rival of Pollich of Mellerstadt, and one of the most distinguished theologians of the time. Wimpina's envy was excited both by the doctor and by the university of Wittemberg; for their reputation obscured his. Tezel applied to him for a reply to Luther's theses, and Wimpina wrote two series of antitheses, the former to defend the doctrine of indulgences, and the latter to defend the authority of the pope. This disputation, which had been long prepared and loudly advertised, and of which Tezel entertained the highest hopes, took place on the 20th January, 1518. Tezel having beaten up for recruits, monks had been sent from all the neighbouring cloisters, and assembled to the number of more than three hundred. Tezel read his theses, one of which declared, "that whosoever says that the soul does not fly away from purgatory as soon as the money tinkles on the bottom of the strong box, is in error."

But, above all, he maintained propositions, according to which, the pope appeared to be truly, as the apostle expresses it, seated as God in the temple of God. It was convenient for this shameless merchant to take refuge under the pope's mantle, with all his disorders and scandals. In presence of the numerous assembly in which he stood, he declared himself ready to maintain as follows:—

3. "Christians must be taught that the pope, by the greatness of his power, is above the whole universal Church and all councils. His orders ought to be implicitly obeyed.

4. "Christians must be taught that the pope alone is entitled to decide in matters of Christian faith; that he, and none but he, has the power to explain the meaning of Scripture in his own sense, and to approve or condemn all words or works of others.

5. "Christians must be taught that the judgment of the pope in things which concern Christian faith, and which are necessary to the salvation of the human race, cannot possibly err.

6. “Christians must be taught that in matters of faith they ought to lean and rest more upon the opinion of the pope, as manifested by his decisions, than on the opinion of all wise men, as drawn by them out of Scripture.

8. “Christians must be taught that those who attack the honour and dignity of the pope are guilty of the crime of lese-majesty, and deserve malediction.

17. “Christians must be taught that there are many things which the Church regards as authentic articles of universal truth, although they are not found either in the canon of Scripture or in ancient doctors.

44. “Christians must be taught to regard those as obstinate heretics, who, by their words, their actions, or their writings, declare that they would not retract their heretical propositions were excommunication after excommunication to rain or hail upon them.

48. “Christians must be taught that those who protect heretics in their error, and who, by their authority, prevent them from being brought before the judge who is entitled to try them, are excommunicated; that if, in the space of a year, they desist not from doing so, they will be declared infamous, and severely punished with various punishments, in terms of law, and to the terror of all men.

50. “Christians must be told that those who spoil so many books and so much paper, and who preach or dispute publicly and wickedly on the confession of the mouth, the satisfaction of works, the rich and great indulgences of the Bishop of Rome, and on his power; that those who ally themselves with those so preaching or writing, who take pleasure in their writings, and circulate them among the people and in the world; that those, in fine, who secretly speak of those things in a contemptuous and irreverent manner, may well tremble at incurring the pains which have just been named, and of precipitating themselves and others with them, at the last day, into eternal condemnation, and even here below into great disgrace. For every beast that toucheth the mountain shall be stoned.”

We see that Luther was not the only person whom Tezel attacked. In the forty-eighth thesis he had probably the Elector of Saxony in view. These propositions savour much of the Dominican. To threaten every contradictor with severe punishment was an inquisitor’s argument, and scarcely admitted of a reply. The three hundred monks whom Tezel had brought together gaped and stared in admiration of his discourse. The theologians of the university were too much afraid of being classed with the abettors of heresy, or were too much attached to the principles of Wimpina, candidly to adopt the extraordinary theses which had just been read. The whole affair, about which so much noise had been made, seemed destined to be only a sham fight; but among the crowd of students present at the disputation was a young man of about twenty, named John Knipstrow. He had read the theses of Luther, and found them conformable to the doctrines of Scripture. Indignant at seeing the truth publicly trampled under foot, while no one appeared to defend it, this young man rose up, to the great astonishment of the whole assembly, and attacked the presumptuous Tezel. The poor Dominican, who had not counted on such opposition, was quite disconcerted. After some efforts, he quitted the field of battle, and gave place to Wimpina, who made a more vigorous resistance; but Knipstrow pressed him so closely, that, to put an end to a contest, which in his eyes was so unbecoming, Wimpina, who presided, declared the discussion closed, and

proceeded forthwith to confer the degree of doctor on Tezel, in recompence of this glorious combat. Wimpina, to disencumber himself of the young orator, caused him to be sent to the convent of Pyritz in Pomerania, with orders that he should be strictly watched. But this dawning light was only removed from the banks of the Oder that it might afterwards shed a bright effulgence in Pomerania. When God sees it meet, he employs scholars to confound teachers.

Tezel, wishing to repair the check which he had received, had recourse to the ultima ratio of Rome and the inquisitors,—I mean the faggot. On a public walk in one of the suburbs of Frankfort, he caused a pulpit and a scaffold to be erected, and repaired thither in solemn procession with his insignia of inquisitor. Mounting the pulpit, he let loose all his fury. He darted his thunder, and with his Stentorian voice exclaimed, that the heretic Luther ought to be burned alive. Then placing the doctor's theses and sermon on the scaffold, he burned them. He was better acquainted with this kind of work than with the defence of theses. Here he met with no opponents, and his victory was complete. The impudent Dominican returned in triumph to Frankfort. When parties in power are vanquished, they have recourse to certain demonstrations which must be conceded to them as a kind of consolation to their disgrace. The second theses of Tezel form an important epoch in the Reformation. They changed the locality of the dispute, transporting it from the indulgence market to the halls of the Vatican, and diverting it from Tezel to the pope. Instead of the contemptible creature whom Luther had taken in his fist, they substituted the sacred person of the Head of the church. Luther was stunned at this. It is probable that he would himself have taken the step at a later period, but his enemies spared him the trouble. Thenceforward the question related not merely to a disreputable traffic, but to Rome; and the blow by which a bold hand had tried to demolish the shop of Tezel, shook the very foundations of the pontifical throne

Tezel's theses were only a signal to the Roman troops. A cry against Luther arose among the monks, who were infuriated at the appearance of an adversary more formidable than either Erasmus or Reuchlin had been. The name of Luther resounded from the pulpits of the Dominicans, who addressed themselves to the passions of the people, and inveighed against the courageous doctor, as a madman, a deceiver, and a demoniac. His doctrine was denounced as the most dreadful heresy. "Wait only for a fortnight, or four weeks at farthest," said they, "and this noted heretic will be burned." Had it depended only on the Dominicans, the fate of the Saxon doctor had soon been that of Huss and Jerome, but his life was destined to accomplish what the ashes of Huss had begun. Each does the work of God, one by his death, and another by his life. Several now began to cry out that the whole university of Wittemberg was tainted with heresy, and pronounced it infamous. "Let us pursue the villain, and all his partisans," continued they. In several places these exclamations had the effect of stirring up the passions of the people. Those who shared the opinions of the Reformer had the public attention directed towards them; and in every place where the monks were strongest, the friends of the gospel felt the effects of their hatred. Thus, in regard to the Reformation, the Saviour's prediction began to be accomplished, "They will revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." This is a recompence which the world at no time fails to bestow on the decided friends of the gospel. When Luther was made acquainted with Tezel's theses, and with the general attack of which they were the signal, his courage rose. He felt that it was necessary to withstand such adversaries to the face; and his intrepid zeal had no difficulty in resolving so to do. At the same time, their feebleness made him aware of his own strength, and told him what he was.

He did not, however, allow himself to give way to those emotions of pride which are so natural to the heart of man. “It gives me more difficulty,” he writes to Spalatin, “to refrain from despising my adversaries, and so sinning against Jesus Christ, than it would give me to vanquish them. They are so ignorant in things human and divine, that one is ashamed at having to fight with them; and yet it is their very ignorance which gives them their inconceivable audacity and face of brass.” But the most powerful support to Luther’s heart, in the midst of this universal opposition, was the deep conviction that his cause was the cause of truth. “Let it not surprise you,” he writes to Spalatin, at the beginning of the year 1518, “that I am so much insulted. I am delighted with these insults. Did they not curse me, I could not believe so firmly that the cause which I have undertaken is God’s own cause. Christ has been set up for a sign to be spoken against. I know,” added he, that from the beginning of the world the nature of the word of God has been such, that every one who has preached it to the world, has been obliged, like the apostles, to leave all and lay his account with death. Were it otherwise, it would not be the word of Jesus Christ.”3 This peace in the midst of agitation is a thing unknown to the world’s heroes. Men placed at the head of a government, or of a political party, are seen to give way under their labours and their vexations. The Christian in his struggles usually acquires new strength, because he has access to a mysterious source of repose and courage, unknown to those whose eyes are closed to the gospel.

One thing, however, sometimes distressed Luther, viz., the thought of the dissensions which his courageous opposition might produce. He knew that a single word might be sufficient to set the world in a flame; and when he foresaw prince against prince, and perhaps nation against nation, his patriotic heart was saddened, and his Christian charity alarmed. His wish was for peace; but he behoved to speak out. So God required. “I tremble,” said he, “I shudder at the thought of being the cause of discord among such mighty princes.”

He still kept silence in regard to Tezel’s propositions concerning the pope. Had he been carried away by passion, he would doubtless have made an impetuous assault on the extraordinary doctrine under which his opponents sought to take shelter. He did not do so; and there is in this delay, reserve, and silence, something grave and solemn, which sufficiently explains the spirit by which he was animated. He waited, but not through weakness; for when he struck he gave a heavier blow.

Tezel, after his auto da fe at Frankfort on the Oder, had hastened to send his theses into Saxony. There, thought he, they will serve as an antidote to those of Luther. A man from Halle, employed by the inquisitor to circulate his propositions, arrived at Wittemberg. The students of the university, still indignant at Tezel for having burned the theses of their master, no sooner heard of the messenger’s arrival, than they sought him out, and, gathering round, jostled and frightened him. “How dare you bring such things here?” demanded they. Some purchasing part of the copies with which he was provided, and others seizing the rest, they got possession of his whole stock, amounting to eight hundred copies. Then, unknown to the Elector, the senate, the rector, Luther, and all the other professors, they put up the following notice on the boards of the university:—“Whosoever is desirous to be present at the burning and funeral of Tezel’s theses, let him repair at two o’clock to the market-place.”

Crowds assembled at the hour, and committed the propositions of the Dominican to the flames, amid loud acclamations. One copy which escaped, Luther afterwards sent to his friend, Lange of

Erfurt. These generous but imprudent youths followed the old precept, “Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth,” and not that of Jesus Christ; but after the example which doctors and professors had given at Frankfort, can we be astonished that young students followed it at Wittemberg? The news of this academical execution spread throughout Germany, and made a great noise. Luther was extremely vexed at it.

“I am astonished,” he writes to his old master, Jodocus, at Erfurt, “how you could think it was I that burned Tezel’s theses. Do you think that I am so devoid of sense? But what can I do? When I am the subject of remark, every thing seems to be believed. Can I tie up the tongues of the whole world? Very well! Let them say, let them hear, let them see, let them pretend whatever they please; I will act as long as the Lord gives me strength, and with his help will fear nothing.” “What will come out of it,” says he to Lange, “I know not, unless it be that my danger is much increased.”2 The act of the students shows how much their hearts already burned for the cause which Luther defended. This was an important symptom; for a movement among the young of necessity soon extends to the whole nation. The theses of Tezel and Wimpina, though little esteemed, produced a certain effect. They heightened the dispute, widened the rent which had been made in the mantle of the Church, and brought questions of the highest interest into the field. Accordingly, the heads of the Church began to look more narrowly at the matter, and to declare decidedly against the Reformer. “Verily, I know not in whom Luther confides,” said the Bishop of Brandenburg, “when he dares thus attack the power of bishops.” Perceiving that this new circumstance called for new proceedings, the bishop came in person to Wittemberg; but he found Luther animated with the inward joy which a good conscience imparts, and determined to give battle. The bishop felt that the Augustin monk was obeying an authority superior to his, and returned to Brandenburg in a rage. One day, in the winter of 1518, when sitting at his fireside, he turned to those who were about him and said, “I will not lay down my head in peace till I have thrown Martin into the fire, as I do this brand,” throwing one into the grate. The revolution of the sixteenth century was not to be accomplished by the heads of the Church any more than that of the first century had been by the Sanhedrim and the synagogue. In the sixteenth century, the heads of the Church were opposed to Luther, the Reformation, and its ministers, in the same way as they were opposed to Jesus Christ, the gospel, and his apostles, and as they too often are at all times to the truth. “The bishops,” says Luther, in speaking of the visit which the Bishop of Brandenburg had paid him, “begin to perceive that they ought to have done what I am doing, and they are consequently ashamed. They call me proud and audacious, and I deny not that I am so. But they are not the people to know either what God is, or what we are.”

CHAP. IX

Prierio—System of Rome—The Dialogue—System of Reform—Reply to Prierio—The Word—The Pope and the Church—Hochstraten—The Monks—Luther replies—Eck—The School—The Obelisks—Luther’s Sentiments—The Asterisks—Rupture. A more serious resistance than that of Tezel was already opposed to Luther. Rome had answered. A reply had issued from the walls of the sacred palace. It was not Leo X who had taken it into his head to speak theology. “A quarrel of monks,” he had one day said. “The best thing is not to meddle with it.” And on another occasion, “It is a drunken German who has written these theses; when he recovers from his wine he will speak differently.” A Dominican of Rome, Sylvester Mazolini de Prierio or Prierias, master of the sacred palace, exercised the functions of censor, and in this character was the first man in Italy who knew

of the Saxon monk's theses. A Roman censor and the theses of Luther! What a rencounter! Liberty of speech, liberty of investigation, liberty of faith, come into collision in Rome, with that power which pretends to have in its hands a monopoly of intelligence, and to open and shut the mouth of Christendom at its pleasure. The struggle between Christian liberty, which begets children of God, and pontifical despotism, which begets slaves of Rome, is, as it were, personified during the first days of the Reformation, in the encounter between Luther and Prierio. The Roman censor, prior-general of the Dominicans, employed to determine what Christendom must say, or not say, and know or not know, hastened to reply, and published a tract, which he dedicated to Leo X. He spoke contemptuously of the German monk, and declared, with a self-sufficiency altogether Roman, "that he was anxious to know whether this Martin had a nose of iron, or a head of brass, which could not be broken." Then, in the form of a dialogue, he attacked the theses of Luther, employing alternately, ridicule, insult, and threatening. The combat between the Augustin of Wittemberg and the Dominican of Rome took place on the very question which lies at the foundation of the Reformation; viz., "What is the sole infallible authority to Christians?" The following is the system of the Church, as expounded by its most independent organs. The letter of the written Word is dead without the spirit of interpretation, which alone unfolds its hidden meaning. Now this spirit is not granted to every Christian, but to the Church; in other words, to the priests. It is great presumption to maintain, that he who promised to be with his Church always to the end of the world, could abandon it to the power of error. It will be said, perhaps, that the doctrine and constitution of the Church are not the same as we find them in the sacred oracles. This is true; but the change is only apparent, relating to the form, and not to the substance. Moreover, the change is an advance. The living power of the Spirit has given reality to what exists in Scripture only in idea; it has embodied the sketches of the Word, put a finishing hand to these sketches, and completed the work of which the Bible had furnished only the first outlines. Scripture ought, therefore, to be understood in the sense determined by the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Here the Catholic doctors are divided. General councils, say some, and Gerson among the number, are the representatives of the Church. The pope, says others, is the depositary of the Spirit of interpretation; and no man is entitled to understand Scripture in a sense differing from that of the Roman pontiff. This was the opinion of Prierio.

Such was the doctrine which the master of the sacred palace opposed to the rising Reformation. On the power of the pope and the Church he advanced propositions at which the most shameless flatterers of the court of Rome would have blushed. The following is one of the points which he maintains at the commencement of his tract:—"Whoever rests not in the doctrine of the Roman Church, and the Roman pontiff, as the infallible rule of faith, from which the Holy Scripture itself derives its force and authority, is a heretic."

Then in a dialogue, in which Luther and Sylvester are the speakers, the latter tries to refute the doctor's propositions. The sentiments of the Saxon monk were quite new to a Roman censor. Accordingly, Prierio shows that he understood neither the emotions of his heart, nor the motives of his conduct. To the teacher of truth he applied the little standards of the valets of Rome. "Dear Luther!" says he, "were you to receive a bishopric and a plenary indulgence for the repair of your Church from our lord the pope, you would proceed more gently, and would even prose in favour of the indulgence which you are now pleased to blacken!" The Italian, so proud of the elegance of his manners, sometimes assumes the most scurrilous tone. "If the property of dogs is to bite," says he

to Luther, “I fear your father must have been a dog.” The Dominican begins at last to be almost astonished at his own condescension in speaking to a rebellious monk; and concludes with showing his opponent the cruel teeth of an inquisitor. “The Roman Church,” says he, “having in the pope the summit of spiritual and temporal power, may, by the secular arm, constrain those who after receiving the faith, stray from it. She is not bound to employ arguments for the purpose of combating and subduing the rebellious.”2

These words traced by the pen of one of the dignitaries of the Roman court had a very significant meaning. They failed, however, to terrify Luther. He believed, or feigned to believe, that this dialogue was not by Prierio, but by Ulrich von Hütten, or by some other of the authors of “The Letters of some Obscure Men,” who (said he in his sarcastic strain) had, in order to stir up Luther against Prierio, compiled this mass of absurdity. He had no desire to see the court of Rome in arms against him. However, after remaining for some time silent, his doubts, if he had any, having been dispelled, he set to work, and in two days after was prepared with his reply.4 The Bible had produced the Reformer and begun the Reformation. Luther, in believing, had no need of the testimony of the Church. His faith was derived from the Bible itself; from within, and not from without. His thorough conviction that the evangelical doctrine was immovably founded on the word of God made him regard all external authority as useless. Luther’s experience, in this respect, opened a new prospect to the Church. The living spring which had burst forth before the monk of Wittemberg, was destined to become a stream at which nations would quench their thirst. The Church had said that, in order to understand the Word, the Spirit of God must interpret it, and so far the Church was right. But her error consisted in regarding the Holy Spirit as a monopoly conferred on a certain caste, and in thinking that it could be appropriated exclusively to certain assemblies and colleges, to a city or a conclave. “The wind bloweth where it listeth,” were the words of the Son of God, when speaking of the Spirit of God; and, on another occasion, “They will all be taught of God.” The corruption of the Church, the ambition of pontiffs, the animosities of councils, the squabbles of the clergy, and the pomp of prelates, had made this Holy Spirit, this breath of humility and peace, eschew the dwelling of the priesthood. He had deserted the assemblies of the proud, and the palaces of the princes of the Church, and gone to live in retirement among simple Christians and modest priests. He had shunned a domineering hierarchy, which often forced blood from the poor, whom it trampled under foot; he had shunned a proud and ignorant clergy, whose chiefs were skilled, not in the Bible, but in the sword; and he was found sometimes among despised sects, and sometimes among men of talents and learning. The holy cloud, withdrawing from proud basilisks and gorgeous cathedrals, had descended on the obscure dwellings of the humble, or on chambers where studious men calmly pursued their conscientious labours. The Church, degraded by her love of power and riches, dishonoured in the eyes of the people by the venal use which she made of the doctrine of life; the Church which sold salvation in order to fill a treasury, for luxury and debauchery to empty, had lost all respect. Men of sense no longer set any value on her testimony, but, despising an authority so degraded, turned with joy, towards the Divine word, and its infallible authority, as toward the only refuge which remained to them in the general confusion. The age, therefore, was prepared. The bold movement by which Luther changed the point on which the human heart rested its highest hopes, and with a mighty hand transferred those hopes from the walls of the Vatican to the rock of the word of God, was hailed with enthusiasm. This was the work which the Reformer had in view in his reply to Prierio.

Putting aside the axioms which the Dominican had placed at the head of his work, he says, “After your example, I, too, am going to lay down some axioms.”

“The first is the saying of St. Paul, ‘Should we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.’” The second is the following passage of St. Augustine, addressed to St. Jerome:—“I have learned to pay to the canonical books alone the honour of believing very firmly that none of them has erred; as to others, I believe not what they say, for the simple reason, that it is they who say it.”

Luther then vigorously proceeds to lay down the fundamental principles of the Reformation,—the word of God, the whole word of God, and nothing but the word of God. “If you understand these principles,” continues he, “you will also understand that your whole dialogue is completely overturned; for you have done nothing else than adduce the words and opinions of St. Thomas.” Next, attacking the axioms of his opponent, he frankly declares his opinion that popes and councils may err. He complains of the flattery of the Roman courtiers in attributing to the pope the alleged infallibility of both popes and councils, and declares that the Church exists virtually only in Christ, and representatively only in Councils. Coming afterwards to the supposition which Prierio had made, he says, “No doubt you judge me by yourself, but if I aspired to a bishopric, assuredly I would not use language which sounds so hateful in your ears. Do you imagine I am ignorant how bishoprics and the popedom are procured at Rome? Do not the very children in the streets sing the well known words—

‘Rome now-a-days is more unclean, Than ought that in the world is seen?’” This was among the stanzas current in Rome before the election of one of the last popes. Nevertheless, Luther speaks of Leo with respect. “I know,” says he, “that in him we have, as it were, a Daniel in Babylon; his integrity has repeatedly endangered his life.” He concludes with a few words in reply to the menaces of Prierio: “In fine, you say that the pope is at once pontiff and emperor, and that he has power to constrain by the secular arm. Are you thirsting for murder? Take my word for it, your rhodomontades and your loud-sounding threats cannot terrify me. Though I be killed, Christ lives, Christ my Lord, and the Lord of all, blessed for ever and ever. Amen.”

Thus Luther with a strong arm assails the infidel altar of the papacy, opposing to it the altar of the word of God, alone holy, alone infallible, before which he would have every knee to bow, and on which he declares himself ready to sacrifice his life.

Prierio published a reply, and after it a third treatise on “the Irrefragable Truth of the Church and of the Roman Pontiff,” in which, founding on ecclesiastical law, he says, that though the pope were to send the people and himself to the devil en masse, he could not for so doing be either judged or deposed. The pope was at length obliged to impose silence on Prierio. A new opponent soon entered the list. He too was a Dominican. James Hochstraten, inquisitor at Cologne, whom we have already seen assailing Reuchlin and the friends of letters, was furious when he saw Luther’s boldness. It was indeed necessary that darkness and monkish fanaticism should engage in close fight with him who was to give them their death-blow. Monkism was formed after primitive truth had begun to decay, and from that period downward, errors and monks had gone hand in hand. The man who was to hasten their ruin had appeared; but these sturdy champions would not quit the field without a fierce combat. This combat they continued to wage with him throughout his whole life, though the proper personification of it is in Hochstraten; Hochstraten and Luther—the one, the

free and intrepid Christian, and the other, the blustering slave of monkish superstition. Hochstraten unchains his rage, and, with loud cries, demands the death of the heretic.… His wish is to secure the triumph of Rome by means of the flames. “It is high treason against the Church,” exclaims he, “to let so execrable a heretic live another single hour. Let a scaffold be instantly erected for him!” This sanguinary counsel was, alas! but too well followed in many countries; the voice of numerous martyrs, as in the first days of the Church, bore testimony to the truth in the midst of the flames. But in vain were fire and sword invoked against Luther. The angel of Jehovah constantly encamped around him and shielded him.

Luther replied to Hochstraten briefly, but very energetically. “Go,” says he to him, when concluding; “go, delirious murderer, whose thirst can only be quenched by the blood of the brethren. My sincere desire is, that you guard against calling me a Christian and a believer, and that, on the contrary, you never cease to denounce me as a heretic. Understand these things well, you bloody man, you enemy of the truth; and if your furious rage impel you to devise mischief against me, do it with circumspection, and time your measures well. God knows what I purpose if he grants me life. My hope and expectation (God willing) will not deceive me.” Hochstraten was silent. A more painful attack awaited the Reformer. Dr. Eck, the celebrated professor of Ingolstadt, who procured the liberty of Urban Regius, Luther’s friend, had received the famous theses. Eck was not the man to defend the abuses of indulgences, but he was a doctor of the school, and not of the Bible, being well versant in scholastics, but not in the word of God. If Prierio had represented Rome, and Hochstraten had represented the monks, Eck represented the School. The School which, for about five centuries, had ruled Christendom, far from yielding to the first blows of the Reformer, proudly rose up to crush the man who dared to assail it with floods of contempt. Eck and Luther, the School and the Word, came to blows on more than one occasion; but the present was the occasion on which the combat commenced.

Eck must have regarded several of Luther’s assertions as erroneous; for nothing obliges us to question the sincerity of his convictions. He defended the scholastic opinions with enthusiasm, just as Luther defended the declarations of the word of God. We may even suppose that he was somewhat pained at seeing himself obliged to oppose his old friend, and yet it would seem, from the mode of attack, that passion and jealousy had some share in his determination.

He gave the name of Obelisks to his remarks on the theses of Luther. Wishing at first to save appearances, he did not publish his work, but contented himself with communicating it confidentially to his ordinary, the Bishop of Eichstädt. Soon, however, whether through the indiscretion of the bishop, or of Eck himself, the Obelisks were circulated in all quarters. A copy having fallen into the hands of a friend of Luther, Link, preacher at Nuremberg, he lost no time in sending it to the Reformer. Eck was a much more formidable opponent than Tezel, Prierio, and Hochstraten; his work was the more dangerous the more it surpassed theirs in knowledge and subtlety. He affected pity for his “feeble opponent,” (knowing well that pity injures more effectually than anger,) and insinuated that the propositions of Luther contained Bohemian poison, and savoured of Bohemia. By these malicious insinuations he threw upon Luther the obloquy and hatred which in Germany attached to the name of Huss and the schismatics of his country. The malice which shone through this treatise roused Luther’s indignation, while the thought that the blow was given by an old friend, was still more distressing. However, he must sacrifice his affections in defending the truth. Luther unbosomed his heart and its sadness, in a letter to

Egranus, pastor at Zwickau—“I am called in the Obelisks a venomous man, a Bohemian, a heretic, seditious, insolent, and presumptuous.… I say nothing of milder epithets, such as sleepy, imbecile, ignorant, contemner of the sovereign pontiff, etc. This book is full of the grossest insults, and yet the author is a distinguished man, alike remarkable for learning and talent; and (it is this that grieves me most) a man with whom I had recently contracted a close friendship, viz., John Eck, doctor in theology, and chancellor of Ingolstadt, a celebrated and illustrious author. Did I not know the thoughts of Satan, I would be astonished at the furious manner in which this man has broken off a friendship at once so pleasant and so recent;2 and this without giving me any warning—without writing or saying a single word.” But if Luther’s heart be wounded, his courage is not destroyed. On the contrary, he girds himself for the combat. “Rejoice, my brother,” says he to Egranus, whom a violent enemy had also attacked; “rejoice, and be not alarmed at all these flying leaves. The more furious my adversaries become, the more I advance. I leave the things which are behind, that they may bark after them, and follow those which are before, that they may in like manner bark after them in their turn.”

Eck felt how shameful his conduct had been, and endeavoured to justify it in a letter to Carlstadt, in which he calls Luther “their common friend;” and throws all the blame on the Bishop of Eichstädt, at whose instigation he pretended that he had written the work. His intention, he said, was not to publish the Obelisks; but for this he would have had more regard for the friendship subsisting between him and Luther; and he requested that Luther, instead of coming to open rupture with him, would turn his arms against the theologians of Frankfort. The professor of Ingolstadt, who had not feared to strike the first blow, began to be alarmed at the power of the opponent whom he had imprudently attacked, and would willingly have evaded the contest. It was too late.

All these fine words did not persuade Luther, who was, however, disposed to be silent, and said, “I will patiently swallow this morsel, though fit for Cerberus.” But his friends were of a different opinion, and urged, or rather constrained him to answer. He, accordingly, replied to the Obelisks by his Asterisks, opposing (as he says, playing upon the word) to the rust and lividity of Obelisks the light and dazzling brightness of the stars of heaven. In this work he treats his new opponent less harshly than those whom he had previously combated; but his indignation is seen peeping through his words.

He showed that in the chaos of the Obelisks there was nothing from the holy Scriptures, nothing from the Fathers of the Church, and nothing from the ecclesiastical canons; that they contained only scholastic glosses, and opinion after opinion, many of them mere dreams; in a word, contained the very things which Luther had attacked. The Asterisks are full of spirit and life. The author’s indignation rises at the errors of his friend’s book, but he shows pity to the man.2 He reiterates the fundamental principle which he had laid down in his reply to Prierio:—“The sovereign pontiff is a man, and may be led into error; but God is truth, and cannot be deceived.” Then employing the argumentum ad hominem against the scholastic doctor, he says to him, “It is certainly impudent in any one to teach, as the philosophy of Aristotle, any dogma which cannot be proved by his authority. You grant this. Well, then, it is a fortiori, the most impudent of all things to affirm in the Church and among Christians anything that Jesus Christ himself has not taught. Now in what part of the Bible is it said that the treasure of Christ’s merits is in the hands of the pope?”

He adds, “As to the malicious charge of Bohemian heresy, I patiently bear the reproach for the love of Jesus Christ. I live in a celebrated university, a distinguished town, an important bishopric, and a powerful duchy, where all are orthodox, and where, doubtless, no toleration would be given to so wicked a heretic.”

Luther did not publish The Asterisks; he only communicated them to his friends. It was not till a later period that they were given to the public. This rupture between the doctor of Ingolstadt and the doctor of Wittemberg made a sensation in Germany. They had common friends. Scheurl, in particular, by whose instrumentality their friendship appears to have been originally formed, was exceedingly annoyed. He was one of those who longed to see a reform throughout the whole Germanic church, produced through the medium of its most distinguished organs. But If in matters of principle the most eminent theologians of the period came to open rupture, and while Luther advanced in a new path, Eck put himself at the head of those who kept to the old path, what disruption must inevitably ensue? Would not numerous adherents gather around each of the two chiefs, and form two hostile camps in the heart of the empire?

Scheurl exerted himself to reconcile Eck and Luther. The latter declared that he was willing to forget every thing; that he loved the genius, and admired the erudition of Dr. Eck, and that the proceedings of his old friend had caused him more grief than anger. “I am ready,” says he, “either for peace or war; but I prefer peace. Do you then set about it. Grieve with us, that the devil has thrown among us this beginning of strife, and then rejoice that Christ in his mercy hath removed it.”2 About the same time, he addressed a most friendly letter to Eck, who, however, not only did not answer it, but did not even send him a verbal message.” It was too late for reconciliation; and the breach became wider and wider. The pride of Eck, and his unforgiving temper, soon completely broke any remaining ties of friendship.

CHAP. X

Popular Writings—Our Father—Thy Kingdom Come—Thy Will be Done—Our Daily Bread—Sermon on Repentance—Forgiveness through Christ.

Such were the struggles which the champion of the word of God had to maintain at the outset of his career. But these combats with the leaders of society, these academical disputes, are of small account with the Christian. Human doctors imagine they have gained the noblest of triumphs if they succeed in filling some newspapers and some saloons with the noise of their systems. As it is with them more an affair of self-love, or party spirit, than of good to humanity, this worldly success satisfies them. Accordingly, their labours are only a smoke, which, after blinding us, passes off and leaves no trace behind. Neglecting to introduce their fire among the masses of the population, they do nothing more than make it skim along the surface of society.

It is not so with the Christian. His object is not success in a coterie, or an academy, but the salvation of souls. He therefore willingly avoids the brilliant skirmishing, which he might carry on at his ease with the champions of the world, and prefers the obscure labours which carry life and light into rural cottages, and the lanes of cities. Thus did Luther, or rather according to the precept of his Master, he did the one, without leaving the other undone. While combating inquisitors, university chancellors, and masters of the sacred palace, he strove to diffuse sound religious knowledge among the multitude. With that view, he at this time published different popular

writings, such as his Discourses on the Ten Commandments, delivered two years before in the church of Wittemberg, and which we have already noticed; and his Exposition of the Lord's Prayer, for simple and ignorant laymen. Who would not like to know how the Reformer then addressed the people?

We will quote some of the words which he sent, as he says, in the preface to the second of these works, "to course the country."

Prayer, that inward act of the heart, will doubtless ever be one of the points with which a reformation in heart and life must commence, and, accordingly, it early engaged the attention of Luther. It is impossible, in a translation, to keep up his energetic style, and the vigour of a language which was formed so to speak, as it fell from his pen; however, we will try.

"When you pray," says he, "have few words, but many thoughts and affections, and, above all, let these be profound. The less you speak, the better you pray. Few words and many thoughts make the Christian, many words and few thoughts, the pagan.

"Seeming and bodily prayer is that muttering of the lips, that external babble, which comes forth without attention, striking the eyes and ears of men; but prayer in spirit and in truth is the inward desire, the emotions, and sighs which proceed from the depths of the heart. The former is the prayer of hypocrites, and of all who trust in themselves. The latter is the prayer of the children of God, who walk in his fear."

Then coming to the first words of our Lord's Prayer, "Our Father," he thus expresses himself:—"Among all the names of God, there is none which inclines more toward him than the name of Father. We should not have so much happiness and consolation in calling him Lord, or God, or Judge.… By this name of father his bowels of compassion are moved; for there is no voice more lovely or touching than that of a child to its father.

"Who art in heaven. He who confesses that he has a Father in heaven owns himself to be, as it were, an orphan on the earth. Hence his heart feels an ardent desire like that of a child living out of its father's country, among strangers, in wretchedness and sorrow. It is as if he said, 'Alas! my father! thou art in heaven, and I, thy miserable child, am on the earth, far from thee, in all sorts of dangers, necessities, and sorrows.'

"Hallowed be thy name! He who is passionate and envious, who curses or slanders, dishonours God, in whose name he was baptized. Applying the vessel which God has consecrated to profane uses, he resembles a priest who should use the holy cup to give drink to a sow, or to gather manure.

"Thy kingdom come. Those who amass wealth, who erect magnificent buildings, who seek after all that the world can give, and with the lips repeat this prayer, are like the large pipes of a church organ, which sounds and cries at full pitch, and without ceasing, but has neither words, nor sense, nor reason." …

Farther on, Luther attacks the error of pilgrimages, which was then so general. "One goes to Rome, another to St. James; one builds a chapel, another founds an endowment, in order to reach the kingdom of God; but all neglect the essential point, which is to become themselves his kingdom. Why do you go beyond seas in quest of the kingdom of God?… Your heart is the place

in which it ought to rise.

“It is a dreadful thing,” continues he, “to hear us utter this prayer, ‘Thy will be done.’ Where in the Church do we see this will done?… Bishop rises against bishop, and church against church. Priests, monks, and nuns, quarrel and fight; throughout there is nothing but discord. And yet all parties exclaim that they have a good will and an upright intention; and so to the honour and glory of God they altogether do the work of the devil.…

“Why do we say our bread?” continues he, “explaining these words, “Give us this day our daily bread,” “Because we pray, not for the ordinary bread which pagans eat, and which God gives to all men, but for our bread—bread to us, children of the heavenly Father.

“And what, then, is this bread of God? It is Jesus Christ our Lord; ‘I am the living bread which came down from heaven, and give life to the world.’ Wherefore let us not deceive ourselves. Sermons and instructions which do not represent to us, or give us the knowledge of Jesus Christ, cannot be the daily bread and food of our souls.…

“What avails it that such a bread is prepared for us, if it is not served out to us, and we cannot taste it?… It is as if a magnificent feast were prepared, and there were nobody to hand the bread, bring the dishes, and pour out the liquor; so that the guests would be left to feed by the eye and the smell … This is the reason why it is necessary to preach Christ, and Christ alone.

“But what, then, you ask, is it to know Jesus Christ, and what profit is gained by it? Answer:—To learn to know Jesus Christ is to comprehend what the Apostle says—Christ has of God been made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Now, you comprehend this when you perceive that your wisdom is culpable folly, your righteousness damnable iniquity, your holiness damnable pollution; your redemption miserable condemnation—when you feel that, before God and all the creatures, you are truly a fool, a sinner, an impure and condemned man—and when you show, not only by your words, but from the bottom of your heart, and by your works, that there remains to you no comfort and no salvation, save Jesus Christ. To believe is nothing else than to eat this bread of heaven.”

Thus Luther faithfully fulfilled his resolution to open the eyes of a people whom priests had blindfolded, and were leading at their pleasure. His writings, which in a short time spread over all Germany, caused new light to arise, and shed the seeds of truth in abundance on a soil well prepared to receive it. But while thinking of those at a distance, he did not forget those who were near. The dominicans from their pulpits denounced him as an infamous heretic. Luther, the man of the people, and who, had he been so disposed, could with a few sentences have set them in commotion, always disdained such triumphs, and made it his sole aim to instruct his hearers. His reputation, which was continually extending, and the courage with which he raised the banner of Christ in the midst of an enslaved Church, made his sermons be followed with increasing interest. Never had the confluence been so great. Luther went straight to the point. One day, having mounted the pulpit of Wittemberg, he undertook to establish the doctrine of repentance. The discourse pronounced on this occasion afterwards became very celebrated, and contains several of the fundamental principles of evangelical doctrine. At first he contrasts the pardon of men with the pardon of heaven. “There are,” says he, “two remissions—the remission of the penalty, and the remission of the fault. The former reconciles man externally with the Church; the latter, which is

the heavenly indulgence, reconciles man with God. If a man has not within himself that tranquil conscience, that cheerful heart which God's remission gives, no indulgence can aid him were he to buy all that ever have been on the earth."

He afterwards continues thus: "They wish to do good works before their sins are pardoned, whereas sins must be pardoned before good works can be done. Works do not banish sin; but banish sin, and you will have works. Good works should be done with a cheerful heart and a good conscience toward God; in other words, with the forgiveness of sins."

He then comes to the principal object of his sermon, an object which was identified with that of the whole Reformation. The Church had put herself in the place of God and his word; he objects to this, and makes every thing depend on faith in the word.

"The remission of the fault," says he, "is not in the power of the pope, or the bishop, or the priest, or any man whatever, but rests solely on the word of Christ, and your own faith. For Christ did not choose to build our comfort or our salvation on a word or work of man, but only on himself, on his own work and word. Your repentance and your works may deceive you, but Christ your God will never deceive, will never waver; and the devil cannot overthrow his words."

"A pope or a bishop has no more power than the humblest priest where the remission of the fault is in question. And even where there is no priest, each Christian, were it a woman or a child, can do the same thing. For if a simple Christian says to you, 'God pardons sin in the name of Jesus Christ,' and you receive the saying with firm faith, as if God himself had spoken, you are acquitted.

"If you believe not that your sins are pardoned, you make your God a liar, and declare that you put greater confidence in your vain thoughts than in God and his word.

"Under the Old Testament neither priest, nor king, nor prophet, had power to proclaim the forgiveness of sins; but under the New Testament every believer has this power. The Church is quite replete with the remission of sins. If a pious Christian comforts your conscience by the word of the cross, be it man or woman, young or old, receive the comfort with a faith so firm, that you would sooner submit to many deaths than doubt that it is ratified in the presence of God…. Repent, and do all the works that you can do; but let the faith which you have in the pardon of Jesus Christ stand in the front rank, and have sole command on the field of battle."

Thus spoke Luther to his astonished and enraptured hearers. All the scaffoldings which impudent priests had, for their own profit, reared between God and the soul of man, were thrown down, and man brought face to face with his Maker. The word of pardon came down pure from on high, without passing through a thousand corrupting channels. It was no longer necessary that the testimony of God, in order to be available, should previously be stamped by men with their false seal. The monopoly of the sacerdotal caste was abolished, and the Church emancipated.

CHAP. XI

Apprehensions of Luther's friends—Journey to Heidelberg—Bibra—The Palatine Castle—Rupture—The Paradoxes—Dispute—The Hearers—Bucer—Brentz—Snepf—Conversations with Luther—Labours of the Young Doctors—Effects on Luther—The Old Professor—The True Light—Arrival.

Meanwhile, the fire which had been kindled at Wittemberg behoved to be kindled elsewhere. Luther, not contented with announcing the truth in the place of his residence, whether to the academic youth or to the people, was desirous to shed the seeds of sound doctrine in other places. The Augustin order were to hold their general chapter at Heidelberg, in the spring of 1518. Luther, as one of the most distinguished men of the order, was invited to attend; but his friends did all they could to dissuade him from undertaking the journey. In fact, the monks had laboured to render the name of Luther odious in all the places through which he had to pass. To insult they had added threatening; and a small matter might have sufficed to excite a popular tumult of which he might have been made the victim. “Or even,” said his friends, “what they may not dare to do by violence, they will accomplish by fraud and stratagem.” But in the discharge of a duty, Luther did not allow himself to be arrested by the fear of any danger, however imminent. He therefore turned a deaf ear to the timid suggestions of his friends, and directed them to Him in whom his confidence was placed, and under whose protection he desired to undertake the perilous journey. After the feast of Easter he quietly set out on foot, on the 13th April 1518.

He had with him a guide named Urban, who carried his small bundle, and was to accompany him as far as Wurzburg. How many thoughts must have occupied the heart of the servant of the Lord during this journey! At Weissenfels, the pastor, though not of his acquaintance, instantly recognised him as the doctor of Wittemberg, and gave him a hearty reception. At Erfurt, he was joined by two other Augustin friars. At Judenbach, the three fell in with Degenard Pfeffinger, the Elector’s confidential councillor, who entertained them at the inn. “I have had the pleasure,” wrote Luther to Spalatin, “of making this rich lord some shillings poorer. You know how I like to take every occasion of making a hole in the purses of the rich for the benefit of the poor, especially if the rich are my friends.”3 He arrived at Coburg, worn out with fatigue. “All goes well by the grace of God,” wrote he; “only, I confess I have sinned in undertaking the journey on foot. But for this sin I presume I will have no need of the remission of indulgences, for my contrition is perfect, and my satisfaction complete. I am knocked up with fatigue, and all the conveyances are full. Is not this enough, or rather more than enough of penitence, contrition, and satisfaction?” The Reformer of Germany, not finding a place in the public conveyances, nor any one who was willing to yield him his place, was obliged next morning, notwithstanding of his fatigue, humbly to resume his journey on foot. He arrived at Wurzburg on the evening of the second Sabbath after Easter, and sent back his guide.

Bishop Bibra, who had received the theses with so much delight, lived in this town, and Luther had a letter for him from the Elector of Saxony. The bishop, overjoyed at the opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with this bold champion of the truth, hastened to invite him to the episcopal palace. He went out to receive him, spoke to him in the kindest terms, and offered to furnish him with a guide as far as Heidleberg. But at Wurzburg, Luther had fallen in with his two friends, the vicar-general Staupitz, and Lange, the prior of Erfurt, who offered him a place in their carriage. He therefore thanked Bibra for his offer, and next day the three friends set out from Wurzburg. They travelled thus for three days, conversing together, and on the 21st April arrived at Heidelberg. Luther went to lodge at the Augustin convent. The Elector of Saxony had given him a letter to Count Palatine Wolfgang, Duke of Bavaria. Luther repaired to his magnificent castle, the site of which is still the admiration of strangers. The monk of the plains of Saxony had a heart to admire the position of Heidelberg, where the two lovely valleys of the Rhine and the Necker unite. He

delivered his letter to James Simler, steward of the court. Simler having read it, said, “Truly you have here a valuable letter of credit.” The Count Palatine received him with much kindness, and often invited him, as well as Lange and Staupitz, to his table. This friendly reception added greatly to Luther’s comfort. “We relax and amuse ourselves with an agreeable and pleasant chit-chat,” says he, “eating and drinking, and surveying all the magnificence of the Palatine palace, admiring its ornaments, its armoury, and cuirasses; in short, every thing remarkable in this distinguished and truly royal castle.”

However, Luther had other work to do. He behoved to work while it was day. Transported to an university which exercised great influence on the west and south of Germany, he was there to strike a blow which should shake the churches of those countries. He, accordingly, began to write theses which he proposed to maintain in a public discussion. Such discussions were of ordinary occurrence; but Luther felt, that in order to make his useful, it was necessary to give it a peculiar interest. His disposition, moreover, inclined him to present the truth under a paradoxical form. The professors of the university would not allow the discussion to take place in their public hall, and it became necessary to hold it in a hall of the Augustin convent. The 26th of April was the day on which it was to take place.

Heidelberg, at a later period, received the gospel, and even at this discussion in the convent, an observer might have augured that good would result from it. The reputation of Luther attracted a large concourse of hearers; professors, courtiers, citizens, and students, crowded to it. The doctor gave the name of Paradoxes to his theses, and it is, perhaps, the name which might still be applied to them in the present day. It would be easy, however, to translate them into evident propositions. The following are some of the Paradoxes:—

1. “The law of God is a salutary rule of life. Nevertheless, it cannot aid man in his search after righteousness; on the contrary, it impedes him.

3. “Works of man, how fair and good soever they may be, are to all appearance, only mortal sins.

4. “Works of God, how deformed and bad soever they may appear, have always an immortal merit.

7. “The works of the just themselves would be mortal sins, did they not, through holy reverence for the Lord, fear that their works would in fact be mortal sins.

9. “To maintain that works done without Christ are dead, but not mortal, is dangerous forgetfulness of the fear of God.

13. “Since the fall of man, free will exists only in name, and when man does all that is possible for him to do, he sins mortally.

16. “A man who expects to attain to grace by doing all that it is possible for him to do, adds sin to sin, and doubles his guilt.

18. “It is certain that man, to become capable of receiving the grace of Christ, must entirely despair of himself.

21. “An honorary theologian calls evil good, and good evil; but a theologian of the cross speaks according to truth.

22. “The wisdom which teaches man to know the invisible perfections of God in his works, inflates, blinds, and hardens him.

23. “The law excites the wrath of God, kills, curses, accuses, judges, and condemns, whatever is not in Christ.

24. “Still this wisdom (§ 22) is not bad; and the law (§ 23) is not to be rejected; but the man who does not study the knowledge of God under the cross, changes its good into evil.

25. “He is not justified who does many works; but he who, without works, believes much in Jesus Christ.

26. “The law says, Do this! And what it commands is never done. Grace says, Believe in him! And, lo! all things are accomplished.

28. “The love of God finds nothing in man, but creates in him what it loves. The love of man proceeds from self-love.”

Five doctors of theology attacked these theses. They had read them with the astonishment which novelty excites. The theology seemed to them very strange. Yet according to Luther’s own testimony, they discussed them with a courtesy which he could not but esteem; and, at the same time, with force and discernment.

Luther, on his part, displayed an admirable mildness in his replies, incomparable patience in listening to the objections of his opponents, and all the liveliness of St. Paul in solving the difficulties which were started. His answers, which were short, but replete with the word of God, filled all the hearers with admiration. “He very much resembles Erasmus,” said several; “but in one thing he surpasses him,—he professes openly what Erasmus is contented only to insinuate.” The discussion was drawing to a close. Luther’s opponents had retired with honour from the field of battle, the youngest of them, Doctor George Niger, alone continuing the struggle with the mighty combatant. Amazed at the bold propositions of the Augustin monk, and feeling utterly at a loss for arguments to refute them, he exclaimed, in an agitated tone,—“Were our peasants to hear such things, they would stone you to death.” At these words there was a general laugh throughout the audience.

Never had hearers listened more attentively to a theological disputation. The first words of the Reformer had awakened men’s minds, and questions which shortly before had met with indifference, were now full of interest. Several countenances gave visible expression to the new ideas which the bold assertions of the Saxon doctor had suggested to their minds.

Three youths in particular were strongly moved. One of them, named Martin Bucer, was a Dominican, of about twenty-seven years of age, who, notwithstanding of the prejudices of his order, seemed unwilling to lose a single word which fell from the doctor. Born in a little town of Alsace, he had entered a convent at sixteen, and soon displayed such talents that the monks entertained the highest hopes of him. “He will one day be an ornament to our order,” said they. His superiors had sent him to Heidelberg that he might devote himself to the study of philosophy,

theology, Greek, and Hebrew. At this period Erasmus having published several of his works, Bucer read them with avidity.

Shortly after, the first works of Luther appeared, and the Alsatian student hastened to compare the Reformer's doctrine with the holy Scriptures. Some doubt as to the truth of the popish religion arose in his mind. This was the way in which light was diffused in those days. The Elector Palatine took notice of the young man. His strong and sonorous voice, his pleasing address, his eloquence, and the freedom with which he attacked prevailing vices, made him a distinguished preacher. He was appointed chaplain to the court, and was acting in this capacity when Luther's journey to Heidelberg was announced. Bucer was greatly delighted; nobody repaired with greater eagerness to the hall of the Augustin convent. He had provided himself with paper, pens, and ink, wishing to write down whatever the doctor should say. But while his hand was rapidly tracing the words of Luther, the hand of God was writing the great truths which he heard in more ineffaceable characters on his heart. The rays of the doctrine of grace beamed upon his soul on this memorable occasion. The Dominican was gained over to Christ. Not far from Bucer sat John Brentz or Brentius, then about nineteen years of age. Brentz, who was the son of a magistrate of a town in Swabia, had, at thirteen, been enrolled among the students of Heidelberg. None of them showed such application. As soon as the hour of midnight struck, Brentz rose and commenced his labours. This practice became so habitual to him, that, during the rest of his life, he could never sleep beyond that hour. At a later period he devoted these still moments to meditation on the Scriptures. Brentz was one of the first to perceive the new light which then rose on Germany, and he received it into his soul in the full love of it. He read the writings of Luther with avidity, and must have been overjoyed at the prospect of hearing him personally at Heidelberg. Young Brentz was particularly struck with one of the doctor's propositions, viz., "Not he who does many works is justified before God, but he who, without works, believes much in Jesus Christ." A pious woman of Heilbronn, on the Necker, wife of a councillor of that town, named Snepf, had, after the example of Hannah, dedicated her first born to the Lord, earnestly desiring to see him devote himself to theology. The young man, who was born in 1495, made rapid progress in literature, but whether from taste or ambition, or compliance with his father's wishes, he devoted himself to the study of law. The pious mother was grieved when she saw her son Ehrhard following another course than that to which she had dedicated him; she warned and urged him, and always concluded by reminding him of the vow which she had made at his birth. At length, overcome by his mother's perseverance, Ehrhard Snepf yielded, and soon felt such delight in his new studies, that nothing in the world could have diverted him from them.

He was in terms of intimacy with Bucer and Brentz, and they remained friends all their lives; "for," says one of their biographers, "friendships founded on the love of literature and virtue are never extinguished." He was present with his two friends at the Heidelberg discussion. The Paradoxes and the bold struggle of the Wittemberg doctor gave Snepf a new impulse. Rejecting the vain dogma of human merit, he embraced the doctrine of free justification. The next day Bucer paid a visit to Luther. "I conversed with him," says he, "and without witnesses; and had a most exquisite repast, not from the viands, but from the truths which were set before me. Whatever objections I stated, were readily answered by the doctor, who explained every thing with the utmost clearness. O! that I had time to write yon more about it." Luther himself was touched with the sentiments of Bucer. "He is the only friar of his order," wrote he to Spalatin, "who is in good faith. He is a young

man of great promise; he received me with simplicity, and conversed with me with earnestness; he is deserving of our confidence and our love."3

Brentz, Snepf, and others also, urged by the new truths which began to dawn upon their minds, in like manner visited Luther, speaking and conferring with him, and asking explanations of any thing which they might not have comprehended. The Reformer, in his answers, founded upon the Bible. At every word that fell from him fresh light arose, and his visitors saw a new world opening before them.

After Luther's departure these noble-minded men began to teach at Heidelberg. It was necessary to follow out what the man of God had begun, and not allow the torch which he had kindled to be extinguished. The scholars will speak should the masters be silent. Brentz, although he was still so youthful, explained St. Matthew, at first in his own room, and afterwards, when it could not contain his hearers, in the hall of philosophy. The theologians, filled with envy at seeing the great concourse which he drew together, were much offended.

Brentz next took orders, and transferred his lectures to the college of the Canons of the Holy Spirit. In this way the fire which had already been kindled in Saxony was kindled also in Heidelberg. The light radiated from numerous foci. This period has been designated the seed-time of the Palatinate. But the fruits of the Heidelberg discussion were not confined to the Palatinate. These bold friends of the truth soon became luminaries in the Church. They all occupied eminent stations, and took part in the numerous discussions, to which the Reformation gave rise. Strasburg, and at a later period England, were indebted to the labours of Bucer, for a purer knowledge of the truth. Snepf taught first at Marburg, then at Stutgard, Tubingen, and Jena. Brentz, after teaching at Heidelberg, long continued to labour at Halle, in Swabia, and at Tubingen. These three individuals will again come before us. This discussion caused Luther himself to advance. He grew daily in the knowledge of the truth. "I am one of those," said he, "who have made progress by writing and by instructing others; and not one of those, who, from nothing, become all at once great and learned doctors."

He was delighted at seeing the avidity with which youth in schools received the growing truth; and this consoled him when he saw how deeply the old doctors were rooted in their opinions. "I have the glorious hope," said he, "that, in like manner as Christ, when rejected by the Jews, went to the Gentiles, we will now see true theology, though rejected by these old men of vain and fantastical opinions, welcomed by the rising generation." The Chapter being closed, Luther thought of returning to Wittemberg. The Count Palatine gave him a letter to the Elector, in which he said that "Luther had displayed so much ability in the discussion as to reflect great glory on the university of Wittemberg." He was not permitted to return on foot. The Augustins of Nuremberg conducted him as far as Wurzburg, and from thence he proceeded to Erfurt with the friars belonging to it. As soon as he arrived he called on his old master Jodocus. The venerable professor, who had been much concerned and shocked at the career which his pupil had followed, was accustomed to put a theta (θ) before all Luther's sentences,—that being the letter which the Greeks used to express condemnation. He had written to the young doctor, censuring his conduct, and he was anxious to answer by word of mouth. Not having been received, he wrote Jodocus:—"The whole university, with the exception of a single licentiate, thinks as I do. Nay, more; the prince, the bishop, several other prelates, and all our enlightened citizens, declare, with one voice, that hitherto they have

neither known nor understood Jesus Christ and his gospel. I am ready to receive your correction, and though it should be harsh I will think it pleasant. Unbosom your heart then without fear, disburden yourself of your anger. I have no wish, I am not able to be angry with you. God and my conscience bear witness."2 The aged doctor was touched by the sentiments of his old pupil, and wished to see if there was no means of removing the condemnatory theta. They had an explanation; but nothing resulted from it. "I have at least," said Luther, "made him understand, that all their sentences are like the beast which is said to eat itself. But it is vain to speak to the deaf. The doctors cling obstinately to their petty distinctions, although they confess that they have nothing to support them but what they term the light of natural reason—a dark chaos to us who proclaim no other light than Jesus Christ, the only true light."

Luther quitted Erfurt in the carriage of the convent. He was thus brought to Eisleben, and from thence the Augustins of the place, proud of a doctor who threw so much lustre on their order and on their town which had given him birth, caused him to be conveyed to Wittemberg with their own horses, and at their own expence. All were desirous to testify affection and esteem for the extraordinary man who was rising at every step.

He arrived on Saturday after the Ascension. The journey had done him good. His friends found him stronger and healthier looking than before his departure, and were delighted with all he told them. Luther reposed for some time from the fatigues of his campaign and the discussion at Heidelberg, but this repose was only a preparation for more severe exertions.

BOOK FOURTH Luther Before the Legate may–december, 1518

CHAP. I

Repentance—The Pope—Leo X—Luther to his Bishop—Luther to the Pope—Luther to the Vicar-General—Rovere to the Elector—Discourse on Excommunication—Influence and Power of Luther.

Truth had at length raised her head in the bosom of Christendom. Victorious over the inferior organs of the papacy, she behoved to have a struggle with its chief. We are going to see Luther at close quarters with Rome. This step was taken on his return from Heidelberg. His first theses on indulgences had been misunderstood, and he determined to explain their meaning with greater clearness. The outcry raised by the blind hatred of his enemies had convinced him how important it was to gain the most enlightened part of the nation in favour of truth, and he resolved to appeal to its judgment by calling attention to the foundation on which his convictions rested. It was, indeed, necessary for once to appeal to the decision of Rome; and he hesitates not to send all his explanations. Presenting them with one hand to the enlightened and impartial among his countrymen, he with the other lays them before the throne of the sovereign pontiff.

These explanations of his theses, which he denominated Solutions, were written with great moderation. Luther tried to soften the passages which had caused most irritation, and gave proof of genuine modesty. At the same time, he showed that his convictions were immovable; and he courageously defended all the propositions which truth obliged him to maintain. He again repeated, that every Christian who truly repents possesses the remission of sins without indulgence; that the pope, like the humblest of priests, can only declare simply what God has already pardoned; that the treasure of the merits of the saints administered by the pope was a

chimera, and that Holy Scripture was the only rule of faith. Let us hear himself on some of these points.

He begins with establishing the nature of true penitence, and contrasts the divine act, which renews man, with the mummery of the Romish Church. “The Greek word μετανοειτε,” says he, “signifies—be clothed with a new spirit and new feelings; have a new nature; so that, ceasing to be earthly, you may become heavenly.… Christ is a teacher of the spirit and not of the letter, and his words are spirit and life.” He, therefore, inculcates, not those external penances which the proudest sinners can perform without being humbled, but a repentance according to spirit and truth—a repentance which may be fulfilled in all the situations of life, under the purple of kings, the cassock of priests, and the coronet of princes, amid the magnificence of Babylon, where a Daniel lived, as well as under a monk’s frock and a beggar’s tatters.

Farther on we meet with these bold words, “I give myself no trouble as to what pleases or displeases the pope. He is a man like other men. There have been several popes who loved not only errors and vices, but even things still more extraordinary. I listen to the pope as pope, that is when he speaks in the canons, according to the canons, or when he decides some article with a council, but not when he speaks out of his own head. If I did otherwise, would I not be bound to say with those who know not Jesus Christ, that the horrible massacres of Christians of which Julius II was guilty, were the kind acts of an affectionate shepherd towards the Lord’s sheep?”

“I cannot but be astonished,” continues he, “at the simplicity of those who have said that the two swords of the gospel represent, the one the spiritual power, and the other the temporal. Yes, the pope holds a sword of steel, and so exhibits himself to Christendom, not as a tender father, but as a formidable tyrant. Ah! God in his anger has given us the sword we wished, and withdrawn that which we despised. In no quarter of the world have there been more dreadful wars than among Christians.… Why did the ingenious intellect which discovered this fine commentary, not with equal subtlety interpret the history of the two keys committed to St. Peter, and in that way make it an established dogma of the Church, that the one serves to open the treasures of heaven, and the other the treasures of the world.”

“It is impossible,” he again says, “that a man can be a Christian without having Christ; and if he has Christ, he at the same time has all that belongs to Christ. The thing which gives peace to our conscience is, that by faith our sins are no longer ours, but Christ’s, on whom God has laid them; and that, on the other hand, all the righteousness of Christ is ours, to whom God has given it. Christ puts his hand upon us, and we are cured. He throws his mantle over us and we are covered; for he is the glorious Saviour, blessed for ever and ever.” With such views of the riches of salvation by Jesus Christ, there was no need of indulgences.

Luther, while attacking the papacy, speaks honourably of Leo X. “The times in which we live are so bad,” says he, “that even the greatest personages cannot come to the help of the Church. We have now a very good pope in Leo X. His sincerity and knowledge fill us with joy. But what can one man, though amiable and agreeable, do by himself alone? He certainly deserved to be pope in better times. We, in our day, deserve only such popes as Julius II, and Alexander VI.”

He afterwards comes to the crowning point. “I wish to say the thing in a few words and boldly. The Church stands in need of a reformation; and this cannot be the work either of a single man, like the

pope, or of many men, like the cardinals, and fathers of councils; but it must be that of the whole world, or, rather, it is a work which belongs to God only. As to the time in which such a reformation ought to begin, He alone who created time can tell.… The embankment is broken down, and it is no longer in our power to arrest the torrents which are rushing impetuously along."

Such are some of the thoughts and declarations which Luther addressed to the enlightened among his countrymen. The Feast of Pentecost was at hand; and, at this period, when the apostles rendered the first testimony of their faith to the risen Saviour, Luther, a new apostle, published this enlivening book in which he expressed his earnest longings for a resurrection of the Church. Saturday, 22nd May, 1518, being Pentecost eve, he sent his work to his ordinary, the Bishop of Brandenburg, with the following letter:—

"Most worthy Father in God,—Some time ago, when a novel and unheard-of doctrine, touching the apostolic indulgences, began to make a noise in these countries, both learned and ignorant felt concerned; and many persons, some of them known to me, and others whom I did not even know by face, urged me to publish, by word of mouth, or by writing, what I thought of the novelty, I am unwilling to say, the impudence of this doctrine. At first I was silent, and kept back. But at length matters came to such a point, that the holiness of the pope was compromised.

"What was I to do? I thought it best neither to approve nor to condemn these doctrines; but to establish a discussion on this important point, until the Holy Church should decide.

"Nobody having come forward to this combat, to which I had invited all the world, and my theses having been considered not as materials for discussion, but positive assertions, I feel myself obliged to publish an explanation of them. Deign, then, most gracious Bishop, to receive these trifles2 at my hand. And that all the world may see I am not acting presumptuously, I supplicate your reverence to take pen and ink, and blot out, or even throw into the fire and burn, whatever in them displeases you. I know that Jesus Christ has no need of my labours and my services, and that he can very well, without me, publish good tidings to his Church. Not that the bulls and menaces of my enemies deter me; very much the contrary. If they were not so impudent and so shameless, nobody would hear a word from me; I would shut myself up in a corner, and there study by myself for myself. If this affair is not of God, it certainly cannot be my affair, nor that of any man, but a thing of nought. Let the glory and honour be ascribed to Him to whom alone they belong."

Luther had still the greatest respect for the head of the Church. He supposed that there was justice in Leo X, and a sincere love of truth. He resolved, therefore, to apply to him also; and eight days after, on Trinity Sunday, 30th May, 1518, addressed him in a letter, of which we give the following extracts:—

"To the Most Blessed Father, Leo X, Sovereign Bishop, "Friar Martin Luther, Augustin, wishes eternal salvation!

"I learn, most Holy Father, that evil reports are current with regard to me, and that my name is brought into bad odour with your Holiness. I am called heretic, apostate, traitor, and a thousand other opprobrious epithets; what I see astonishes, what I hear amazes me. But the only foundation of my tranquillity remains, and that is a pure and peaceful conscience. Be pleased to listen to me, most Holy Father, to me, who am only an ignorant child."

Luther relates the origin of the whole affair, and continues thus:—

“In all taverns, nothing was heard but complaints of the avarice of priests, and attacks on the power of the keys and the sovereign pontiff. This all Germany can testify. On hearing these things, my zeal for the glory of Christ was moved, (so I thought,) or if they will explain it otherwise, my young and boiling blood was inflamed.

“I warned several of the princes of the Church, but some mocked me, and others turned a deaf ear. All seemed paralysed by the terror of your name. Then I published the discussion, “And this, most Holy Father! this is the fire which is said to have set the whole world in flames!

“Now, what must I do? I cannot retract, and I see that this publication is subjecting me to inconceivable hatred in all quarters. I love not to stand forth in the midst of the world; for I am without knowledge, without talent, and far too feeble for such great things, especially in this illustrious age, in which Cicero himself, were he alive, would be obliged to hide in some obscure corner.

“But in order to appease my adversaries, and respond to numerous solicitations, I here publish my thoughts. I publish them, Holy Father, that I may place myself in safety under the shadow of your wings. All who are willing will thus be able to understand with what simplicity of heart I have asked the ecclesiastical authority to instruct me, and what respect I have shown for the power of the keys. If I had not managed the affair in a becoming manner, it is impossible that the most serene lord Frederick, Duke and Elector of Saxony, who shines among the friends of apostolical and Christian truth, would ever have tolerated in his university of Wittemberg a man so dangerous as I am represented to be.

“Wherefore, most Holy Father, I throw myself at the feet of your Holiness, and submit to you with all I have, and all I am. Destroy my cause, or embrace it; decide for me, or decide against me; take my life, or restore it to me, just as you please. I will recognise your voice as the voice of Jesus Christ, who presides and speaks by you. If I have deserved death I refuse not to die. The earth belongs unto the Lord, and all that it contains. Let him be praised to all eternity. Amen. May he sustain you for ever and ever. Amen.

“On the day of the Holy Trinity, in the year 1518.

“Friar Martin Luther, Augustin.”

What humility and truth in this fear, or rather in this confession of Luther, that his young and boiling blood had perhaps been too quickly inflamed! We here recognise the man of sincerity, who, not presuming on himself, fears the influence of passion even in those of his actions which are most conformable to the word of God. There is a wide difference between this language and that of a proud fanatic. We see in Luther an earnest desire to gain over Leo to the cause of truth, to prevent all disruption, and make this reformation, the necessity of which he proclaims, come from the very pinnacle of the Church. Assuredly, he is not the person who ought to be charged with destroying in the West that unity, the loss of which was afterwards so much regretted. He sacrificed every thing in order to maintain it; every thing but truth. It was not he, but his adversaries, who, by refusing to acknowledge the fulness and sufficiency of the salvation wrought out by Jesus Christ, are chargeable with having rent the Saviour’s robe at the foot of the cross.

After writing this letter, Luther, the very same day, addressed his friend Staupitz, vicar-general of his order. It was through him he wished his “Solutions” and his epistle to reach Leo.

“I pray you,” says he to him, “kindly to accept the miserable things which I send you, and transmit them to the excellent pope, Leo X. Not that I would thereby drag you into the perils to which I am exposed. I wish to take all the danger to myself. Jesus Christ will see whether what I have said comes from him or comes from me—Jesus Christ, without whose will neither the tongue of the pope can move, nor the hearts of kings resolve.

“To those who threaten me I have no answer to give, unless it be the remark of Reuchlin, ‘The poor man has nothing to fear, for he has nothing to lose.’ I have neither money nor goods, and I ask none. If I once possessed some honour and some reputation, let him that has begun to strip me of them finish his work. I have nothing left but this miserable body, enfeebled by so many trials; let them kill it by force or fraud, to the glory of God. In this way they will, perhaps, shorten my life an hour or two. Enough for me to have a precious Redeemer, a powerful Priest, Jesus Christ the Lord! I will praise him while I have a breath of life; and if none will praise him with me, how can I help it?”

These words enable us to read Luther’s heart.

While he was thus looking with confidence towards Rome, Rome had thoughts of vengeance towards him. On the 3rd of April, Cardinal Raphael De Rovere had written to the Elector Frederick in the pope’s name, stating that suspicions were entertained of his faith, and that he ought to beware of protecting Luther.

“Cardinal Raphael,” says Luther, “would have had great pleasure in seeing me burned by Duke Frederick.” Thus Rome began to whet her arms against Luther, and the first blow which she aimed at him was through the mind of his protector. If she succeeded in destroying the shelter under which the monk of Wittemberg was reposing, he would become an easy prey. The German princes attached much importance to their reputation as Christian princes. The slightest suspicion of heresy filled them with alarm, and the court of Rome had shrewdly availed itself of this feeling. Frederick, moreover, had always been attached to the religion of his fathers, and Raphael’s letter made a very strong impression on his mind. But it was a principle with the Elector not to act hastily in any thing. He knew that truth was not always on the side of the strongest. The transactions of the empire with Rome had taught him to distrust the selfish views of that court; and he was aware that in order to be a Christian prince, it was not necessary to be the pope’s slave.

“He was not,” says Melancthon, “one of those profane spirits who wish to stifle all changes in their first beginnings. Frederick resigned himself to God. He carefully read the writings which were published, and what he judged true he allowed no one to destroy.”3 He had power to do so. Supreme in his own States, he was respected in the empire at least as highly as the emperor himself.

It is probable that Luther learned something of this letter of Cardinal Raphael, which was sent to the Elector on the 7th of July. Perhaps it was the prospect of excommunication which this Roman missive seemed to presage, that led him to mount the pulpit of Wittemberg on the 15th of the same month, and on this subject deliver a discourse which made a profound impression. He distinguished between internal and external excommunication; the former excluding from

communion with God, and the latter excluding only from the ceremonies of the Church. “Nobody,” says he, “can reconcile a lapsed soul with God save God himself. Nobody can separate man from communion with God unless it be man himself by his own sins! Happy he who dies unjustly excommunicated! While for righteousness’ sake he endures a heavy infliction on the part of man, he receives the crown of eternal felicity from the hand of God.”

Some highly applauded this bold language, while others were more irritated by it. But Luther was no longer alone; and although his faith needed no other support than that of God, a phalanx of defence against his enemies was formed around him. The Germans had heard the voice of the Reformer. His discourses and his writings sent forth flashes which awoke and illumined his contemporaries. The energy of his faith fell in torrents of fire on slumbering hearts. The life which God had infused into this extraordinary soul was imparted to the dead body of the Church; and Christendom, which had for so many ages been motionless, was animated with a religious enthusiasm. The devotedness of the people to the superstitions of Rome diminished every day, and the number of hands which offered money for the purchase of pardon became fewer and fewer, while at the same time Luther’s fame continued to increase. People turned towards him, and hailed him with love and respect as the intrepid defender of truth and liberty.2 No doubt the full depth of the doctrines which he announced was not perceived. It was enough for the greater number to know that the new doctor withstood the pope, and that the empire of priests and monks was shaken by his powerful word. To them the attack of Luther was like one of those fires which are kindled on mountain tops, as the signal for a whole nation to rise and burst its chains. Before the Reformer suspected what he had done, all the generous hearted among his countrymen had already acknowledged him for their leader. To many, however, the appearance of Luther was something more. The word of God, which he wielded with so much power, pierced their minds like a sharp two-edged sword; and their hearts were inflamed with an ardent desire to obtain the assurance of pardon and eternal life. Since primitive times the Church had not known such hungering and thirsting after righteousness. If the preaching of Peter the Hermit and Bernard so aroused the population of the middle ages as to make them take up a perishable cross, the preaching of Luther disposed those of his time to embrace the true cross, the truth which saves. The framework which then lay with all its weight on the Church had smothered everything; the form had destroyed the life. But the powerful word given to Luther caused a quickening breath to circulate over the soil of Christendom. At the first glance the writings of Luther were equally captivating to believers and unbelievers,—to unbelievers, because the positive doctrines afterwards to be established were not yet fully developed in them; and to believers, because they contained the germ of that living faith which they so powerfully express. Hence the influence of these writings was immense; they spread almost instantaneously over Germany and the world. The prevailing impression of men every where was, that they were assisting, not at the establishment of a sect, but at a new birth of the Church and of society. Those who were born of the Spirit of God ranged themselves around him who was its organ. Christendom was divided into two camps,—the one leagued with the spirit against the form, and the other with the form against the spirit. It is true that on the side of the form were all the appearances of strength and grandeur, and on the side of the spirit those of feebleness and insignificance. But the form, devoid of the spirit, is a lifeless body, which the first breath may upset. Its appearance of power only provokes hostility and accelerates its downfall. In this way the simple truth had placed Luther at the head of a mighty army.

CHAP. II

Diet at Augsburg—The Emperor to the Pope—The Elector to Rovere—Luther cited to Rome—Luther's Peace—Intercession of the University—Papal Brief—Lather's Indignation—The Pope to the Elector. This army was needed; for the great began to move. Both the empire and the Church were uniting their efforts to rid themselves of this troublesome monk. Had the imperial throne been occupied by a brave and energetic prince, he might have profited by these religious agitations, and, throwing himself on God and the nation, given new force to the former opposition to the papacy. But Maximilian was too old, and was determined, moreover, to sacrifice every thing to what he regarded as the end of his existence,—the aggrandisement of his house, and through it the exaltation of his grandson. The Emperor Maximilian at this time held a diet at Augsburg. Six Electors attended in person, and all the Germanic States were represented at it, while the kings of France, Hungary, and Poland, sent their ambassadors. All these princes and envoys appeared in great splendour. The war against the Turks was one of the subjects for which the diet had assembled. The legate of Leo X strongly urged the prosecution of it; but the States, instructed by the bad use which had formerly been made of their contributions, and sagely counselled by the Elector Frederick, contented themselves with declaring that they would take the matter into consideration, and at the same time, produced new grievances against Rome. A Latin discourse, published during the Diet, boldly called the attention of the German princes to the true danger. "You wish," said the author, "to put the Turk to flight. This is well; but I am much afraid that you are mistaken as to his person. It is not in Asia, but in Italy, that you ought to seek him."

Another affair of no less importance was to occupy the Diet. Maximilian was desirous that his grandson Charles, already king of Spain and Naples, should be proclaimed king of the Romans, and his successors in the imperial dignity. The pope knew his interest too well to wish the imperial throne to be occupied by a prince whose power in Italy might prove formidable to him. The Emperor thought he had already gained the greater part of the electors and states, but he found a strenuous opponent in Frederick. In vain did he solicit him, and in vain did the ministers and best friends of the Elector join their entreaties to those of the Emperor. Frederick was immovable, and proved the truth of what has been said of him, that when once satisfied of the justice of a resolution, he had firmness of soul never to abandon it. The Emperor's design failed. From this time the Emperor sought to gain the good will of the pope, in order to render him favourable to his plans; and as a special proof of his devotedness, on the 5th August, wrote him the following letter:—"Most Holy Father, we learned some days ago that a friar of the Augustin order, named Martin Luther, has begun to maintain divers propositions as to the commerce in indulgences. Our displeasure is the greater because the said friar finds many protectors, among whom are powerful personages. If your Holiness and the very reverend fathers of the Church, (the Cardinals,) do not forthwith employ their authority to put an end to these scandals, not only will these pernicious doctors seduce the simple, but they will involve great princes in their ruin. We will take care that whatever your Holiness may decide on this matter, for the glory of Almighty God, shall be observed by all in our empire." This letter must have been written after some rather keen discussion between Maximilian and Frederick. The same day, the Elector wrote to Raphael de Rovere. He had doubtless learned that the Emperer was addressing the Roman pontiff, and to parry the blow he put himself in communication with Rome.

“I can have no other wish,” said he, “than to show myself submissive to the universal Church. Accordingly, I have never defended the writings and sermons of Doctor Martin Luther. I understand, moreover, that he has always offered to appear with a safe-conduct before impartial, learned, and Christian judges, in order to defend his doctrine, and submit, in the event of being convinced by Scripture itself.”

Leo X, who had hitherto allowed the affair to take its course, aroused by the cries of theologians and monks, instituted an ecclesiastical court, which was to try Luther at Rome, and in which Sylvester Prierio, the great enemy of the Reformer, was at once accuser and judge. The charge was soon drawn up, and Luther was summoned by the court to appear personally in sixty days.

Luther was at Wittemberg, calmly awaiting the good effect which his humble letter to the pope was, as he imagined, to produce, when, on the 7th of August, only two days after the despatch of the letters of Maximilian and Frederick, he received the citation from the Roman tribunal. “At the moment,” says he, “when I was expecting the benediction, I saw the thunder burst upon me. I was the lamb troubling the water to the wolf. Tezel escapes, and I must allow myself to be eaten.” This citation threw Wittemberg into consternation; for whatever course Luther might adopt, he could not avert the danger. If he repaired to Rome he must there become the victim of his enemies. If he refused to go, he would, as a matter of course, be condemned for contumacy, without being able to escape; for it was known that the legate had received orders from the pope to do everything he could do to irritate the Emperor and the German princes against him. His friends were in dismay. Must the teacher of truth go with his life in his hand to that great city, drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus? Is it sufficient to ensure any man’s destruction that he has raised his head from the bosom of enslaved Christendom? Must this man, whom God appears to have formed for resisting a power which hitherto nothing has been able to resist, be also overthrown? Luther, himself, saw no one who could save him unless it were the Elector, but he would rather die than endanger his prince. His friends at last fell on an expedient which would not compromise Frederick. Let him refuse a safe-conduct, and Luther will have a legitimate cause for refusing to appear at Rome. On the 8th of August Luther wrote to Spalatin, praying that the Elector would employ his influence to have him cited in Germany. He also wrote to Staupitz, “See what ambuscades they use to ensnare me, and how I am surrounded with thorns. But Christ lives and reigns, to-day, yesterday, and for ever. My conscience assures me that what I have taught is the truth, though it becomes still more odious when I teach it. The Church is like the womb of Rebecca. The children must struggle together so as even to endanger the life of the mother. As to what remains, entreat the Lord that I may not have too much joy in this trial. May God not lay the sin to their charge.” The friends of Luther did not confine themselves to consultation and complaint. Spalatin, on the part of the Elector, wrote to Renner, the Emperor’s secretary, “Dr. Martin is very willing that his judges shall be all the universities of Germany, with the exception of those of Erfurt, Leipsic, and Frankfort on the Oder, which he has ground to suspect. It is impossible for him to appear personally at Rome.” The university of Wittemberg wrote a letter of intercession to the pope himself, and thus spoke of Luther,—“The feebleness of his body, and the dangers of the journey, make it difficult and even impossible for him to obey the order of your Holiness. His distress and his prayers dispose us to have compassion on him. We, then, as obedient sons, entreat you, most Holy Father, to be pleased to regard him as a man who has never taught doctrines in opposition to the sentiments of the Roman Church.” On the same day the

university, in its anxiety, addressed Charles de Miltitz, a Saxon gentleman, the chamberlain, and a great favourite of the pope, and bore testimony to Luther in terms still stronger than those which it had ventured to insert in the former letter. “The worthy father, Martin Luther, Augustin, is the noblest and most honourable man of our university. For several years we have seen and known his ability, his knowledge, his high attainments in arts and literature, his irreproachable manners, and his altogether Christian conduct.” This active charity on the part of all who were about Luther is his finest eulogium.

While the issue was anxiously waited for, the affair terminated more easily than might have been supposed. The Legate de Vio, chagrined at not having succeeded in the commission which he had received to prepare a general war against the Turks, was desirous to give lustre to his embassy in Germany by some other brilliant exploit; and thinking that if he extinguished heresy he would reappear at Rome with glory, he asked the pope to remit the affair to him. Leo felt himself under obligation to Frederick, for having so strenuously opposed the election of young Charles, and was aware that he might still want his assistance. Accordingly, without adverting to the citation, he charged his legate by a brief, dated 23rd of August, to examine the affair in Germany. The pope lost nothing by this mode of proceeding; and, at the same time, if Luther could be brought to a retractation, the noise and scandal which his appearance at Rome might have occasioned were avoided.

“We charge you,” said he, “to bring personally before you, to pursue and constrain without delay, and as soon as you receive this our letter, the said Luther, who has already been declared heretic by our dear brother, Jerome, Bishop of Asculan.”

Then the pope prescribes the severest measures against Luther.

“For this purpose invoke the arm and assistance of our very dear son in Christ, Maximilian, the other princes of Germany, and all its commonalties, universities, and powers ecclesiastical or secular; and if you apprehend him, keep him in safe custody, in order that he may be brought before us.”

We see that this indulgent concession of the pope was little else than a surer method of dragging Luther to Rome. Next follow the gentle measures:—

“If he returns to himself, and asks pardon for his great crime, asks it of himself, and without being urged to do it, we give you power to receive him into the unity of Holy Mother Church.” The pope soon returns to malediction.

“If he persists in his obstinacy, and you cannot make yourself master of his person, we give you power to proscribe him in all parts of Germany, to banish, curse, and excommunicate all who are attached to him, and to order all Christians to shun their presence.”

Still this is not enough. The pope continues:—

“And in order that this contagion may be the more easily extirpated, yon will excommunicate all prelates, religious orders, communities, counts, dukes, and grandees, except the Emperor Maximilian, who shall refuse to seize the said Martin Luther and his adherents, and send them to you, under due and sufficient guard. And if (which God forbid) the said princes, communities, universities, grandees, or any one belonging to them, offer an asylum to the said Martin and his

adherents, in any way, and give him, publicly or in secret, by themselves or others, aid and counsel, we lay under interdict these princes, communities, and grandees, with their towns, burghs, fields, and villages, whither said Martin may flee, as long as he shall remain there, and for three days after he shall have left." This audacious chair, which pretends to be the representative on earth of Him who has said, God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved, continues its anathemas; and, after having denounced penalties against ecclesiastics, proceeds:—

"In regard to the laity, if they do not obey your orders instantly, and without any opposition, we declare them infamous, (with the exception of the most worthy Emperor,) incapable of performing any lawful act, deprived of Christian burial, and stript of all fiefs which they may hold, whether of the apostolic see, or of any other superior whatsoever."

Such was the fate which awaited Luther. The monarch of Rome has leagued for his destruction, and to effect it, spared nothing, not even the peace of the tomb. His ruin seems inevitable. How will he escape this immense conspiracy? But Rome had miscalculated; a movement produced by the Spirit of God was not to be quelled by the decrees of its chancery.

Even the forms of a just and impartial inquest had not been observed. Luther had been declared heretic, not only without having been heard, but even before the expiry of the period named for his compearance. The passions (and nowhere do they show themselves stronger than in religious discussions) overleap all the forms of justice. Strange proceedings, in this respect, occur, not only in the Church of Rome, but in Protestant churches also, which have turned aside from the gospel; in other words, in all places where the truth is not, every thing done against the gospel is deemed lawful. We often see men who, in any other case, would scruple to commit the smallest injustice, not hesitating to trample under foot all forms and all rights when the matter in question is Christianity, and the testimony borne to it. When Luther was afterwards made acquainted with this brief, he expressed his indignation. "Here," says he, "is the most remarkable part of the whole affair. The brief is dated on the 23rd of August, and I was cited for the 7th of August; so that between the citation and the brief there is an interval of sixteen days. Now, make the calculation, and you will find that my Lord Jerome, Bishop of Asculan, has proceeded against me, given judgment, condemned, and declared me heretic, before the citation could have reached me, or at most sixteen days after it had been despatched to me. Now, I ask, where are the sixty days given me in the citation? They commenced on the 7th August, and were to end on the 7th October. Is it the style and fashion of the court of Rome to cite, admonish, accuse, judge, and pronounce sentence of condemnation, all in one day, against a man who is at such a distance from Rome, that he knows nothing at all of the proceedings? What answer would they give to this? Doubtless, they forgot to purge themselves with hellebore before proceeding to such falsehoods." But at the same time that Rome was secretly depositing her thunders in the hands of her legate, she was endeavouring, by smooth and flattering words, to detach the prince whose power she most dreaded from Luther's cause. The same day, 25th August 1518, the pope wrote the Elector of Saxony. Recurring to those wiles of ancient policy which we have already pointed out, he endeavoured to flatter the prince's self-love:

"Dear son," said the Roman pontiff, "when we think on your noble and honourable race, and on yourself, its head and ornament; when we recollect how you and your ancestors have always

desired to maintain Christian faith, and the honour and dignity of the Holy See, we cannot believe that a man who abandons the faith can trust to the favour of your Highness, in giving loose reins to his wickedness. And yet it is told us from all quarters that a certain friar, Martin Luther, Eremite of the order of St. Augustine, has, like a child of malice, and a contemner of God, forgotten his habit and his order, which consist in humility and obedience, and is boasting that he fears neither the authority nor the punishment of any man, because assured of your favour and protection.

“But, as we know that he is mistaken, we have thought good to write to your Highness, and exhort you, according to the Lord, to be vigilant for the honour of your name as a Christian prince, and to defend yourself from these calumnies—yourself the ornament, the glory, and sweet savour of your noble race—and to guard, not only against a fault so grave as that which is imputed to you, but also against even the suspicion which the insensate hardihood of this friar tends to excite against you.”

Leo X, at the same time, announced to Frederick that he had charged Cardinal Saint Sixtus to examine the affair, and he enjoined him to put Luther into the hands of the legate, “lest,” added he, returning again to his favourite argument, “lest the pious people of our time, and of future times, may one day lament and say, The most pernicious heresy with which the Church of God has been afflicted was excited by the favour and support of this high and honourable House.”

Thus Rome had taken all her measures. With one hand she diffused the perfume of praise, which is always so intoxicating, while the other held terrors and vengeance.

All the powers of the earth, emperor, pope, princes, and legates, began to move against this humble friar of Erfurt, whose internal combats we have already traced. “The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed.”

CHAP. III The Armourer Schwarzerd—His Wife—Philip—His Genius—His Studies—The Bible—Call to Wittemberg—Melancthon’s Departure and Journey—Leipsic—Mistake—Luther’s Joy—Parallel—Revolution in Education—Study of Greek. The letter and brief had not reached Germany, and Luther was still fearing that he would be obliged to appear at Rome, when a happy event gave comfort to his heart. He needed a friend to whom he could unboscm his sorrows, and whose faithful love would solace him in his hours of depression. All this God gave him in Melancthon. On the 14th February 1497, George Schwarzerd, a skilful armour-master of Bretten, a small town in the Palatinate, had a son born to him, who was named Philip, and who afterwards distinguished himself under the name of Melancthon. Patronised by the Palatine princes, and those of Bavaria and Saxony, George was a man of unimpeachable integrity. He often refused the price which purchasers offered him, and on learning that they were poor, insisted on returning their money. He rose regularly at midnight, and on his knees offered up a prayer. If on any occasion morning arrived without his having done it, he felt dissatisfied with himself the whole day. Barbara, Schwarzerd’s wife, was daughter of an honourable magistrate named John Reuter. She was of a gentle temper, somewhat inclined to superstition, but otherwise remarkable for wisdom and prudence. From her we have the old well-known German rhymes— The giving of alms impoverisheth not;

Attendance at Church impedeth not;

Greasing the wheel retardeth not;

Ill-gotten gear enricheth not; The Book of God deceiveth not. And again—

Those who are pleased more to expend Than their fields can render, Must come to ruin in the end, It may be to a halter.

Young Philip was not eleven when his father died. Two days before, George called his son to his bed-side, and exhorted him to have the thought of God always present. “I foresee,” said the dying armourer, “that dreadful storms are coming to shake the world. I have seen great things, but greater are in preparation. May God guide and direct you!” Philip, after receiving his father’s blessing, was sent to Spires, that he might not be present at his death. He departed crying bitterly. The young boy’s grandfather, the worthy bailie Reuter, who had also a son, acted as a father to him, and took him, together with his brother, George, under his own roof. Shortly after he gave the three boys for tutor John Hungarus, an excellent man, who afterwards, and at a very advanced age, became a powerful preacher of the gospel. He let nothing pass in the young man, punishing him for every fault, yet with discretion. “In this way,” says Melancthon in 1554, “he made me a grammarian. He loved me as a son, I loved him as a father, and we will meet, I trust, in eternal life.”

Philip was remarkable for the excellence of his understanding, and for his facility in learning, and expounding what he had learned. He could not endure idleness, and always sought out some one with whom he might discuss what he had heard. It often happened that educated strangers passed through Bretten, and visited Reuter. The bailie’s grandson instantly accosted them, entered into conversation with them, and so pressed them in discussion as to excite the wonder of those present. To a powerful genius he joined great sweetness of temper, and was hence a general favourite. He had a stammer, but, like the celebrated orator of the Greeks, made such exertions to overcome it, that it afterwards completely disappeared. His grandfather having died, Philip was sent with his brother and his young uncle, John, to the school of Pforzheim. The boys resided with one of their relatives, the sister of the famous Reuchlin. Eager for knowledge, Philip, under the tuition of George Simler, made rapid progress in science, and especially in the study of Greek, for which he had a real passion. Reuchlin often came to Pforzheim, and having become acquainted with his sister’s young boarders, was soon struck with Philip’s answers, and gave him a Greek grammar and a Bible. These two books were to be the study of his whole life. When Reuchlin returned from his second journey into Italy, his young relative, then twelve years of age, with some friends, performed a Latin comedy of his own composition before him, in honour of his arrival. Reuchlin, in raptures with the talents of the youth, embraced him tenderly, called him his dear son, and jocularly gave him the red bonnet which he had received on being made doctor. It was at this time Reuchlin changed his name of Schwarzerd into that of Melancthon. Both words, the one German and the other Greek, mean black earth. It was a general custom with the learned thus to change their names into Greek or Latin.

Melancthon, at twelve, repaired to the university of Heidelberg, and began to gratify his eager thirst for knowledge. He was admitted Bachelor at fourteen. In 1512 Reuchlin invited him to Tubingen, which contained a great number of distinguished literary men. Here he attended at the same time lectures on theology, medicine, and jurisprudence. There was no branch of knowledge which he did not think it his duty to study. His object was not praise, but the possession of science and the benefits of it. The Holy Scriptures particularly occupied him. Those who frequented the church of

Tubingen had often observed a book in his hands, which he studied between the services. This unknown volume seemed larger than the common prayer-books, and the report spread that Philip when in church read profane books. It turned out that the object of their suspicion was a copy of the Holy Scriptures, printed a short time before at Bâsle by John Frobenius. This volume he studied through life with unwearied application. He had it always with him, carrying it to all the public meetings to which he was invited. Rejecting the vain system of the schoolmen, he devoted himself to the simple word of the Gospel. Erasmus at this time wrote to Œcolampadius, “Of Melancthon I have the highest opinion, and the highest hopes. Jesus grant that this young man may have a long life! He will completely eclipse Erasmus.”2 Melancthon, nevertheless, shared in the errors of his age. “I shudder,” says he, in advanced life, “when I think of the honour which I paid to images when I was still in the papacy.” In 1514, he was made doctor in philosophy, and began to teach. His age was seventeen. The grace and attractiveness which he gave to his lectures formed a striking contrast to the insipid method which the doctors, and especially the monks, had hitherto pursued. He took an active part in the combat in which Reuchlin was engaged with the Obscurants of his age. His agreeable conversation, his gentle and elegant manners, gaining him the love of all who knew him, he soon acquired great authority, and a solid reputation in the world. At this time, the Elector Frederick having conceived the idea of inviting some distinguished professor of ancient languages to his university of Wittemberg, applied to Reuchlin who suggested Melancthon. Frederick saw all the lustre which this young Hellenist might shed on an institution which was so dear to him; and Reuchlin, delighted at seeing so fine a field opened to his young friend, addressed him in the words of Jehovah to Abraham,—“Come out from thy country, and thy kindred, and thy father’s house, and I will render thy name great, and thou shalt be blessed.” “Yes,” continues the old man, “I hope it will be so with thee, my dear Philip, my work and my comfort.” In this invitation, Melancthon saw a call from God. The university was grieved to part with him, and yet he was not without envious rivals and enemies. He left his native country, exclaiming, “The will of the Lord be done.” He was then twenty-one years of age.

Melancthon made the journey on horseback, in company with some Saxon merchants, in the same way in which caravans travel in the desert; for, says Reuchlin, he knew neither the towns nor the roads. At Augsburg he did homage to the Elector, who happened to be there. At Nuremberg he saw the excellent Pirckheimer, whom he already knew, and at Leipsic formed an intimacy with the learned Hellenist, Mosellanus. In this last town the university gave a fete in honour of him. It was a truly academic repast. The dishes were numerous, and as each made its appearance, a professor rose and addressed Melancthon in a Latin discourse previously prepared. He immediately gave an extempore reply. At length, worn out with so much eloquence, “Most illustrious friends,” said he, “allow me to reply once for all to your addresses; for not being prepared, I cannot put as much variety into my replies as you into your addresses.” Thereafter the dishes arrived without the accompaniment of a discourse.

Reuchlin’s young relative arrived at Wittemberg, 25th August, 1518, two days after Leo X had signed the brief addressed to Cajetan, and the letter to the Elector. The professors of Wittemberg did not receive Melancthon with so much favour as those of Leipsic had done. The first impression which he made upon them did not correspond to their expectations. They saw a young man, who seemed still younger than he really was, of small stature, and a feeble, timid air. Is this the illustrious doctor whom the greatest men of the age, Erasmus and Reuchlin, extol so loudly?…

Neither Luther, with whom he first was made acquainted, nor his colleagues, conceived high hopes of him, when they saw his youth, his embarrassment, and whole appearance.

Four days after his arrival (29th August) he delivered his inaugural address. The whole university was assembled. The boy, as Luther calls him, spoke such elegant Latin, and displayed so much knowledge, a mind so cultivated, and a judgment so sound, that all his hearers were filled with admiration. At the termination of the address, all pressed forward to congratulate him, but none felt more joy than Luther, who hastened to communicate to his friends the feelings with which his heart was overflowing. Writing Spalatin, 31st August, he says, “Melancthon, four days after his arrival, delivered an address so beautiful and so learned, that it was listened to with universal approbation and astonishment. We have soon got the better of the prejudices which his stature and personal appearance had produced. We praise and admire his eloquence; we thank the prince and you for the service you have done us. I ask no other Greek master. But I fear that his delicate body will not be able to digest our food, and that, on account of the smallness of his salary, we shall not keep him long. I hear that the Leipsic folks are already boasting of being able to carry him off from us. Oh, my dear Spalatin, beware of despising his age and personal appearance. He is a man worthy of all honour.

Melancthon immediately began to explain Homer, and St. Paul’s Epistle to Titus. He was full of ardour. “I will do my utmost,” wrote he to Spalatin, “to bring Wittemberg into favour with all who love literature and virtue.” Four days after the inauguration, Luther again wrote to Spalatin, “I recommend to you most particularly the very learned and very amiable Greek, Philip. His class-room is always full. All the theologians in particular attend him. He sets all classes from the highest to the lowest, to the learning of Greek.”3

Melancthon was able to return the affection of Luther, in whom he soon discovered a goodness of heart, a strength of intellect, a courage and a wisdom, which he had not previously found in any man. He venerated and loved him. “If there is any one,” said he, “whom I love strongly, and whom my whole soul embraces, it is Martin Luther.”

Thus met Luther and Melancthon, and they were friends till death. We cannot sufficiently admire the goodness and wisdom of God in uniting two men so different, and yet so necessary to each other. What Luther had in warmth, elasticity, and force, Melancthon had in perspicuity, wisdom, and gentleness. Luther animated Melancthon; Melancthon moderated Luther. They were like the two forms of electric matter, the positive and the negative, which modify each other. Had Luther been without Melancthon, the stream had perhaps overflowed its bank; and, on the other hand, Melancthon, when without Luther, hesitated, and even yielded, where he ought to have stood firm. Luther did much by vigour, and Melancthon perhaps did not less by pursuing a slower and calmer course. Both were upright, open, and generous, and both, smitten with the love of the word of eternal life, served it with a fidelity and devotedness which formed the distinguishing feature of their lives. The arrival of Melancthon produced a revolution, not only at Wittemberg, but throughout Germany and the learned world. His study of the Greek and Latin classics, and of philosophy, had given him an order, perspicuity, and precision of thought, which shed new light and inexpressible beauty on all the subjects which he discussed. The mild spirit of the gospel fertilized and enlivened his meditations, and the driest subjects when he expounded them were invested with a grace which fascinated all his hearers. The sterility which scholasticism had spread over education

ceased, and a new mode of instruction and study commenced. “Thanks to Melancthon,” says a distinguished German historian, “Wittemberg became the national school.”

It was, indeed, of great importance, that a man thoroughly versed in Greek should teach in this university, where the new developments of theology called masters and scholars to study the primitive documents of the Christian faith in the original languages. Thenceforth Luther set himself zealously to this task. Often did the meaning of a Greek term, which had previously been unknown to him, throw sudden light on his theological views. For example, Low great his satisfaction and delight when he saw that the Greek word, μετ■νοια, which according to the Latin church, meant a penance, a satisfaction enacted by the Church, meant in Greek a transformation or conversion of heart. A thick mist all at once disappeared from before his eyes. The two meanings given to this word are sufficient to characterise the two churches. The impulse which Melancthon gave to Luther, in regard to the translation of the Bible, is one of the most remarkable circumstances in the friendship of these two great men. As early as 1517, Luther had made some attempts at translation, and procured as many Greek and Latin books as he could. Now, aided by his dear Philip, his task received a new impetus. Luther obliged Melancthon to take part in his researches, by consulting him on difficult passages, and the work, destined to be one of the greatest works of the Reformer, advanced more surely and more rapidly.

Melancthon, on his part, became acquainted with a new theology. The beautiful and profound doctrine of justification by faith filled him with astonishment and joy. Still, in receiving the system Luther professed, he acted independently, moulding it according to the particular form of his own intellect; for, although he was only twenty-one years of age, he was one of those precocious minds which enter early into possession of all their powers, and are themselves from the very outset. The zeal of the masters was soon transfused into the scholars. It was proposed to reform the course of study. With the concurrence of the Elector, certain branches, only of scholastic importance, were suppressed, and at the same time a new impulse was given to classic pursuits. The school of Wittemberg underwent a transformation, and the contrast between it and other universities became still more prominent. Still, however, the landmarks of the Church were observed, though all felt that they were on the eve of a great battle with the pope.

CHAP. IV

Sentiments of Luther and Staupitz—Order to Appear—Alarms and Courage—The Elector with the Legate—Departure for Augsburg—Sojourn at Weimar—Nuremberg. The arrival of Melancthon, doubtless, gave a pleasant turn to Luther’s thoughts at this very critical moment; and, doubtless, in the sweet intercourse of a growing friendship, and amid the biblical labours to which he devoted himself with new zeal, he sometimes forgot Prierio, Leo, and the ecclesiastical court before which he behoved to plead. Still, these were only fleeting moments, and his thoughts were ever recurring to the formidable tribunal before which implacable enemies had summoned him to appear. What terrors would not this thought have thrown into a mind which was seeking aught else than the truth! But Luther trembled not! Confiding fully in the faithfulness and power of God, he remained firm, and was quite ready to expose himself single-handed to the rage of enemies mightier than those who had lighted the fire for John Huss. A few days after the arrival of Melancthon, and before the pope’s resolution transferring the citation of Luther from Rome to Augsburg could be known, Luther wrote Spalatin:—“I ask not our sovereign to do any thing whatever for the defence

of my theses. I am willing to be delivered up and thrown single into the hands of my adversaries. Let him allow the whole storm to burst upon me. What I have undertaken to defend, I hope I shall be able, with the assistance of Christ, to maintain. Violence, indeed, must be submitted to; but still without abandoning the truth." The courage of Luther communicated itself to others. Men of the greatest gentleness and timidity, on seeing the danger which threatened the witness for the truth, found words full of energy and indignation. The prudent and pacific Staupitz, on the 7th September, wrote to Spalatin: "Cease not to exhort the prince, your master and mine, not to be alarmed at the roaring of the lions. Let him defend the truth without troubling himself about Luther, or Staupitz, or the order. Let there be a place where men can speak freely and without fear. I know that the plague of Babylon—I had almost said of Rome—breaks forth against all who attack the abuses of those traffickers in Jesus Christ. I have myself seen a preacher of the truth thrown headlong from the pulpit; I have seen him, though on a festival, bound and dragged to a dungeon. Others have seen still greater cruelties. Therefore, my dear friend, strive to make his Highness persevere in his sentiments." The order to appear at Augsburg before the cardinal legate at length arrived. Luther had now to do with one of the princes of the Church. All his friends entreated him not to go. They feared that on the journey snares might be laid for him, and an attempt made on his life. Some employed themselves in looking out for an asylum to him. Staupitz himself, the timid Staupitz, felt moved at the thought of the dangers which threatened that friar Martin whom he had drawn from the obscurity of the cloister, and placed on the troubled stage where his life was now in peril. Ah! would it not have been better if the poor friar had remained for ever unknown? It was too late. Still, at least, he would do everything to save him. Accordingly, on the 15th September he wrote him from his convent of Salzburg, urging him to flee and seek an asylum beside himself. "It seems to me," said he, "that the whole world is enraged, and in coalition against the truth. In the same way crucified Jesus was hated. I see not that you have anything to expect but persecution. Shortly, no man will be able without the permission of the pope, to sound the Scriptures, and search for Jesus Christ in them, though this Christ himself enjoins. You have only a few friends; and would to God that the fear of your adversaries did not prevent those few from declaring in your favour. The wisest course is to quit Wittemberg for a time and come to me. Thus we will live and die together. This is also the prince's opinion," adds Staupitz. From different quarters Luther received the most alarming notices. Count Albert of Mansfeld sent a message to him to beware of setting out, for some great barons had sworn to make themselves masters of his person, and to strangle or drown him. But nothing could deter him. He never thought of availing himself of the vicar-general's offer. He will not go and hide himself in the obscurity of the convent of Salzburg, but will faithfully remain on the stormy scene on which the hand of God has placed him. It is by persevering in the face of adversaries, and proclaiming the truth with loud voice in the midst of the world, that the reign of truth advances. Why, then, should he flee? He is not one of "those who draw back to perdition; but of those who believe to the saving of the soul." The words of the Master whom he serves, and loves better than life, are incessantly echoing in his heart, "Whosoever will confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven." In Luther and in the Reformation we uniformly meet with that intrepid courage, that high-toned morality, that boundless charity, which the first preaching of Christianity manifested to the world. "I am like Jeremiah," says Luther, at the period of which we are now speaking; "Jeremiah, the man of quarrel and discord; but the more they multiply their menaces the more they increase my joy. My wife and children are well provided, (of course, meaning he had none;) my fields, my houses, and all my

goods, are in order. They have already torn my honour and my reputation to shreds. The only thing left me is my poor body, and let them take it; they will only shorten my life some few hours. My soul they cannot take from me. He who would publish the word of Christ in the world must expect death every hour; for our bridegroom is a bridegroom of blood."3 The Elector was then at Augsburg. A short time before quitting that town after the Diet, he had of his own accord paid a visit to the legate. The cardinal, greatly flattered by this mark of respect from so illustrious a prince, promised that if the monk presented himself he would listen to him like a father, and kindly dismiss him. Spalatin, on the part of the prince, wrote to his friend that the pope had named a commission to try him in Germany; that the Elector would not allow him to be dragged to Rome; and that he must prepare to set out for Augsburg. Luther resolved to obey; but the warning which he had received from Count Mansfeld made him apply to Frederick for a safe-conduct. Frederick replied that it was unnecessary, and merely gave him recommendations to some of the leading counsellors of Augsburg. He also sent him some money for the journey. The Reformer, poor and defenceless, set out on foot to place himself in the hands of his adversaries.

What must have been his feelings on quitting Wittemberg, and directing his steps towards Augsburg, where the legate of the pope was waiting for him! The object of this journey was not like that of Heidelberg, a friendly meeting. He was going to appear in presence of the legate of Rome without a safe-conduct; perhaps he was going to death. But in him faith was not a mere matter of show. Being a reality it gave him peace, and in the name of the Lord of Hosts he could advance without fear to bear testimony to the Gospel.

He arrived at Weimar on the 28th of September, and lodged in the convent of the Cordeliers. One of the monks was unable to withdraw his eyes from him. It was Myconius. This was the first time he had seen Luther, and he longed to approach him, and tell that he owed the peace of his soul to him, and that his whole desire was to labour with him. But Myconius being closely watched by his superiors, was not permitted to speak to Luther. The elector of Saxony was then holding his court at Weimar, and this is probably the reason why the Cordeliers gave admittance to the doctor. The day after his arrival the feast of St. Michael was celebrated. Luther said mass, and was even invited to preach in the church of the castle. It was a mark of favour which the prince wished to give him. He, accordingly, in presence of the court, preached a long sermon, on the text of the day, which is taken from the Gospel of St. Matthew, (Matthew 18:1-11) He spoke forcibly against hypocrites, and those who boast of their own righteousness; but he did not speak of the angels, though this was the customary topic on St. Michael's day. The courage of the doctor of Wittemberg, in calmly setting out on foot to obey a summons, which in the case of so many before him had issued in death, astonished those who saw him. Interest, admiration, and compassion, succeeded each other in their minds. John Kestner, superintendant to the Cordeliers, alarmed at the idea of the dangers which awaited his guest, said to him, "Brother, you will find at Augsburg Italians, men of learning, and subtle antagonists, who will give you much to do. I fear you will not be able to defend your cause against them. They will cast you into the fire, and with their flames consume you." Luther replied gravely, "Dear friend, pray to our Lord God, who is in heaven, and present a Pater noster for me, and his dear child, Jesus, whose cause my cause is, that he may be gracious toward me. If he maintain his cause, mine is maintained. But if he pleases not to maintain it, assuredly it is not I who can maintain it; and it is he who will bear the affront."

Luther continued his journey on foot, and arrived at Nuremberg. He was going to present himself before a prince of the Church, and wished his dress to be suitable; but his clothes were old, and, besides, had suffered much by the journey. He borrowed a frock from his faithful friend, Winceslaus Link, preacher at Nuremberg.

Luther, doubtless, did not confine his visit to Link, but also saw his other friends in Nuremberg, secretary Scheurl, the celebrated painter, Albert Durer, to whom Nuremberg is now erecting a statue, and many others. He strengthened himself by intercourse with the excellent of the earth, while many monks and laymen expressed alarm, and endeavoured to shake him by representing the difficulties in his way. Letters which he wrote from this town show the spirit by which he was animated. “I have met,” says he, “with pusillanimous men, who would persuade me not to go to Augsburg; but I have determined on going. The will of the Lord be done. Even at Augsburg, even in the midst of his enemies, Jesus Christ reigns. Let Christ live; let Luther and every sinner die. According as it is written: Let the God of my salvation be exalted! Behave well, persevere, stand firm; for we must not be reproved either by men or by God; God is true, and man a liar.”

Link and an Augustin monk could not consent to allow Luther to travel alone and meet the dangers which threatened him. They were acquainted with his bold and fearless character, and suspected he would fail in due precaution. They, therefore, accompanied him. When they were about five leagues from Augsburg, Luther, exhausted, no doubt, by the fatigue of travelling, and the varied emotions of his heart, was seized with violent pains in the stomach. He thought he was dying, and his friends becoming very uneasy, hired a car to transport him. They arrived at Augsburg on the evening of Friday the 7th of October, and lighted at the Augustin convent. Luther was greatly fatigued, but soon recovered: his faith and mental energy speedily recruiting his exhausted body.

CHAP. V

Arrival at Augsburg—De Vio—His Character—Serra-Longa—Preliminary Conversation—Visit of the Counsellors—Return of Serra-Longa—The Prior—Luther’s Wisdom—Luther and Serra-Longa—The Safe-Conduct—Luther to Melancthon. The instant he was at Augsburg, and before he had seen any one, Luther, wishing to pay all due respect to the legate, begged Winceslaus Link to go and announce his arrival. Link did so, and humbly declared to the cardinal, on the part of the doctor of Wittemberg, that he was ready to appear at his order. The legate was delighted with the news. At last he had a hold of this boisterous heretic, who, he assured himself, would not quit the walls of Augsburg as he had entered. At the same time, when Link went to the legate, the monk Leonard set out to announce Luther’s arrival to Staupitz. The vicar-general had written the doctor, that he would certainly come as soon as he should know of his being in the town, and Luther was unwilling to lose an instant in giving him intimation. The Diet was closed, and the Emperor and the electors had already separated. The Emperor, it is true, had not left but was hunting in the neighbourhood. The ambassador of Rome was thus at Augsburg alone. Had Luther come during the Diet, he would have found powerful protectors, but now it seemed that every thing must bend under the weight of papal authority. The name of the judge before whom Luther had to appear was not fitted to increase his confidence. Thomas de Vio surnamed Cajetan, from the town of Gaeta, in the kingdom of Naples, where he was born, had, from his youth, given great hopes. Having at sixteen entered the Dominican order, against the express wish of his parents, he afterwards became general of his order, and a cardinal of the Roman Church. But what was worse

for Luther, this learned doctor was one of the most zealous defenders of the scholastic theology, which the Reformer had always treated so unmercifully. His mother was said to have dreamt during her pregnancy, that St. Thomas would in person educate the child to which she was to give birth, and introduce him to heaven. Hence De Vio, on becoming Dominican, had changed his name from James to Thomas. He had zealously defended the prerogatives of the papacy, and the doctrines of Thomas Aquinas, whom he regarded as the most perfect of theologians. A lover of pomp and show, he almost gave a literal meaning to the Roman maxim that legates are above kings, and surrounded himself with great state. On the first of August, he had celebrated a solemn mass in the cathedral of Augsburg, and in presence of all the princes of the empire, had placed the cardinal's hat on the head of the Archbishop of Mentz while kneeling before the altar, and had delivered to the Emperor himself the hat and sword consecrated by the pope. Such was the man before whom the monk of Wittemberg was going to appear, clothed in a frock which was not even his own. Besides, the acquirements of the legate, the austerity of his disposition, and the purity of his morals, gave him in Germany an influence and authority which other Roman courtiers would not have easily obtained. To this reputation for sanctity he doubtless owed his mission. Rome saw that he would serve her purposes admirably. Thus the personal qualities of Cajetan made him still more formidable. Moreover, the business entrusted to him was not complicated. Luther had already been declared a heretic.2 If he refused to retract, the duty of the legate was to put him in prison; or if he escaped, to launch excommunication at every one who should dare to give him an asylum. This was all that Rome required to be done by the legate before whom Luther was cited.

Luther had recovered strength during the night, and on Saturday morning 8th October, being somewhat rested from his journey, began to consider his strange situation. He felt resigned, and waited till the will of God should be manifested by the event. He had not long to wait. A personage who was unknown to him sent in a message, as if he had been entirely devoted to his service, to say that he was coming to wait upon him, and that Luther must take good care not to appear before the legate without having seen him. This message came from an Italian named Urban of Serra-Longa, who had often been in Germany, as envoy of the Margrave of Montferrat. He was known to the Elector of Saxony, to whom he had been accredited, and after the death of the Margrave had attached himself to Cardinal de Vio. The finesse and manners of this man formed a very striking contrast to the noble frankness and generous integrity of Luther. The Italian shortly after arrived at the Augustin convent. The cardinal had sent him to sound the Reformer, and prepare him for the retractation which he was expected to make. Serra-Longa imagined that his residence in Germany gave him great advantages over the other courtiers in the suite of the legate, and he hoped to have good sport with the German monk.

He arrived attended by two servants, and pretended to have come of his own accord, because of the friendship which he felt for a favourite of the Elector of Saxony, and because of his attachment to the Holy Church. After paying his respects to Luther in the warmest terms, the diplomatist added, in an affectionate manner,—

"I come to give you sage and good advice. Re-attach yourself to the Church. Submit unreservedly to the cardinal. Retract your injurious expressions. Remember the Abbot Joachim of Florence. He, you know, had said heretical things, and yet was declared not heretical, because he retracted his errors."

Luther spoke of defending himself.

Serra-Longa.—“Beware of doing so!… Would you pretend to fight with the legate of his holiness, as if you were tilting at a tournay?”

Luther.—“When it is proved that I have taught anything contrary to the Roman Church I will pass judgment on myself, and retract instantly. The whole question will be, Whether the legate leans more upon St. Thomas than the faith authorises him to do? If he does, I will not yield to him.”

Serra-Longa.—“Ah! Ah! Do you pretend, then, to break lances?”

Then the Italian began to say things which Luther designates horrible. He pretended that false propositions might be maintained, provided they produced money and filled the strong box—that the universities must take good care not to dispute on the authority of the pope—that their duty, on the contrary, was to maintain that the pope can, at his beck, alter or suppress articles of faith; adding other things of the same nature. But the wily Italian soon perceived that he was forgetting himself. Returning to soft words, he strove to persuade Luther to submit to the legate in every thing, and retract his doctrines, his oaths, and his theses. The doctor, who, at the outset, had given some credit to the fine protestations of orator Urban, (as he designates him in his account of the interview,) was now convinced that they were of very little value, and that Serra-Longa was much more on the legate’s side than on his. He, therefore, became less communicative, and contented himself with saying that he was quite disposed to exercise humility, give proof of obedience, and make satisfaction in whatever matters he had been mistaken. At these words Serra-Longa, overjoyed, exclaimed, “I am off to the legate, and you will follow me; everything will go off most admirably; it will be soon finished.…”

He went off. The Saxon monk, who had more discernment than the Roman courtier, thought within himself, “This wily Sinon has come along ill-prepared and ill-instructed by his Greeks.” Luther was suspended between hope and fear; hope, however, predominating. The visit and the strange assertions of Serra-Longa, whom at a later period he calls an inexpert mediator,3 made him resume courage. The counsellors and other inhabitants of Augsburg, to whom the Elector had recommended Luther, hastened to visit the monk, whose name was now resounding throughout all Germany. Peutinger, counsellor of the empire, who was one of the most distinguished patricians of the town, and often invited Luther to his table, counsellor Langemantel, Dr. Auerbach of Leipsic, the two brothers Adelmann, both canons, and several others besides, repaired to the convent of the Augustins, and gave a cordial welcome to the extraordinary man, who had journeyed so far to come and place himself in the hands of the creatures of Rome. “Have you a safe-conduct?” they asked. “No!” replied the intrepid monk. “What hardihood!” exclaimed they. “It was, indeed,” says Luther, “a fit term to designate my rash folly.” All with one voice entreated him not to go to the legate until he had obtained a safe-conduct from the Emperor himself. It is probable that the public had already heard of the papal brief of which the legate was the bearer.

“But,” replied Luther, “I came to Augsburg without a safe-conduct, and have arrived in good health.”

“The Elector having recommended you to us, you ought to obey us, and do what we tell you,” rejoined Langemantel, kindly but firmly. Dr. Auerbach seconded his remonstrances. “We know,” says he, “that the cardinal, at the bottom of his heart, is in the highest degree incensed against

you. No trust can be put in the Italians."5

Canon Adelmann likewise insisted, "You have been sent defenceless, and it has been forgotten to furnish you with the precise thing which you required." These friends engaged to obtain the necessary safe-conduct from the Emperor. They afterwards told Luther how many persons even of elevated rank, were inclined in his favour. "Even the minister of France, who quitted Augsburg a few days ago, spoke of you in the most honourable terms."2 This statement struck Luther, and he afterwards remembered it. Thus, the most respectable citizens in one of the first cities of the empire were already gained to the Reformation.

They were still conversing when Serra-Longa re-appeared. "Come," said he to Luther, "the cardinal is waiting for you and I myself am going to conduct you to his presence. Listen while I tell you how you are to appear. When you enter the hall where he is, you will prostrate yourself before him with your face on the ground; when he tells you to rise, you will get up on your knees, and not stand erect, but wait till he bids you. Recollect that it is before a prince of the Church that you are going to appear. For the rest fear nothing; the whole will be finished soon, and without difficulty."

Luther, who had promised this Italian that he would be ready to follow at his call, felt embarrassed. Yet he hesitated not to inform him of the advice which he had received from his Augsburg friends, and spoke to him of a safe-conduct.

"Beware of asking one," immediately replied Serra-Longa; "you have no need of it. The legate is well-disposed, and quite ready to finish the thing amicably. If you ask a safe-conduct you will totally spoil your affair."

"My gracious lord, the Elector of Saxony," replied Luther, "has recommended me to several honourable men of this town, who counsel me to undertake nothing without a safe-conduct. I must follow their advice, for, were I not to do so, and were anything to happen, they would write to the Elector, my master, that I had refused to listen to them."

Luther persisted in his resolution, and Serra-Longa saw himself obliged to return to his chief, to announce the obstacle which his mission had encountered at the moment when he was flattering himself with seeing it crowned with success.

Thus terminated the conferences of that day with the orator of Montferrat.

Another invitation was given to Luther. John Frosch, the prior of the Carmelites, who was an old friend of his, and two years before, as a licentiate of theology, had maintained theses under the presidency of Luther, paid him a visit, and earnestly begged he would come and reside with him. He claimed the honour of having the doctor of Germany for his guest. Men at length feared not to do homage to him in presence of Rome; the feeble had already become strong. Luther accepted, and left the Augustin convent for that of the Carmelites. The day did not close without serious reflection. The eagerness of Serra-Longa, and the fears of the counsellors, equally served to acquaint him with the difficulty of his position. Nevertheless, God in heaven was his protector, and under his guardianship he could sleep without fear. The next day, being Sunday, gave him somewhat more repose. He had, however, to endure a different kind of fatigue. The whole talk of the town was about Dr. Luther, and, as Melancthon expresses it, every body was desirous to see "this new Erostratus, who had kindled so immense a conflagration."2 The people pressed around

him, and the good doctor, no doubt smiled at their eagerness. But he had to submit to another kind of importunity. If the people were desirous to see him, they were still more so to hear him, and he was requested on all hands to preach. Luther had no greater delight than in proclaiming the word, and would have been happy to preach Jesus Christ in this great city, in the solemn circumstances in which he was placed. But on this occasion, as on many others, he showed a strong sense of propriety, and profound respect for his superiors, and refused to preach, lest the legate might suppose that he did it in order to give him pain, and by way of defiance. This moderation and wisdom were undoubtedly of as much value as a sermon. The cardinal's creatures, however, did not leave him in tranquillity, but returned to the charge. "The Cardinal," said they, "assures you of his entire grace and favour. What do you fear?" They alleged a thousand reasons in order to induce him to go. "He is a father full of mercy, said one of these envoys; but another approaching, whispered in his ear, "Don't believe what is told you—he does not keep his word." Luther adhered to his resolution. On Monday morning, 10th October, Serra-Longa returned to the charge. The courtier had made it a point of honour to succeed in his negotiation. As soon as he entered, he exclaimed in Latin, "Why do you not come to the cardinal? He is waiting for you with the most indulgent feelings. The whole matter may be summed up in six letters:—Revoca, Retract. Come, you have nothing to fear."

Luther thought within himself, these six are important letters; but, without entering into discussion on the subject, said, "As soon as I have obtained the safe-conduct I will appear."

Serra-Longa broke out on hearing these words. He insisted, and remonstrated, but found Luther immovable. Becoming more and more irritated, he exclaimed, "You imagine, doubtless, that the Elector will take up arms in your behalf, and for your sake run the risk of losing the territories handed down to him from his fathers."

Luther.—"God forbid."

Serra-Longa.—"Abandoned by all, where will your refuge be?"

Luther.—(Looking upwards with the eye of faith,) "Under heaven."

Serra-Longa, struck with this sublime reply, for which he was not prepared, remained a moment silent, and then continued:—

"What would you do if you had the pope, the legate, and all the cardinals, in your hands, as they have you in theirs?"

Luther.—"I would pay them all honour and respect. But in my view, the word of God takes precedence of all."

Serra-Longa.—(Laughing, and wagging one of his fingers as the Italians do.) "Hem! Hem! all honour…. I don't believe a word of it.…"

He then went out, leapt into his saddle, and disappeared.

Serra-Longa returned no more to Luther; but he long remembered both the resistance which he had met with from the Reformer, and that which his master also was soon to experience. At a later period, we shall see him with loud cries demanding Luther's blood.

Serra-Longa had not long left the doctor when the safe-conduct arrived. His friends had obtained it from the counsellor of the empire, who, it is probable, had previously consulted with the Emperor, as he was not far from Augsburg. It would even seem, from a remark afterwards made by the cardinals that, to avoid offending him, his consent had been asked. This may have been his reason for employing Serra-Longa to work upon Luther; for to have openly opposed the giving of a safe-conduct would have been to reveal intentions which he was desirous to conceal. It was safer to induce Luther himself to desist from his demand. It was soon seen, however, that the Saxon monk was not made of pliable materials.

Luther is going to appear. While demanding a safe-conduct, he did not trust to a carnal arm; for he knew very well that a safe-conduct did not save John Huss from the flames. He only wished to do his duty by submitting to the advice of his master's friends. Jehovah will decide. If he requires him to give back his life, he is ready to give it joyfully. At this solemn moment, he feels a longing for converse with his friends, especially with Melancthon, now so dear to his heart, and avails himself of a moment of retirement to write him.

"Comport yourself like a man," says he to him, "as you always do. Teach our dear youth what is right and agreeable to God. For me, I am ready to be sacrificed for you and for them, if it is the Lord's will. Sooner than retract what I was bound to teach, I would die, and even (what would be to me the greatest misfortune) be deprived for ever of your delightful society, thus losing (perhaps by my fault) the excellent studies to which we are now devoted.

"Italy, like Egypt of old, is plunged in darkness, so thick that it may be felt. Nobody knows anything of Christ, or of what relates to him; and yet these people are our lords and masters in faith and manners. Thus the wrath of God is fulfilled upon us, as the prophet speaks: 'I will give them youths for governors, and babes will rule over them.' Conduct yourself as in presence of the Lord, my dear Philip, and avert the divine wrath by pure and fervent prayer." The legate, informed that Luther was next day to appear before him, assembled the Italians and Germans, in whom he had the greatest confidence, in order to consider what was necessary to be done with the Saxon monk. Opinions were divided. "He must," says one, "be compelled to retract." "He must be seized," says another, "and imprisoned." A third thought that it was better to get quit of him; and a fourth that an attempt should be made to gain him by kindness and lenity. This last advice the cardinal seems at first to have determined to adopt.

CHAP. VI

First appearance—First Words—Conditions of Rome—Propositions to Retract—Luther's reply—He withdraws—Impressions on both sides—Arrival of Staupitz. The day of conference at length arrived. The legate, knowing that Luther had declared his readiness to retract what could be proved contrary to the truth, had great hopes of success. He doubted not that it would be easy for a man of his rank and knowledge to bring back this monk to the obedience of the Church.

Luther repaired to the legate, accompanied by the prior of the Carmelites, (his host and friend,) two friars of the convent, Dr. Link, and an Augustin, probably the one who had come with him from Nuremberg. Scarcely had he entered the palace of the legate, than all the Italians in the suite of the prince of the Church rushed forward. Every one wished to see the famous doctor, and pressed so upon him that he could scarcely advance. Luther found the Apostolical Nuncio, and

Serra-Longa, in the hall where the cardinal was waiting. The reception was cold but polite, and conformable to Roman etiquette. Luther, following the instructions which Serra-Longa had given him, prostrated himself before the cardinal; when told to rise, he put himself on his knees; and, on a new order from the legate, stood erect. Several of the most distinguished Italians in the service of the legate pushed forward into the hall to be present at the interview. They desired above all to see the German monk humbling himself before the representative of the pope. The legate remained silent. Hating Luther as an adversary of the theological supremacy of St. Thomas, and as the head of an active opposition in a rising university, whose very first steps had greatly disquieted the Thomists, he was pleased at seeing him lying before him, and thought, says a contemporary, that Luther was going to sing a palinode. Luther, on his part, waited till the prince should address him; but seeing he did not, he took his silence for an invitation to begin, and spoke as follows:—

“Most Worthy Father,—On the citation of his Papal Holiness, and at the request of my most gracious lord, the Elector of Saxony, I appear before you as a submissive and obedient son of the holy Christian Church, and I acknowledge that I published the Propositions and Theses in question. I am ready to listen in all obedience to the charge brought against me, and to allow myself, if I am mistaken, to be instructed in the way of truth.” The cardinal, who had resolved to assume the air of a tender father, full of compassion for an erring child, now spoke in the most friendly tone, praised the humility of Luther, expressed all the joy it gave him, and said:—“My dear son, you have stirred up all Germany by your dispute on indulgences. I am told that you are a very learned doctor in the Scriptures, and have many disciples. Wherefore, if you would be a member of the Church, and find in the pope a most gracious lord, listen to me.”

After this exordium, the legate did not hesitate to disclose to him at once all that he expected of him—so confident was he of his submission. “Here,” said he, “are three articles which, by the order of our most holy father, Leo X, I have to lay before you; First, You must retrace your steps, acknowledge your faults, and retract your errors, propositions, and discourses: Secondly, You must promise to abstain in future from circulating your opinions; and, Thirdly, You must engage to be more moderate, and to avoid every thing that might grieve or upset the Church.”

Luther.—“I request, most worthy father, that you will communicate to me the brief of the pope, in virtue of which you have received full power to dispose of this affair.”

Serra-Longa, and the other Italians in the cardinal’s suite, stared on hearing this request; and although the German monk had already appeared to them a very odd man, they could scarcely recover from the astonishment produced by so bold a speech. Christians, accustomed to ideas of justice, desire just procedure in the case of others as well as of themselves, but those who act habitually in an arbitrary manner are quite surprised when they are told to proceed in regular form, according to law.

De Vio.—“This request, my dear son, cannot be granted. You must acknowledge your errors, take care of your words in future, and not return to your vomit, so that we may be able to sleep without trouble and anxiety; thereafter, conformably to the order and authority of our most holy father the pope, I will arrange the affair.”

Luther.—“Have the goodness, then, to tell me in what I have erred.” At this new request the Italian courtiers, who had expected to see the poor German on his knees crying mercy, were struck with still greater astonishment. Not one of them would have thought of condescending so far as to answer so impertinent a question. But De Vio, who considered it ungenerous to crush the cative monk with the whole weight of his authority, and who, besides, was confident that his superior knowledge would give him an easy victory, consented to tell Luther of what he was accused, and even to enter into discussion with him. In justice to this general of the Dominicans, it must be admitted that he had more equity, a better sense of propriety, and less passion, than have been shown on many occasions since, in similar affairs. He assumed a tone of condescension, and said:—

“Very dear son!—Here are two propositions which you have advanced, and which you must first of all retract: First, The treasury of indulgences does not consist of the merits and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ: Second, The man who receives the Holy Sacrament must have faith in the grace which is offered to him.” In fact, both of these propositions gave a mortal blow to the Roman traffic. If the pope had not the power to dispose at pleasure of the merits of the Saviour; if those who received the bills which the courtiers of the Church were negotiating did not receive part of this infinite righteousness, the paper lost all its value, and was worth no more than if it had been blank. It was the same with the sacraments. Indulgences were to some extent an extraordinary branch of the commerce of Rome, whereas the sacraments were of the nature of an ordinary branch. The returns which they yielded were far from being insignificant. To maintain that faith was necessary before the sacraments could confer a real benefit on a Christian soul, was to deprive them of all interest in the eyes of the people; faith being a thing which the pope did not give, which was beyond his power, and came from God only. To declare it necessary was to wrest out of the hands of Rome both speculation and profit. Luther, in attacking these two dogmas, had imitated Jesus Christ, when at the commencement of his ministry he overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple, saying, Make not my Father’s house a house of merchandise.

“I will not, in order to combat these errors,” continued Cajetan, “invoke the authority of St. Thomas and the other scholastic doctors; I will found only on the authority of Holy Scripture, and speak with you in all friendship.” But scarcely had De Vio begun to unfold his proofs than he deviated from the rule which he had declared his intention to follow. He combated Luther’s first proposition by an extravagant1 of Pope Clement, and the second by all sorts of scholastic dogmas. The discussion commenced on this constitution of the pope in favour of indulgences. Luther, indignant at the authority which the legate ascribed to a decree of Rome, exclaimed:—

“I cannot receive such constitutions as sufficient proofs in so important matters. For they wrest the Holy Scripture, and never quote it appositely.”

De Vio.—“The pope has authority and power over all things.”

Luther, (keenly.)—“Save Scripture.”

De Vio, (ironically.)—“Save Scripture!… The pope, know you not, is above Councils? Even recently he condemned and punished the Council of Bâsle.”

Luther.—“The university of Paris appealed.”

De Vio.—These Parisian gentry will pay the penalty." The discussion between the cardinal and Luther afterwards turned on the second point, viz., on faith. This Luther declared to be necessary, in order to receive benefit from the sacraments, and, according to his custom, quoted several passages of Scripture in favour of the opinion which he maintained, but the legate received them with loud laughter. "It is of general faith you speak, then," said he.—"No!" replied Luther. One of the Italians, master of the ceremonies to the legate, out of all patience at Luther's opposition and his answers, was burning with eagerness to speak. He was constantly trying to break in, but the legate enjoined silence, and at last was obliged to reprimand him so sharply, that the master of the ceremonies left the hall in confusion.

"As to indulgences," said Luther, "if it can be shown that I am mistaken, I am quite willing to be instructed. One may pass over that point without being a bad Christian, but on the article of faith, were I to yield a whit, I should be denying Jesus Christ. With regard to it, then, I am neither able nor willing to yield, and by the grace of God never shall."

De Vio, (beginning to lose temper.)—"Whether you will or not, you must this very day retract that article; otherwise for that article alone, I will reject and condemn all your doctrine."

Luther.—"I have no will apart from that of the Lord; He will do with me what pleases him. But had I five heads, I would lose them all sooner than retract the testimony which I have borne to holy Christian faith."

De Vio.—"I did not come here to reason with you. Retract, or prepare to suffer the pains which you have deserved."

Luther saw plainly that it was impossible to settle the matter by a conference. His opponent sat before him as if he were the pope himself, and insisted on his receiving humbly, and with submission, whatever he said, while his answers, even when founded on the Holy Scriptures, were received with a shrug of his shoulders, and all sorts of irony and contempt. He thought the wisest course would be to answer the cardinal in writing. This method, thought he, leaves at least some consolation to the oppressed. Others will be able to form a judgment of the affair, and the unjust adversary, who, by clamour, remains master of the field of battle, may be deterred by it.

Luther having signified his intention to withdraw, the legate said to him, "Do you wish me to give you a safe-conduct to Rome?"

Nothing would have been more agreeable to Cajetan than the acceptance of this offer, as it would have disencumbered him of a task, the difficulties of which he began to comprehend. But the Reformer, who saw all the difficulties with which he was surrounded even at Augsburg, took good care not to accept a proposal the effect of which could only have been to give him over, bound hand and foot, to the vengeance of his enemies. He rejected it as often as De Vio was pleased to renew it, and this was frequently. The legate disguised the pain which he felt at Luther's refusal, and, wrapping himself up in his dignity, dismissed the monk with a smile of compassion, under which he tried to conceal his disappointment, and at the same time the politeness of one who hopes he may succeed better another time. No sooner was Luther in the court of the palace than the talkative Italian, the master of the ceremonies, whom his master's reprimands had obliged to quit the hall of conference, delighted at being able to speak out of sight of Cajetan, and burning with eagerness to confound the abominable heretic by his luminous reasons, ran after him, and

continuing to walk, began to retail his sophisms. But Luther, weary of this foolish personage, answered him with one of those cutting expressions which he had so much at command, and the poor master of the ceremonies left off, and returned in confusion to the cardinal's palace.

Luther did not carry away a very high opinion of his opponent. He had heard from him, as he afterwards wrote to Spalatin, propositions which were quite at variance with theology, and in the mouth of any other person would have been regarded as archheretical. And yet De Vio was considered the most learned of the Dominicans. Second to him was Prierias. "From this," says Luther. "we may infer what those must have been who were tenth or hundredth." On the other hand, the noble and resolute bearing of the Wittemberg doctor had greatly surprised the cardinal and his courtiers. Instead of a poor monk humbly begging pardon, they had found a free man, a decided Christian, an enlightened teacher, who insisted that unjust accusations should be supported by proof, and who defended his doctrine triumphantly. All the inmates of Cajetan's palace inveighed against the pride, obstinacy, and effrontery of this heretic. Luther and De Vio had mutually learned to know each other, and both prepared for their second interview. A very agreeable surprise awaited Luther on his return to the convent of the Carmelites. The vicar-general of the Augustin order, his friend, his father Staupitz, had arrived at Augsburg. Not having been able to prevent Luther from coming to this city, Staupitz gave his friend a new and touching proof of his attachment by coming personally in the hope of being useful to him. This excellent man foresaw that the conference with the legate would lead to very serious consequences. He was equally agitated by his fears and his friendship for Luther, who, after his painful sederunt, felt it refreshing to clasp so valuable a friend in his arms. Having told him that it had been impossible for him to get an answer worth any thing, and how the legate had been contented to demand a retractation without trying to convince him—"It is absolutely necessary," said Staupitz, "to give the legate a written answer."

After what he had heard of the first interview, Staupitz hoped nothing from the others, and, therefore, determined on a proceeding which he deemed necessary. He resolved to loose Luther from obedience to his order. By this Staupitz hoped to gain two ends. If, as all anticipated, Luther fell in the struggle, the disgrace of his condemnation would not fall on the whole order; or if the cardinal ordered Staupitz to oblige Luther to silence or retractation, he would have an excuse for not doing it. The ceremony, which took place in the usual form, made Luther aware of all that he had thenceforth to expect. He felt exceedingly at seeing the ties which he had formed in the enthusiasm of his youth, thus broken. The order of his choice rejects him. His natural protectors stand aloof, and he becomes a stranger to his brethren. But though his heart is filled with sadness at the thought, he recovers all his joy on turning to the promises of a faithful God, who has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." The counsellors of the empire having intimated to the legate, through the Bishop of Trent, that Luther was provided with an imperial safe-conduct, and having caused it to be declared at the same time, that nothing was to be attempted against the doctor's person, De Vio became angry, and sharply replied in words characteristically Roman, "Very well, but I will do what the pope commands." We know what this was.

CHAP. VII

Communication to the Legate—Second Appearance—Luther's Declaration—The Legate's Reply—The Legate's Volubility—Luther's Request. The next day both parties prepared for the

second interview, which promised to be decisive. The friends of Luther, who had resolved to accompany him to the legate, repaired to the convent of the Carmelites. The dean of Trent, and Peutinger, both counsellors of the emperor, and Staupitz, arrived in succession. Shortly after the doctor had the pleasure to see them joined by the Chevalier Philip von Feilitsch, and Doctor Ruhel, counsellors of the Elector, who had been ordered by their master to attend the conferences, and protect the liberty of Luther. They had arrived the previous evening, and were, says Mathesius, to stand at his side, as at Constance the Chevalier de Chlum stood at the side of John Huss. The doctor, moreover, took a notary, and accompanied with all these friends, proceeded to the legate. At this moment Staupitz came up to him; he thoroughly comprehended Luther's situation, and knew that if he did not fix his eye solely on the Lord, who is the deliverer of his people, he must succumb. "My dear brother," said he to him seriously, "constantly remember that you have begun these things in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." Thus God surrounded his humble servant with consolation and encouragement.

Luther, on arriving at the cardinal's, found a new opponent. This was the prior of the Dominicans of Augsburg, who was seated at the side of his chief. Luther, agreeably to the resolution which he had formed, had written his reply, and, after the usual salutations, with a firm voice read the following declaration:—

"I declare that I honour the holy Roman Church, and that I will continue to honour it. I have sought the truth in public discussions; and all that I have said I regard, even at this hour, as just, true, and Christian. Still I am a man, and may be mistaken. I am, therefore, disposed to receive instruction and correction in the things in which I may have erred. I declare myself ready to reply, by word of mouth or by writing, to all the objections and all the charges which my lord the legate may bring against me. I declare myself ready to submit my theses to the four universities of Bâsle, Friburg in Brisgau, Louvain, and Paris; and to retract what they declare to be erroneous. In a word, I am ready to do all that may be demanded of a Christian. But I protest solemnly against the course which is sought to be given to this affair, and against the strange pretension of constraining me to retract without having refuted me."

Undoubtedly, nothing could be more equitable than these proposals of Luther, and yet they must have been very embarrassing to a judge whose decision had been prescribed to him beforehand. The legate, who had not expected this protestation, sought to conceal his uneasiness by pretending to laugh at it, and assuming an exterior of gentleness, said to Luther, smiling, "This protestation is unnecessary. I will not dispute with you either in public or in private, but I purpose to arrange the affair kindly, and like a father." The whole policy of the cardinal consisted in putting aside the strict forms of justice, which afford protection to those who are prosecuted, and in treating the affair only as one of administration between superior and inferior;—a commodious method, in as much as it opens up a wide field for arbitrary procedure.

Still maintaining the most affectionate manner, "My dear friend," said De Vio, "abandon, I pray you, a useless design. Rather return to yourself, acknowledge the truth, and I am ready to reconcile you with the Church and the sovereign bishop. Whether you will or not, it matters little. It will be hard for you to kick against the pricks…."

Luther, who saw himself treated as if he were already proved a rebellious child, rejected of the Church, exclaimed, "I cannot retract; but I offer to answer, and in writing. We had enough of

debating yesterday."

De Vio was irritated at this expression, which reminded him that he had not acted with sufficient prudence; but he recovered himself, and said with a smile, "Debating, my dear son! I did not debate with you. I have no wish to debate; but in order to please the most serene Elector Frederick, I am willing to hear you, and exhort you amicably and paternally."

Luther did not comprehend why the legate should have been so much offended at the expression which he had used; for, thought he, if I had not wished to speak politely, I would have said, not debated, but disputed, and wrangled,—for that was truly what we did.

Still De Vio, who felt that before the respectable witnesses who were present at the conference it was at least necessary to seem to try to convince Luther to return to the two propositions, which he had singled out as fundamental errors, thoroughly resolved to let the Reformer speak as little as possible. Strong in his Italian volubility he overwhelms him with objections, to which he does not wait for a reply. Sometimes he jests, sometimes he scolds; he declaims with impassioned heat, mixes up the most heterogeneous subjects, quotes St. Thomas and Aristotle, cries, and gets into a passion with all who differ with him in opinion, and then apostrophises Luther. Luther, more than ten times, tries to speak, but the legate instantly interrupts him, and showers down menaces upon him. Retractation! retractation! is the whole sum of his demand; he thunders, and domineers, and insists on having all the talk to himself. Staupitz interferes to stop the legate. "Have the goodness," says he, "to give Doctor Martin time to answer." But the legate recommences his discourse, quotes the extravagants and the opinions of St. Thomas, determined to harangue during the whole interview. If he cannot convince, and if he dares not strike, he at least can stun.

Luther and Staupitz saw clearly that they must abandon the hope, not only of enlightening De Vio by discussion, but also of making a useful profession of faith. Luther, therefore, resumed the request which he had made at the commencement, and which the cardinal had then evaded. Since he was not permitted to speak, he asked that he might, at least, be allowed to write, and send his written reply to the legate. Staupitz supported him; several others who were present joined their entreaties, and Cajetan, notwithstanding of all his repugnance for what was written, (for he remembered that what is written remains,) at last consented. The meeting broke up. The hope of terminating the affair at this interview was adjourned, and it became necessary to await the result of a subsequent conference. The permission which the general of the Dominicans gave Luther to prepare an answer, and to answer in writing, the two distinct and articulate accusations which he had made, touching indulgences and faith, was nothing more than justice demanded, and yet we are obliged to De Vio for it, as a mark of moderation and impartiality.

Luther left the cardinal's palace delighted that his request had been granted. In going and returning he was the object of public attention. All enlightened men were interested in his case, as if it had been their own, for it was felt that the cause then pleaded at Augsburg was the cause of the gospel, justice, and liberty. The lowest of the people alone were with Cajetan; and of this he doubtless gave some significant hints to the Reformer, who afterwards spoke of them.

It became more and more evident that the legate had no wish to hear any more from Luther than the words "I retract;" and these Luther was resolved not to pronounce. What will be the issue of this unequal struggle? How can it be imagined that the whole power of Rome, brought to bear on a

single man, will not succeed in crushing him? Luther sees this. Feeling the weight of the terrible hand under which he is placed, he gives up the hope of ever returning to Wittemberg, revisiting his dear Philip, and again finding himself in the midst of the generous youths into whose hearts he loved so much to shed the seeds of life. He sees excommunication hanging over his head, and has no doubt that it must shortly fall upon him. These prospects afflict his soul, but do not overwhelm it. His confidence in God is not shaken. God may break the instrument which he has been pleased till now to employ, but the truth will be maintained. Whatever happens, Luther must defend it to the last. He accordingly, begins to prepare the protestation which he is to present to the legate. It appears that he devoted to it part of the 13th October.

CHAP. VIII

Third Appearance—Treasury of Indulgences—Faith—Humble Request—Legate's Reply—Luther's Reply—Legate's Rage—Luther Retires—First Defection. On Friday the 14th October, Luther returned to the cardinal, accompanied by the counsellors of the Elector. The Italians pressed around him as usual, and were present at the conference in great numbers. Luther advanced, and presented his protestation to the legate. The cardinal's people looked with astonishment at a writing which, in their eyes, was so audacious. The following is the doctor of Wittemberg's declaration to their master:—

"You attack me on two points. First, you oppose to me the Constitution of Pope Clement VI, in which it is said, that the treasury of indulgences is the merit of Jesus Christ and the saints; whereas I deny this in my theses.

"Panormitanus, (Luther thus designates Ives, author of the famous collection of ecclesiastical law, entitled Panormia, and Bishop of Chartres at the end of the eleventh century,) Panormitanus declares, in his First Book, that in regard to holy faith, not only a General Council, but every believer is superior to the pope, if he produces declarations of Scripture, and better arguments than the pope.

"The voice of our Lord Jesus Christ rises far above all the voices of men, whatever be the names they bear.

"What gives me the greatest pain and uneasiness is, that this Constitution contains doctrines quite opposed to the truth. It declares that the merits of the saints is a treasure, while all Scripture testifies that God recompenses far more richly than we deserve. The prophet exclaims, 'Lord, enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight can no living man be justified.' 'Woe to men, however honourable and laudable their life may be,' says St. Augustine, 'were judgment passed upon it without mercy.'4

"Hence the saints are not saved by their merits, but only by the mercy of God, as I have declared. I maintain this, and adhere firmly to it. The words of holy Scripture, which declare that the saints have not enough of merit, must take precedence of the words of men, who affirm that they have too much; for the pope is not above, but beneath the word of God."

Luther does not stop here, but shows that if indulgences cannot be the merit of saints, no more are they the merit of Christ. He observes, that indulgences are barren and without fruit, since they have no other effect than to exempt men from doing good works, such as prayers and alms. "No,"

exclaims he, “the merit of Christ is not a treasure of indulgences, which exempts from well-doing; but a treasure of grace, which gives life. The merit of Christ is applied to believers without indulgences, without keys, by the Holy Spirit only, and not by the pope. If any one has a better founded opinion than mine,” adds he, in concluding this first point, “let him show it, and then I will retract.”

“I have affirmed,” says he, in coming to the second article, “that no man can be justified before God unless it be by faith, and hence that it is necessary for man to believe with full assurance that he has obtained grace. To doubt of this grace is to reject it. The righteousness and life of the righteous is his faith.”

Luther proves his proposition by a multitude of quotations from Scripture.

“Be pleased, then, to intercede for me with our most holy lord, Pope Leo X,” adds he, “in order that he may not treat me with so much disfavour … My soul seeks the light of truth. I am not so proud, so desirous of vain-glory, as to be ashamed to retract if I have taught what is false. My greatest joy will be to see the triumph of whatever accords with the will of God. Only let them not force me to do anything which is contrary to the cry of my conscience.” The legate had taken the declaration from Luther’s hands, and after having perused it, said to him coldly, “You have here useless verbiage, you have written many vain words; you have answered the two articles foolishly, and blotted your paper with a number of passages of holy Scripture which have no reference to the subject.” Then, with a disdainful air, De Vio threw down the protestation, as setting no value upon it, and resuming the tone which he had found tolerably successful at the last interview, began to cry at full pitch that Luther must retract. Luther was immovable. “Friar! friar!” exclaims De Vio in Italian, “last time you were very good, but to-day you are very naughty.” Then the cardinal begins a long discourse, drawn from the writings of St. Thomas, again loudly extols the Constitution of Clement VI, and persists in maintaining, that, in virtue of this Constitution, the very merits of Jesus Christ are distributed to the faithful by means of indulgences. He thinks he has silenced Luther, who sometimes begins to speak, but De Vio scolds, thunders away without ceasing, and insists on having the whole field of battle to himself. This method might have had some success a first time, but Luther was not the man to suffer it a second. His indignation at length burst forth; it is his turn to astonish the spectators, who deem him already vanquished by the volubility of the prelate. He raises his powerful voice, seizes the favourite objection of the cardinal, and makes him pay dear for his temerity in having entered the lists with him. “Retract! retract!” repeated De Vio, showing the Constitution of the pope. “Well,” replied Luther, “if it can be proved by this Constitution that the treasure of indulgences is the merit of Jesus Christ, I consent to retract according to the will and good pleasure of your Eminence …” The Italians, who expected nothing of the kind, stared at these words, and could scarcely contain their joy at seeing the enemy at length caught in the net. The cardinal was, as it were, out of himself; he laughed outright, but with a laugh in which anger and indignation mingled; darting forward, he lays hold of the volume containing the famous Constitution, looks it out, pounces upon it, and, quite proud of his victory, reads it aloud, with boiling and heaving breast. The Italians exult; the Elector’s counsellors are uneasy and embarrassed: Luther is waiting for his opponent. At length, when the cardinal comes to the words, “The Lord Jesus Christ has acquired this treasure by his sufferings,” Luther stops him, “Most worthy father,” says he, “be so good as consider and carefully meditate this expression, ‘has acquired.’ Christ has acquired a treasure by his merits; the merits, therefore, are not the treasure;

for, to speak philosophically, cause and effect are different things. The merits of Christ have acquired authority to the pope to grant such indulgences to the people, but what the hand of the pope distributes is not the merits themselves. Thus, then my conclusion is true, and the Constitution, which you invoke with so much noise, bears testimony with me to the truth which I proclaim."

De Vio still holds the book in his hand; his eyes are still riveted on the fatal passage, but he has nothing to reply. Thus he is taken in the net which he himself had laid, and Luther with strong hand keeps him in, to the inexpressible astonishment of the Italian courtiers around him. The legate would have evaded the difficulty, but could not. He had long abandoned the testimony of Scripture and the authority of the Fathers; he had taken refuge in this Extravagant of Clement VI, and there he is caught. Still he has too much finesse to let his embarrassment appear. Wishing to hide his shame, the prince of the Church suddenly changes the subject, and rushes violently to other articles. Luther who perceives the adroit manœuvre, allows him not to escape; he grasps and completely closes the net which he has thrown over the cardinal, and makes evasion impossible. "Most reverend father!" says he, with an irony clothed in the form of respect, "your Eminence cannot surely think that we Germans do not know grammar; to be a treasure, and to acquire a treasure, are very different things."

"Retract!" says De Vio; "retract, or, if you don't, I send you to Rome, to appear there before the judges entrusted with the cognisance of your cause. I excommunicate you; you, all your partizans, all who are or may become favourable to you, and I reject them from the Church. Full authority in this respect has been given me by the holy apostolic See. Think you your protectors can stop me? Do you imagine that the pope cares for Germany? The little finger of the pope is stronger than all the German princes."2

"Deign," replies Luther, "to send the written reply which I handed you to pope Leo X, with my very humble prayers." At these words, the legate, glad to find a moment's respite, again wraps himself up in a feeling of his dignity, and proudly and passionately says to Luther:—

"Retract, or return not."

Luther is struck with the expression. This time he gives no verbal answer, but bows and takes his leave, followed by the Elector's counsellors. The cardinal and his Italians, left alone, stare at each other, confounded at the issue of the debate.

Thus the Dominican system, clad in the Roman purple, had proudly dismissed its humble opponent. But Luther felt that there is a power, viz., Christian truth—truth, which no authority, secular or spiritual, can ever subdue. Of the two combatants, he who withdrew was master of the field. This is the first step by which the Church detached herself from the papacy.

Luther and De Vio never saw each other again; but the Reformer had made a powerful impression on the legate, an impression which was never entirely effaced. What Luther had said on faith, and what De Vio read in the subsequent writings of the doctor of Wittemberg, greatly modified the cardinal's views. The theologians of Rome were surprised and displeased at his statements on justification in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. The Reformer did not recoil, did not retract; but his judge, he who never ceased exclaiming, Retract! changed his views, and indirectly retracted his errors. In this way was the Reformer's unshaken fidelity rewarded.

Luther returned to the convent where he had met with hospitality. He had stood firm, had borne testimony to the truth and done his part. God will do the rest. His heart was filled with peace and joy.

CHAP. IX

De Vio and Staupitz—Staupitz and Luther—Luther and Spalatin—Luther to Carlstadt—Communion—Link and De Vio—Departure of Staupitz and Link—Luther to Cajetan—The Cardinal's Silence—Luther's Farewell—Departure—Appeal to the Pope.

Still the news brought to him were not at all satisfactory. The rumour in the town was, that if he would not retract, he was to be seized and immured in a dungeon. The vicar-general of the order, Staupitz himself, it was confidently said, had been obliged to consent to it. Luther cannot believe what is told him of his friend. No! Staupitz will not betray him. As to the designs of the cardinal, judging by his own words, it is difficult to doubt. Still he is unwilling to flee before the danger; his life, like truth herself, is in mighty hands; and, notwithstanding of the danger which threatens him, he resolves not to quit Augsburg. The legate soon repented of his violence. He felt that he had gone out of his course, and he was desirous to return to it. Scarcely had Staupitz finished dinner, (it was the morning when the interview had taken place, and the dinner-hour was mid-day,) when he received a message from the cardinal to wait upon him. Staupitz was accompanied by Winceslaus Link. The vicar-general found the legate alone with Serra-Longa. De Vio immediately went up to Staupitz, and, in the mildest accents said to him:—"Try, then, to persuade your monk, and induce him to make a retraction. Of a truth I am otherwise satisfied with him, and he has not a better friend than I."

Staupitz.—"I have done so already, and will still counsel him to submit to the Church in all humility."

De Vio.—"You must answer the arguments which he draws from holy Scripture."

Staupitz.—"I must confess to you, my lord, that that is beyond my strength; for Dr. Martin is my superior both in talent and in knowledge of the holy Scriptures." The cardinal doubtless smiled at the vicar-general's frankness. He himself knew, besides, wherein lay the difficulty of convincing Luther. He continued, and said to Link:—

"Are you aware, that, as partizans of a heretical doctrine, you are yourselves liable to the pains of the Church?"

Staupitz.—Deign to resume the conference with Luther. Appoint a public discussion of the controverted points."

De Vio, (terrified at the very idea.)—"I won't have any further discussion with that beast. For it has in its head piercing eyes and strange speculations."

Staupitz at last obtained the cardinal's promise to give Luther a written statement of what he was to retract. The vicar-general went immediately to Luther, and, shaken by the cardinal's representations, tried to bring about some arrangement. "Refute then," says Luther, "the passages of Scripture which I have brought forward." "It is above my power," said Staupitz. "Well," said Luther, "it is against my conscience to retract, so long as no other explanation can be given of

these passages." "What!" continued he, "the cardinal pretends, as you assure me, that he is desirous to arrange the affair without shame or disadvantage to me. Ah! these are Roman words, and signify in good German that it would be my disgrace and eternal ruin. What else has he to expect, who, from fear of man and against the voice of his conscience, abjures the truth?"

Staupitz did not insist; he merely intimated that the cardinal had consented to give him a written statement of the points of which he demanded a retractation. Then, doubtless, he informed him of his resolution to leave Augsburg, where he had nothing more to do, and Luther imparted to him a design which he had formed with a view to comfort and strengthen their souls.

Staupitz promised to return, and they separated for a short time.

Luther, left alone in his cell, turned his thoughts towards friends who were dear to his heart. He transported himself to Weimar and Wittemberg. He was desirous to inform the Elector of what was passing; and, afraid of compromising the prince by addressing him directly, wrote to Spalatin, and begged him to inform his master how matters stood. He related the whole affair, even to the promise of the legate to give him a written statement of the controverted points, and concluded:—"Thus matters are; but I have neither hope nor confidence in the legate. I will not retract a single syllable. I will publish the reply which I have sent him, in order that, if he proceeds to violence, his shame may extend over all Christendom." The doctor next availed himself of some moments still left him to communicate with his friends at Wittemberg.

"Peace and felicity!" wrote he to Doctor Carlstadt. "Accept these few lines as if they were a long letter; for time and events are pressing on me. Another time I will write you and others at greater length. For three days my affair has been under discussion, and things are now come to this, that I have no hope of returning to you, and expect nothing but excommunication. The legate is absolutely determined that I shall have no discussion, either public or private. He says, he wishes not to be my judge but my father, and yet the only words he will hear from me are, 'I retract, and own that I have been mistaken.' These, again, are words which I won't say.

"My cause is in so much the greater peril, that its judges are not only implacable enemies, but, moreover, men incapable of comprehending it. However, the Lord God lives and reigns; to his care I commend myself, and I doubt not that, in answer to the prayers of some pious souls, he will send me assistance; methinks I feel that I am prayed for.

"Either I shall return to you without having suffered harm, or, struck with excommunication, will be obliged to seek an asylum elsewhere.

"Be this as it may, comport yourself valiantly, stand firm, exalt Christ intrepidly and joyfully….

"The cardinal always calls me his dear son. I know what this amounts to. Nevertheless, I am persuaded I would be to him the dearest and most agreeable of men, if I would only pronounce the single word Revoco, I retract. But I will not become a heretic by retracting the faith which made me become a Christian. Better be hunted, cursed, burnt, and put to death.…

"Take care of yourself, my dear doctor, and show this letter to our theologians, to Amsdorff, Philip, Otten, and others, in order that you may pray for me, and also for yourselves; for the affair which is here discussed is yours also. It is that of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and of divine grace."

Delightful thought! which ever gives full peace and consolation to those who have borne testimony to Jesus Christ, to his divinity and grace, when the world from all quarters showers down its censures, ejections, and frowns. “Our cause is that of faith in our Lord!” And how sweet also the conviction expressed by the Reformer, “I feel that I am prayed for.” The Reformation was the work of prayer and piety. The struggle between Luther and De Vio was a struggle between the religious element re-appearing in full life, and the expiring remains of the quibbling dialectics of the middle ages.

Such was Luther’s converse with his absent friends. Staupitz soon returned; Doctor Ruhel and the Chevalier de Ferlitzoch, the Elector’s envoys, also arrived after they had taken leave of the cardinal. Some other friends of the gospel joined them; and Luther, seeing the generous men thus assembled on the point of separating, perhaps separating from himself for ever, proposed that they should join in celebrating the Lord’s Supper. The proposal was accepted, and this little flock of believers communicated in the body and blood of Jesus Christ. What feelings must have filled the hearts of these friends of the Reformer at this moment when celebrating the Eucharist with him and thinking that it was perhaps the last time he would be permitted to do so! What joy and love must have animated Luther’s heart at seeing himself so graciously received by his Master at an hour when men were repulsing him! How solemn must that supper have been—how sacred that evening! The next day Luther waited for the articles which the legate was to send him, but no message arriving, he begged his friend, Dr. Winceslaus Link, to go to the cardinal. De Vio received Link with the greatest affability, and assured him that he would act only as a friend. “I no longer,” says he, “regard Doctor Martin Luther as a heretic. I will not excommunicate him at this time, at least if I do not receive other orders from Rome. I have sent his reply to the pope by an express.” Then, to give a proof of his good intentions, he added, “Would Doctor Martin Luther only retract what relates to the indulgences, the affair would soon be ended; for, with regard to faith in the sacrament, it is an article which every one may interpret and understand in his own way.” Spalatin, who relates these words, adds the sarcastic but just remark: “It clearly follows, that Rome has more regard for money than for the purity of the faith and the salvation of souls.”

Link returned to Luther. He found Staupitz with him, and gave an account of his visit. When he mentioned the legate’s unlooked for concession, “It had been worth while,” said Staupitz, “for Dr. Winceslaus to have had a notary and witnesses with him to take down the words, for if such a proposal was known it would greatly prejudice the cause of the Romans.”

Meanwhile, the smoother the prelate’s words became, the less the honest Germans trusted him. Several of the worthy men to whom Luther had been recommended consulted together. “The legate,” said they, “is plotting some mischief by the courier of whom he speaks; there is good ground to fear that you will all be seized and cast into prison.”

Staupitz and Winceslaus, therefore, determined to quit the town. Embracing Luther, who persisted in remaining at Augsburg, they set out in all haste by different roads for Nuremberg, not without a feeling of great uneasiness as to the fate of the intrepid witness whom they left behind.

Sunday passed quietly enough. Luther waited in vain for a message from the legate. But as he did not send him a word, Luther at last resolved to write him. Staupitz and Link, before their departure, had begged him to make all possible submission to the cardinal. Luther was yet without experience in Rome and its envoys; but if submission did not succeed, he would be able to regard

it as a warning. Now, he must at least make the attempt. In so far as concerns himself, not a day passes in which he does not condemn himself, does not mourn over the facility with which he allows himself to be hurried into expressions which exceed the bounds of propriety. Why should he not confess to the cardinal that which he daily confesses to God? Luther, moreover, had a heart which was easily touched, and which suspected no evil. He therefore took up the pen, and, under a feeling of respect and good will, wrote to the cardinal as follows:—

Most worthy Father in God,—I come once more, not with my voice, but by writing, to supplicate your paternal goodness to give me a favourable hearing. The reverend Doctor Staupitz, my very dear Father in Christ, has asked me to humble myself, to renounce my own opinion, and submit it to the judgment of pious and impartial men. He also has lauded your paternal goodness, and convinced me of the favourable sentiments with which you are animated towards me. The tidings filled me with joy.

“Now, then, most worthy father, I confess, as I have already done, that I have not shown enough of modesty, enough of meekness, enough of respect for the name of the sovereign pontiff; and although I have been greatly provoked, I perceive it would have been far better for me to have treated the affair with more humility, good nature, and reverence, ‘not answering a fool according to his folly, for fear of being like unto him.’ (Proverbs 26:4)

“This grieves me very much; I ask pardon for it; and I am willing to announce it to the people from the pulpit, as indeed I have already often done. I will endeavour, by the grace of God, to speak differently. Moreover, I am ready to promise, that, unless I am asked, I will not say a single word on the subject of indulgences after this affair is arranged. But, in like manner, let those who led me to begin it be obliged hereafter to be moderate in their discourses, or to be silent.

“As regards the truth of my doctrine, the authority of St. Thomas and other doctors cannot satisfy me. If I am worthy of it, I must hear the voice of the spouse, who is the Church. For it is certain that she hears the voice of the Bridegroom who is Christ.

“With all humility and submission, therefore, I pray your paternal love to refer the whole of this matter, which to this hour is so uncertain, to our most holy lord, Leo X, in order that the Church may decide, pronounce, and ordain, thereby enabling men to retract with a good conscience, or to believe in sincerity.” The reading of this letter suggests a reflection. It shows us that Luther was not acting on a premeditated system, but only in virtue of convictions which were successively impressed on his mind and his heart. So far from having adopted a fixed system, or calculated opposition, he was sometimes, without suspecting it, at variance with himself. Old convictions still prevailed in his mind, even after contrary convictions had taken root. And yet, in these evidences of sincerity and truth, men have searched for weapons to assail the Reformation; because it followed the obligatory law of progress invariably imposed on the human mind, they have written the history of its variations; in the very traits which attest its sincerity, and consequently do it honour, one of the greatest geniuses of Christendom has found his strongest objections to it. Inconceivable is the waywardness of the human mind!

Luther received no answer to his letter. Cajetan and his courtiers, from being violently agitated, became all at once motionless. What could the reason be? Might it not be the calm which precedes the storm? Some are of the opinion of Pallavicini, who observes, that “the cardinal

expected that the proud monk would, like inflated bellows, gradually lose the wind with which he was filled, and become quite humble." Others, who thought themselves better acquainted with the ways of Rome, felt assured that the legate was preparing to seize Luther; but not daring, of his own accord, to proceed to such extremities in defiance of the imperial safe-conduct, was waiting for an answer from Rome. Others, again, could not admit that the cardinal would consent to wait so long. The Emperor, Maximilian, they said, (and this may indeed have been true,) would have no more scruple in delivering up Luther to the judgment of the Church, in spite of the safe-conduct, than Sigismund had in delivering up John Huss to the Council of Constance. Their conjecture, therefore, was, that the legate was negotiating with the emperor. The sanction of Maximilian might arrive at any hour. The greater the opposition he had formerly showed to the pope, the more disposed he now seemed to flatter him, until he should succeed in encircling the head of his grandson with the imperial crown. There was not an instant to be lost, "and, therefore," said the generous men around Luther, "prepare an appeal to the pope, and quit Augsburg without delay."

Luther, whose presence in the town had for four days been quite useless, and who, by remaining these four days after the departure of the Saxon counsellors whom the Elector had sent to watch over his safety, had sufficiently demonstrated that he feared nothing, and was ready to answer every charge, at length yielded to the urgent entreaties of his friends. Wishing to leave a notification to De Vio, he wrote him on Tuesday, the evening before his departure. This second letter is firmer in its tone than the former. It would seem that Luther, in perceiving that all his advances were vain, began to hold up his head, and show that he had a due sense both of his own rights, and of the injustice of his enemies.

"Most worthy Father in God," wrote he to De Vio, "your paternal goodness has seen, yes, I say, seen, and distinctly recognised my obedience. I have undertaken a distant journey, in the midst of great dangers, in much bodily weakness, and notwithstanding of my extreme poverty, on the order of our most holy lord, Leo X. I have appeared personally before your Eminence; in fine, I have thrown myself at the feet of his Holiness, and am now waiting his pleasure, prepared to acquiesce in his judgment, whether he condemn or acquit me. I thus feel that I have omitted nothing which becomes an obedient son of the Church.

"Hence, I cannot see it to be my duty uselessly to prolong my sojourn here; indeed, it is impossible for me to do so. I want means, and your paternal goodness has commanded me, in peremptory terms, not again to show myself in your presence, unless I am willing to retract.

"I depart, therefore, in the name of the Lord, desiring, if it be possible, to repair to some spot where I may be able to live in peace. Several personages, of greater weight than I am, have urged me to appeal from your paternal goodness, and even from our most holy lord, Leo X, ill informed, to himself better informed. Although I know that such an appeal will be much more agreeable to our most serene Elector than a retractation, nevertheless, if I had only had myself to consult, I would not have taken it. Having committed no fault, I ought to have nothing to fear."

Luther, having written this letter, which was not sent to the legate till after his departure, prepared to quit Augsburg. God had kept him till this hour, and his heart praised Him for it; but he must not tempt God. He took leave of his friends, Peutinger, Langemantel, the Adelmanns, Auerbach, and the prior of the Carmelites, who had shown him so much Christian hospitality. On Wednesday before day-break he got up, and was ready to depart. His friends had advised him to use great

precaution, lest his intention should be observed and frustrated, and he followed their counsels as much as he could. A pony, which Staupitz had left him, was brought to the gate of the convent, and once more bidding adien to his brethren, he mounted and set off, without bridle, boots, or spurs, and unarmed. The magistrates had sent one of their officers on horseback, who was to accompany him, and who knew the roads perfectly. The servant led him in the darkness, through the silent streets of Augsburg, towards a small gate which was pierced in the city wall, and which counsellor Langemantel had given orders should be opened to him. He is still in the power of the legate, and the hand of Rome may still reach him. Doubtless, did the Italians know that their prey was escaping, they would sally forth in fury with hue and cry. Who knows if the intrepid opponent of Rome will not yet be seized and immured in a dungeon?… At length Luther and his guide arrive at the little gate, and, passing through it, are out of Augsburg. Then, putting their horses to the gallop, they make off in all haste.

Luther, on departing, had left his appeal to the pope in the hands of the prior of Pomesaw. His friends were of opinion that it should not be sent to the legate, and the prior was therefore charged to see to its being fixed up, two or three days after the doctor's departure, on the gate of the cathedral, in presence of a notary and witnesses. This was accordingly done. In this document, Luther declares that he appeals from the most holy father the pope, ill informed, to the most holy lord and father in Christ, by name Leo X, by the grace of God, when better informed. This appeal had been regularly drawn up and executed in due form by Gall de Herbrachtingen, the imperial notary, in presence of two Augustin monks, Bartholomew Utzmair and Wengel Steinbies. It was dated 16th October. When the cardinal was informed of Luther's departure, he was astonished, and even, as he declares in a letter to the Elector, was frightened and amazed. In fact, he had grounds for irritation. This departure, which put so abrupt a termination to negotiation, disappointed the hopes which had so long flattered him. His ambition was to cure the wounds of the Church, and re-establish the pope's influence in Germany; and, lo! the heretic has escaped not only without having been punished, but even without having been humbled. The conference had only served to bring more prominently into view, on the one hand, the simplicity, uprightness, and firmness of Luther; and, on the other, the imperiousness and unreasonable conduct of the pope and his ambassador. Rome, having gained nothing, must have lost: her authority not having been strengthened, had, of necessity, experienced a new check. What will be said at the Vatican? What tidings will arrive at Rome? The difficulties of his situation will be forgotten, and the failure imputed to his want of skill. Serra-Longa and the Italians are furious at seeing persons of their ability outwitted by a German monk. De Vio is scarcely able to conceal his irritation. The affront cries for vengeance, and we shall soon see him giving vent to his wrath in a letter to the Elector.

CHAP. X

Luther's Flight—Admiration—Luther's Wish—The Legate to the Elector—The Elector to the Legate—Prosperity of the University.

Luther continued with his guide to flee from Augsburg. He urged his steed to the utmost speed that the poor animal's strength would permit. He thought of the real or supposed flight of John Huss, the manner in which he was laid hold of, and the assertion of his adversaries, who pretended that the flight annulled the Emperor's safe-conduct, and entitled them to condemn him to the flames. These uneasy thoughts merely crossed Luther's mind. Escaped from the town, where he had

passed ten days under the terrible hand of Rome, which had already crushed so many thousand witnesses of the truth, and drenched herself with blood—now that he is free, now that he breathes the pure air of the field, and traverses the villages and plains—now that he sees himself wonderfully delivered—his whole soul magnifies the Lord. Truly he may now say, “Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.” Luther’s heart is thus filled with joy. But his thoughts also revert to De Vio. “The cardinal,” says he, “would have liked to have me in his hands to send me to Rome. No doubt he is chagrined at my escape. He imagined that he was master of me at Augsburg—he thought he was sure of me; but he had an eel by the tail. Is it not a shame in these people to set so high a price upon me? They would give many crowns to have me; whereas, our Lord Jesus Christ was sold for thirty pieces of silver.”3 The first day Luther travelled fourteen leagues. In the evening, on arriving at the inn where he was to pass the night, he was so fatigued (his horse, says one of his biographers, had a very hard trot,) that, on dismounting, he could not stand erect, and stretched himself out upon the straw. He, nevertheless, enjoyed some sleep, and the next day continued his journey. At Nuremberg, he found Staupitz on a visit to the convents of his order, and, for the first time saw the brief which the pope had sent to Cajetan respecting him. He was indignant at it. In all probability, if he had read it before his departure from Wittemberg, he would never have appeared before the cardinal. “It is impossible to believe,” says he, “that any thing so monstrous could emanate from a sovereign pontiff.”

Throughout the journey, Luther was an object of general interest. He had not yielded a whit. Such a victory gained by a mendicant monk over a representative of Rome, excited universal admiration. Germany seemed avenged for the contempt of Italy. The eternal Word had been more honoured than the word of the pope; and that vast power which had domineered over the world for so many ages had received an important check. Luther’s journey was a triumph. People were delighted with the obstinacy of Rome, hoping that it would hasten her downfall. Had she not chosen to keep fast hold of dishonest gains—had she been wise enough not to despise the Germans—had she reformed clamant abuses—perhaps, according to human views, things might have returned to the state of death out of which Luther had aroused them. But the papacy chooses not to yield, and the doctor will see himself constrained to bring many other errors to light, and to advance in the knowledge and the manifestation of the truth. On the 26th October Luther arrived at Græfenthal, situated at the extremity of the forests of Thuringia. Here he fell in with Count Albert of Mansfeld, who had so strongly dissuaded him from going to Augsburg. The count laughed heartily on seeing his singular equipage; and, laying hands on him, obliged him to become his guest. Shortly after Luther resumed his journey.

He made haste to be at Wittemberg by the 31st October, expecting that the Elector would be there at the Feast of All Saints, and that he would be able to see him. The brief which he had read at Nuremberg had made him fully aware of the danger of his situation. In fact, being already condemned at Rome, he could not hope either to remain at Wittemberg, or to obtain an asylum in a convent, or to be in peace and safety any where else. The protection of the Elector might, perhaps, defend him, but he was far from being able to calculate upon it. He could not expect any help from the two friends whom he had formerly had at the court. Staupitz, having lost the favour he long enjoyed, had quitted Saxony, Spalatin was loved by Frederick, but had no great influence over him. The Elector himself was not so well acquainted with the gospel as to encounter manifest

perils on account of it. However, Luther saw nothing better which he could do than return to Wittemberg, and there await the decision of an almighty and merciful God. If, as several thought, he were left at liberty, his wish was to devote himself entirely to study and the education of youth.

Luther did arrive at Wittemberg by the 30th October; but his haste had been to no purpose, for neither the Elector nor Spalatin came to the festival. His friends were overjoyed on seeing him again among them. The very day of his arrival he hastened to announce it to Spalatin—"I came back to Wittemberg to-day, safe and sound, by the grace of God; but how long I shall remain is more than I know.… I am filled with joy and peace; so much so, that I cannot help wondering how the trial which I endure appears so great to so many great personages."

De Vio did not wait long, after Luther's departure, to vent all his indignation to the Elector. His letter breathes vengeance. In an assuming tone he gives Frederick an account of the conference. "Since friar Martin," says he, in conclusion, "cannot be brought by paternal methods to acknowledge his error, and remain faithful to the Catholic Church, I pray your Highness to send him to Rome, or banish him from your States. Be assured that this difficult, naughty, and venomous affair, cannot last longer; for, when I shall have acquainted our most holy lord with all the craft and malice, there will soon be an end of it." In a postscript, in his own hand, the cardinal entreats the Elector not to sully his own honour, and that of his illustrious ancestors, for a miserable paltry friar.

Never, perhaps, was the soul of Luther filled with nobler indignation than on reading the copy of this letter which the Elector sent him. The thought of the sufferings which he is destined to endure, the value of the truth for which he is combating, the contempt he feels for the conduct of the legate of Rome, at once fill his heart. His reply, written under the influence of those feelings, is full of the courage, dignity, and faith, which he always manifested in the most difficult crisis of his life. He, in his turn, gives an account of the conference of Augsburg, and then, after exposing the conduct of the cardinal continues:—

"I should like to answer the legate in the Elector's stead.

"Prove that you speak with knowledge," I would say to him; "let the whole affair be committed to writing; then I will send Friar Martin to Rome, or rather, I myself will cause him to be seized and put to death. I will take care of my conscience and my honour, and allow no stain to sully my fame. But as long as your certain knowledge shuns the light, and manifests itself only by clamour, I cannot give credit to darkness.

"This, most excellent prince, would be my answer.

"Let the reverend legate, or the pope himself, give a written specification of my errors; let them explain their reasons; let them instruct me who desire, who ask, and wish, and wait for instruction, in so much that even a Turk would not refuse to give it. If I retract not, and condemn myself after they shall have proved to me that the passages which I have cited ought to be understood differently from what I have done, then, O most excellent Elector, let your Highness be the first to pursue and chase me, let the university discard me, and load me with its anger. Nay, more, (and I call heaven and earth to witness,) let the Lord Jesus Christ reject and condemn me! The words which I speak are not dictated by vain presumption, but by immovable conviction. I am willing that the Lord God withdraw his grace from me, and that every creature of God refuse to countenance

me, if, when a better doctrine shall have been shown to me, I embrace it not.

“If, on account of the humbleness of my condition, they despise me, a poor paltry mendicant friar, and if they refuse to instruct me in the way of truth, let your Highness pray the legate to point out to you in writing wherein I have erred; and, if they refuse this favour even to your Highness, let them write their views either to his Imperial Majesty, or to some Archbishop of Germany. What ought I, what can I say more?

“Let your Highness listen to the voice of your honour and your conscience, and not send me to Rome. No man can command you to do it, for it is impossible I can be in safety at Rome. The pope himself is not in safety there. It would be to order you to betray Christian blood. They have paper, pens, and ink, and they have also notaries without number. It is easy for them to write, and show wherein and how I have erred. It will cost less to instruct me by writing while I am absent, than while present to accomplish my death by stratagem.

“I resign myself to exile. My enemies are so ensnaring me on all sides, that I can no where live in safety. In order that no evil may befall you on my account, I, in the name of God, abandon your territories; I will go wherever an almighty and merciful God wishes me to be. Let him do with me as seemeth to him good!

“Thus, then, most serene Elector, with veneration I bid you farewell. I commend you to Almighty God, and give you immortal thanks for all your kindness towards me. Whatever the people among whom I shall live in future, I will always remember you, and gratefully pray, without ceasing, for the happiness of you and yours. … I am still, thank God, full of joy, and I bless him that Christ his Son counts me worthy of suffering in so holy a cause. May he eternally guard your illustrious Highness! Amen!” This letter, so replete with truth, made a profound impression on the Elector. “He was shaken by a very eloquent letter,” says Maimbourg. He never would have thought of delivering an innocent man into the hands of Rome. Perhaps he would have asked Luther to remain for some time in concealment, but not even in appearance would he have yielded, in any way, to the menaces of the legate. He wrote to his counsellor Pfeffinger, who happened to be with the Emperor, to make him acquainted with the real state of matters, and beg him to request Rome either to put an end to the affair, or at least leave it to be decided in Germany by impartial judges.

Some days after the Elector replied to the legate:—“Since Doctor Martin appeared before you at Augsburg, you ought to be satisfied. We did not expect that without having convicted him you would have thought of constraining him to retract. None of the learned in our dominions have told us that the doctrine of Martin is impious, antichristian, and heretical.” The prince then refuses to send Luther to Rome, or banish him from his states. This letter, which was communicated to Luther, filled him with joy. “Good God!” wrote he to Spalatin, “with what joy I have read it and re-read it. I know what confidence may be put in these words, so admirable at once for vigour and moderation. I fear the Romans will not comprehend all that is meant by them, but they will at least comprehend that what they thought already finished is not even begun. Have the goodness to present my thanks to the prince. It is strange that he, (De Vio,) who not long ago was a mendicant monk like me, is not afraid to accost the most powerful princes without respect, to interpel, threaten, and command them, and treat them with inconceivable pride. Let him learn that the temporal power is of God, and that it is not permitted him to trample its glory under foot.”

Frederick, in answering the legate in a tone which he had not expected, had doubtless been encouraged by an address which he had received from the university of Wittemberg. This university had good reason for declaring in the doctor's favour, in as much as it was flourishing more and more, and eclipsing all the other schools. Crowds of students flocked from all parts of Germany to hear the extraordinary man whose lessons seemed to open a new era to religion and science. These youths who came from all the provinces stopped at the moment when they perceived the steeples of Wittemberg in the distance, and raising their hands to heaven, thanked God for making the light of truth shine on this town as formerly on Zion, and send its rays even to the remotest countries. A life and activity hitherto unknown animated the university. "They ply their studies here like ants," wrote Luther.2

CHAP. XI

Thoughts of Departure—Adieus to the Church—Critical Moment—Deliverance—Luther's Courage—Discontentment at Rome—Bull—Appeal to a Council.

Luther, thinking that he might soon be banished from Germany, employed himself in preparing the Acts of the Conference of Augsburg for publication. He wished these Acts to remain as evidence of the struggle which he had maintained with Rome. He saw the storm ready to burst, but feared it not. Day after day he expected the anathemas of Rome, and arranged and set every thing in order, that he might be ready when they arrived. "Having tucked up my coat, and girt my reins," said he, "I am ready to depart like Abraham; not knowing whither I shall go, or rather knowing well, since God is every where." He intended to leave a farewell letter behind him. "Have the boldness, then," wrote he to Spalatin, "to read the letter of a man cursed and excommunicated." His friends were in great fear and anxiety on his account, and begged him to enter himself prisoner in the hands of the Elector, in order that that prince might somewhere keep him in safe custody. His enemies could not understand what it was that gave him so much confidence. One day they were talking of him at the court of the Bishop of Brandenburg, and asking on what prop he could be leaning. "It must be in Erasmus," said they, "or Capito, or some other of the learned, that he confides." "No! no!" replied the bishop, "the pope would give himself very little trouble with such folks as these. His trust is in the university of Wittemberg and the Duke of Saxony." Thus both were ignorant of the fortress in which the Reformer had taken refuge.

Thoughts of departure flitted across Luther's mind. They arose not from fear, but from the foresight of continually recurring obstacles which the free profession of the truth must encounter in Germany. "If I remain here," said he, "the liberty of speaking and writing will, as to many things, be wrested from me. If I depart, I will freely unbosom the thoughts of my heart, and offer my life to Jesus Christ."

France was the country in which Luther hoped he would be able, untramelled, to announce the truth. The liberty which the doctors and university of Paris enjoyed seemed to him worthy of envy. He was, besides, agreed with them on many points. What would have happened had he been transported from Wittemberg to France? Would the Reformation have taken place there as it did in Germany? Would the power of Rome have been dethroned; and would France, which was destined to see the hierarchical principles of Rome, and the destructive principles of an infidel philosophy, long warring in its bosom, have become one great focus of gospel light? It is useless to indulge in vain conjectures on this subject; but perhaps Luther at Paris might have somewhat

changed the destinies of Europe and France.

Luther's soul was powerfully agitated. As he often preached at the town church in place of Simon Heyens Pontanus, pastor of Wittemberg, who was almost always sick, he thought it his duty, at all events, to take leave of a people to whom he had so often preached salvation. "I am," said he one day in the pulpit, "I am a precarious and uncertain preacher. How often already have I set out suddenly without bidding you farewell.… In case the same thing should happen again, and I not return, here receive my adieus." After adding a few words more, he thus meekly and modestly ended:—"I warn you, in fine, not to be alarmed though the papal censures let loose all their fury on me. Impute it not to the pope, and wish no ill either to him or any other mortal whatsoever, but commit the whole matter to God." The moment seemed to have at length arrived. The prince gave Luther to understand he was desirous of his removal to a distance from Wittemberg; and the wishes of the Elector were too sacred for him not to hasten to comply with them. He accordingly made preparations for his departure, without well knowing whither he should direct his steps. He wished, however, to have a last meeting with his friends, and for this purpose invited them to a farewell repast. Seated at table with them, he was still enjoying their delightful conversation, their tender and anxious friendship. A letter is brought to him.… It comes from the court. He opens and reads, and his heart sinks; it is a new order to depart. The prince asks why he is so long of setting out. His soul was filled with sadness. Still, however, he took courage, and raising his head and looking around on his guests, said firmly and joyfully, "Father and mother forsake me, but the Lord will take me up." There was nothing for it but to depart. His friends were deeply moved. What is to become of him? If Luther's protector rejects him, who will receive him? And the gospel, and the truth, and this admirable work …; all doubtless must fall with their illustrious witness. The Reformation apparently is hanging by a thread; and at the moment when Luther quits the walls of Wittemberg, will not the thread break? Luther and his friends spoke little. Stunned with the blow which was directed against their brother, they melt into tears. But some moments after a second message arrives, and Luther opens the letter, not doubting he is to find a renewal of the summons to depart. But, O powerful hand of the Lord! for this time he is saved. The whole aspect is changed. "As the new envoy of the pope hopes that every thing may be arranged by means of a conference, remain still."2 So says the letter. How important an hour this was; and who can say what might have happened if Luther, who was always in haste to obey the will of his prince, had quitted Wittemberg immediately after the first message? Never were Luther and the work of the Reformation at a lower ebb than at this moment. Their destinies seemed to be decided; but an instant sufficed to change them. Arrived at the lowest point in his career, the doctor of Wittemberg rapidly reascended; and thenceforward his influence ceased not to increase. In the language of a prophet, "The Eternal commands, and his servants descend into the depths; again they mount up to heaven."

Spalatin having, by order of Frederick, invited Luther to Lichtenberg to have an interview with him, they had a long conversation on the situation of affairs. "If the censures of Rome arrive," said Luther, "I certainly will not remain at Wittemberg." "Beware," "of being too precipitate with your journey to France," replied Spalatin, who, left telling him to wait till he heard from him. "Only recommend my soul to Christ," said Luther to his friends. "I see that my adversaries are strong in their resolution to destroy me, but at the same time Christ strengthens me in my resolution not to yield to them."4

Luther at this time published the “Acts of the Conference at Augsburg.” Spalatin, on the part of the Elector, had written him not to do it; but it was too late. After the publication had taken place the prince approved of it. “Great God!” said Luther in the preface, “what new, what astonishing crime, to seek light and truth! And more especially to seek them in the Church, in other words, in the kingdom of truth.” In a letter to Link he says, “I send you my Acts. They are more cutting, doubtless, than the legate expected; but my pen is ready to give birth to far greater things. I know not myself whence those thoughts come. In my opinion the affair is not even commenced; so far are the grandees of Rome from being entitled to hope it is ended. I will send you what I have written, in order that you may see whether I have divined well in thinking that the Antichrist of which the Apostle Paul speaks is now reigning in the court of Rome. I believe I am able to demonstrate that it is at this day worse than the very Turks.”

Ominous rumours reached Luther from all quarters. One of his friends wrote to him, that the new envoy of Rome had received orders to seize him, and deliver him up to the pope. Another told him, that in travelling he had fallen in with a courtier, and the conversation having turned on the affairs of Germany, the courtier declared that he had come under an obligation to deliver Luther into the hands of the sovereign pontiff. “But,” wrote the Reformer, “the more their fury and violence increase, the less I tremble.” At Rome there was great dissatisfaction with Cajetan. The chagrin which they felt at the failure of the affair at first turned upon him. The Roman courtiers thought themselves entitled to reproach him with a want of that prudence and finesse which, if they are to be believed, constitute the first quality of a legate, and with having failed on so important an occasion, to give pliancy to his scholastic theology. He is wholly to blame, said they. His lumbering pedantry has spoiled all. Of what use was it to irritate Luther by insults and menaces, instead of gaining him over by the promise of a good bishopric, or even of a Cardinal’s hat. These hirelings judged the Reformer by themselves. However, it was necessary to repair this blunder. On the one hand, Rome must give her decision, and, on the other, due court must be paid to the Elector, who might be of great use in the election of an emperor, an event which must shortly take place. As it was impossible for Roman ecclesiastics to suspect what constituted the strength and courage of Luther, they imagined that the Elector was much more implicated in the affair than he really was. The pope, therefore, resolved to follow another line of conduct. He caused his legate in Germany to publish a bull, confirming the doctrine of indulgences in the very points in which they were attacked, but without mentioning either the Elector or Luther. As the Reformer had always expressed his readiness to submit to the decision of the Roman Church, the pope thought that he must now either keep his word, or stand openly convicted as a disturber of the peace of the Church, and a contemner of the holy Apostolic See. In either case it seemed that the pope must gain. But nothing is gained by obstinately opposing the truth. In vain had the pope threatened to excommunicate every man who should teach otherwise than he ordered; the light was not arrested by such orders. The wise plan would have been to curb the pretensions of the venders of indulgences. This decree of Rome was therefore a new blunder. By legalising clamant errors, it irritated all the wise, and made it impossible for Luther to return. “It was thought,” says a Roman Catholic historian, a great enemy of the Reformation, “that this bull had been made solely for the interest of the pope and the mendicants, who began to find that nobody would give anything for their indulgences.” The Cardinal de Vio published the bull at Lintz, in Austria, on the 13th December, 1518, but Luther had already placed himself beyond its reach. On the 28th November, in the chapel of Corpus Christi at Wittemberg, he had appealed from the pope to a general council

of the Church. He foresaw the storm which was gathering around him, and he knew that God alone could avert it. Still he did as duty called him. He must, no doubt, quit Wittemberg (were it only for the sake of the Elector) as soon as the Roman anathema should arrive; but he was unwilling to quit Saxony and Germany without a strong protestation. This he accordingly drew up; and, in order that it might be ready for circulation the moment the furies of Rome, as he expresses it, should reach him, he caused it to be printed, under the express condition that the bookseller should deposit all the copies in his custody. But the bookseller, in his eagerness for gain, sold almost the whole, while Luther was quietly waiting to receive them. He felt annoyed, but the thing was done. This bold protestation spread every where. In it Luther declared anew that he had no intention to say any thing against the Holy Church, or the authority of the Apostolic See, or the pope well advised. “But,” continues he, “considering that the pope, who is the vicar of God upon earth, may, like any other vicar, err, sin, or lie, and that the appeal to a general council is the only safeguard against unjust proceedings which it is impossible to resist, I feel myself obliged to have recourse to it.”

Here, then, we see the Reformation launched on a new course. It is no longer made to depend on the pope and his decisions, but on an universal council. Luther addresses the whole Church, and the voice which proceeds from the chapel of Corpus Christi, must reach the whole members of Christ’s flock. There is no want of courage in the Reformer, and here he gives a new proof of it. Will God fail him? The answer will be found in the different phases of the Reformation which are still to be exhibited to our view.

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CHAP. XII

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CHAP. XIV

How Truth Triumphs—Society at Einsidlen—Request to the Bishops—To the Confederates—The Men of Einsidlen Separate—A Scene in a Convent—A Dinner by Myconius—The Strength of the Reformers—Effect of the Petitions to Lucerne—The Council of the Diet—Haller at the Town-House—Friburg—Destitution of Oswald—Zuinglius comforts him—Oswald quits Lucerne—First Severity of the Diet—Consternation of the Brothers of Zuinglius—His Resolution—The Future—The Prayer of Zuinglius.

BOOK FIFTH The Discussion of Leipsic, 1519

CHAP. I

Luther's Dangers—God saves Luther—The Pope sends a Chamberlain—The Legate's Journey—Briefs of Rome—Circumstances favourable to the Reformation—Miltitz with Spalatin—Tezel's Terror—Caresses of Miltitz—A Recantation demanded—Luther refuses, but offers to be silent—Agreement between Luther and the Nuncio—The Legate's Embrace—Tezel overwhelmed by the Legate—Luther to the Pope—Nature of the Reformation—Luther against

Separation—De Vio and Miltitz at Trèves—Luther's cause extends in different countries—Luther's writings the commencement of the Reformation.

Dangers had gathered round Luther and the Reformation. The doctor of Wittemberg's appeal to a General Council was a new attack on papal authority. By a bull of Pius II, the greater excommunication had been denounced even against emperors who should dare to incur the guilt of such a revolt. Frederick of Saxony, as yet imperfectly confirmed in evangelical doctrine, was prepared to send Luther away from his states; and hence a new message from Leo might have thrown the Reformer among strangers, who would be afraid to compromise themselves by receiving a monk whom Rome had anathematised. And even should the sword of some noble be drawn in his defence, mere knights, unable to cope with the powerful princes of Germany, must soon have succumbed in the perilous enterprise. But at the moment when all the courtiers of Leo X were urging him to rigorous measures, and when one blow more might have placed his adversary in his hands, the pope suddenly changed his course to one of conciliation and apparent mildness. It may be said, no doubt, that he was under a delusion as to the Elector's feelings, and deemed them more decided in Luther's favour than they really were. It may also be admitted that the public voice and the spirit of the age, powers which at this time were altogether new, seemed to throw an impregnable barrier around the Reformer. It may even be supposed, with one of Leo's biographers,2 that he followed the promptings of his mind and heart which inclined to gentleness and moderation. Still this new mode of action on the part of Rome, at such a moment, is so extraordinary that it is impossible not to recognise in it a higher and mightier hand.

There was then at the Court of Rome a Saxon noble who was chamberlain to the pope and canon of Mentz, Trèves, and Meissen. He had turned his talents to advantage. As he boasted of being, in some degree, allied to the Saxon princes, the Roman courtiers sometimes designated him by the title of Duke of Saxony. In Italy he made an absurd display of his German nobility, while in Germany he aped the manners and polish of the Italians. He was given to wine—a vice which his residence at the Court of Rome had increased. Still the Roman courtiers hoped great things from him. His German extraction—his insinuating address—and his ability in negotiation—all led them to expect that Charles de Miltitz (this was his name) would, by his prudence, succeed in arresting the mighty revolution which was threatening to shake the world.

It was of importance to conceal the true object of the chamberlain's mission, and in this there was no difficulty. Four years before, the pious Elector had applied to the pope for the golden rose. This rose, the fairest of flowers, was emblematic of the body of Jesus Christ, and being annually consecrated by the sovereign pontiff, was presented to one of the first princes in Europe. On this occasion it was resolved to send it to the Elector. Miltitz set out with a commission to examine into the state of affairs, and to gain over the Elector's counsellors, Spalatin and Pfeffinger, for whom he had special letters. Rome hoped that, by securing the favour of the persons about the prince, she would soon become mistress of her formidable adversary. The new legate, who arrived in Germany in December 1518, was careful as he came along to ascertain the state of public opinion. To his great astonishment he observed, at every place where he stopped, that the majority of the inhabitants were friendly to the Reformation, and spoke of Luther with enthusiasm. For one person favourable to the pope, there were three favourable to the Reformer.2 Luther has preserved an anecdote of the journey—"What think you of the see (seat) of Rome?" frequently asked the legate at the mistresses of the inns and their maidservants. One day, one of these poor

women, with great simplicity, replied—“How can we know what kind of seats you have at Rome, and whether they are of wood or stone?” The mere rumour of the new legate’s arrival filled the Elector’s court, the university, the town of Wittemberg, and all Saxony, with suspicion and distrust. “Thank God,” wrote Melancthon, in alarm, “Martin still breathes.” It was confidently stated that the Roman chamberlain had received orders to possess himself of Luther’s person, by force or fraud; and the doctor was advised, on all hands, to be on his guard against the stratagems of Miltitz. “His object in coming,” said they, “is to seize you and give you up to the pope. Persons worthy of credit have seen the briefs of which he is the bearer.” “I await the will of God,” replied Luther.5 In fact, Miltitz brought letters addressed to the Elector and his counsellors, to the bishops and to the burgomaster of Wittemberg. He was also provided with seventy apostolic briefs. Should the flattery and the favours of Rome attain their object, and Frederick deliver Luther into her hands, these seventy briefs were to serve as a kind of passports. He was to produce and post up one of them in each of the towns through which he had to pass, and hoped he might thus succeed in dragging his prisoner, without opposition, all the way to Rome. The pope seemed to have taken every precaution. The electoral court knew not well what course to take. Violence would have been resisted, but the difficulty was to oppose the chief of Christianity, when speaking with so much mildness, and apparently with so much reason. Would it not be the best plan, it was said, to place Luther somewhere in concealment until the storm was over?… An unexpected event relieved Luther, the Elector, and the Reformation, from this difficult situation. The aspect of affairs suddenly changed. On the 12th of January, 1519, Maximilian, the Emperor of Germany, died, and Frederick of Saxony, agreeably to the Germanic constitution, became regent of the empire. From this time the Elector feared not the schemes of nuncios, while new interests began to engross the court of Rome—interests which, obliging her to be chary of giving offence to Frederick, arrested the blow which Miltitz and De Vio were undoubtedly meditating. The pope earnestly desired to prevent Charles of Austria, already King of Naples, from ascending the imperial throne. A neighbouring King appeared to him more formidable than a German monk; and in his anxiety to secure the Elector, who might be of essential service to him in the matter, he resolved to give some respite to the monk that he might be the better able to oppose the king Both, however, advanced in spite of him. In addition to the change thus produced in Leo, there was another circumstance which tended to avert the storm impending over the Reformation. The death of the emperor was immediately followed by political commotions. In the south of the empire the Swabian confederation sought to punish Ulric of Wurtemberg, for his infidelity to it, while in the south, the Bishop of Hildesheim proceeded, sword in hand, to invade the bishopric of Minden, and the territories of the Duke of Brunswick. How could men in power, amid such disturbances, attach any importance to a dispute relating to the remission of sins? But, above all, the reputation for wisdom enjoyed by the Elector, now regent of the empire, and the protection which he gave to the new teachers, were made subservient by Providence to the progress of the Reformation. “The tempest,” says Luther, intermitted its fury, and papal excommunication began to fall into contempt. The gospel, under the shade of the Elector’s regency, spread far and wide, and in this way great damage was sustained by the papacy.”

Moreover, the severest prohibitions were naturally mitigated during an interregnum. In every thing there was more freedom and greater facility of action. Liberty which began to shed its rays on the infant Reformation, rapidly developed the still tender plant, and any one might have been able to predict how favourable political freedom would prove to the progress of evangelical Christianity.

Miltitz, having arrived in Saxony before the death of Maximilian, lost no time in visiting his old friend Spalatin; but no sooner did he begin his complaint against Luther than the chaplain made an attack upon Tezel, acquainting the nuncio with the lies and blasphemies of the vender of indulgences, and assuring him that all Germany blamed the Dominican for the division which was rending the Church.

Miltitz was taken by surprise. Instead of accuser he had become the accused. Turning all his wrath upon Tezel, he summoned him to appear at Altenburg and give an account of his conduct. The Dominican, as great a coward as a bully, and afraid of the people whom he had provoked by his impostures, had ceased his peregrinations over town and country, and was living in retirement in the college of St. Paul. He grew pale on receiving the letter of Miltitz. Even Rome is abandoning, threatening, and condemning him—is insisting on dragging him from the only asylum in which he feels himself in safety, and exposing him to the fury of his enemies … Tezel refused to obey the nuncio's summons. "Assuredly," wrote he to Miltitz, on the 31st of December, 1518, "I would not regard the fatigues of the journey if I could leave Leipsic without endangering my life; but the Augustin, Martin Luther, has so stirred up men in power, and incensed them against me that I am not in safety any where. A great number of Luther's partizans have conspired my death, and therefore I cannot possibly come to you." There was a striking contrast between the two men, the one of whom was then living in the college of St. Paul at Leipsic, and the other in the cloister of the Augustins at Wittemberg. In presence of danger the servant of God displayed intrepid courage—the servant of men despicable cowardice.

Miltitz had orders, in the first instance, to employ the arms of persuasion; and it was only in the event of failure that he was to produce his seventy briefs, and at the same time endeavour, by all the favours of Rome, to induce the Elector to put down Luther. He accordingly expressed a desire to have an interview with the Reformer. Their common friend, Spalatin, offered his house for this purpose, and Luther left Wittemberg on the 2nd or 3rd of January to repair to Altenburg. At this interview Miltitz exhausted all the address of a diplomatist and a Roman courtier. The moment Luther arrived the nuncio approached him with great demonstrations of friendship. "O," thought Luther, "how completely his violence is turned into gentleness! This new Saul came into Germany provided with more than seventy apostolic briefs to carry me alive and in chains to murderous Rome, but the Lord has cast him down on the way."

"Dear Martin," said the pope's chamberlain to him in a coaxing tone, "I thought you were an old theologian sitting quietly behind your stove, and stuffed with theological crotchets; but I see that you are still young, and in the full vigour of life. Do you know," continued he in a more serious tone, "that you have stirred up the whole world against the pope and attached it to yourself?"2 Miltitz was aware that to flatter men's pride is the most effectual mode of seducing them; but he knew not the man with whom he had to do. "Had I an army of twenty-five thousand men," added he, "assuredly I would not undertake to seize you and carry you off to Rome." Rome, notwithstanding of her power, felt herself feeble in presence of a poor monk, and the monk felt strong in presence of Rome. "God," said Luther, "arrests the billows of the ocean at the shore, and arrests them … by the sand."4 The nuncio, thinking he had thus prepared the mind of his opponent, continued as follows: "Do you yourself bind up the wound which you have inflicted on the Church, and which you alone can cure." "Beware," added he, letting a few tears fall, "beware of raising a tempest, which would bring ruin on Christendom." He then began gradually to insinuate that a recantation

was the only remedy for the evil; but he at the same time softened the offensiveness of the term by giving Luther to understand that he had the highest esteem for him, and by expressing his indignation at Tezel. The net was laid by a skilful hand, and how was it possible to avoid being taken in it? “Had the Archbishop of Mentz spoken thus to me at the outset,” said the Reformer afterwards, “this affair would not have made so much noise.”6

Luther then replied. With calmness, but also with dignity and force, he stated the just grievances of the Church; expressed all the indignation he felt at the Archbishop of Mentz, and nobly complained of the unworthy treatment he had received from Rome, notwithstanding of the purity of his intentions. Miltitz, though he had not expected this firm language, was able, however, to conceal his wrath.

Luther resumed, “I offer to be silent in future as to these matters, and let the affair die out of itself, provided my opponents also are silent; but if they continue to attack me, a petty quarrel will soon beget a serious combat. My armour is quite ready. I will do still more,” added he, after a momentary pause, “I will write his Holiness, acknowledging that I have been somewhat too violent, and declaring that it was as a faithful child of the Church I combated harangues which subjected her to mockery and insult from the people. I even consent to publish a document in which I will request all who read my books not to see any thing in them adverse to the Roman Church, but to remain subject to her. Yes: I am disposed to do every thing and bear every thing; but as to retractation never expect it from me.”

Luther’s decided tone convinced Miltitz that the wisest course was to appear satisfied with the promise which the Reformer had just made, and he merely proposed that an archbishop should be appointed arbiter to decide certain points which might come under discussion. “Be it so,” said Luther, “but I am much afraid that the pope will not consent to have a judge. In that case no more will I accept the judgment of the pope, and then the strife will begin anew. The pope will give out the text, and I will make the commentary.”

Thus terminated the first interview between Luther and Miltitz. They had a second, in which the truce, or rather peace, was signed. Luther immediately informed the Elector of what had passed. “Most serene prince and very gracious lord,” wrote he, “I hasten very humbly to inform your Electoral Highness, that Charles de Miltitz and I have at length agreed, and have terminated the affair by means of the two following articles:—

“1st, Both parties are forbidden to preach or write, or to do any thing further in reference to the dispute which has arisen.

“2ndly, Miltitz will immediately acquaint the holy father with the state of matters. His holiness will order an enlightened bishop to enquire into the affair, and specify the erroneous articles which I am required to retract. If I am found to be in error, I will retract willingly, and never more do any thing that may be prejudicial to the honour or the authority of the holy Roman Church.” The agreement being thus made, Miltitz appeared quite delighted. “For a hundred years,” exclaimed he, “no affair has given the cardinals and Roman courtiers more anxiety than this. They would have given ten thousand ducats sooner than consent to its longer continuance.” The chamberlain of the pope made a great show of feeling before the monk of Wittemberg. Sometimes he expressed joy, at other times shed tears. This display of sensibility made little impression on the

Reformer, but he refrained from showing what he thought of it. “I looked as if I did not understand what we meant by these crocodile tears,” said he. The crocodile is said to weep when it cannot seize its prey.

Luther having accepted an invitation to supper from Miltitz, the host laid aside the stiffness attributed to his office, while Luther gave full scope to his natural gaiety. It was a joyous repast, and when the parting hour arrived, the legate took the heretical doctor in his arms and kissed him.3 “A Judas kiss,” thought Luther, “I pretended,” wrote he to Staupitz, “not to comprehend all these Italian manners.” Was this then to be in truth the kiss of reconciliation between Rome and the dawning Reformation? Miltitz hoped so, and rejoiced at it, for he had a nearer view than the courtiers of Rome of the fearful results which the Reformation might produce in regard to the papacy. If Luther and his opponents are silent, said he to himself, the dispute will be ended, and Rome by availing herself of favourable circumstances will regain all her ancient influence. It thus seemed that the debate was drawing to a close: Rome had stretched out her arms and Luther had apparently thrown himself into them; but the Reformation was the work not of man but of God. The error of Rome consisted in seeing the quarrel of a monk where she ought to have seen an awakening of the Church. The revival of Christendom was not to be arrested by the kisses of a pope’s chamberlain.

Miltitz, in fulfilment of the agreement which he had just concluded, proceeded from Altenburg to Leipsic, where Tezel was residing. There was no occasion to shut Tezel’s month, for, sooner than speak, he would, if it had been possible, have hidden himself in the bowels of the earth; but the nuncio was determined to discharge his wrath upon him. Immediately on his arrival at Leipsic Miltitz summoned the unhappy Tezel before him, loaded him with reproaches, accused him of being the author of the whole mischief, and threatened him with the pope’s displeasure. Nor was this all: the agent of the house of Fugger, who was then at Leipsic, was confronted with him. Miltitz laid before the Dominican the accounts of that house, together with papers which he himself had signed, and proved that he had squandered or stolen considerable sums. The poor wretch, who had stickled at nothing in his day of glory, was overwhelmed by the justice of these accusations: despair seized him, his health gave way, and he knew not where to hide his shame. Luther heard of the miserable condition of his old enemy, and was the only person who felt for him. In a letter to Spalatin he says, “I pity Tezel.” Nor did he confine himself to such expressions. He had hated not the man but his misconduct, and, at the moment when Rome was pouring out her wrath upon him, wrote him in the most consolatory terms. But all was to no purpose. Tezel, stung by remorse, alarmed at the reproaches of his best friends, and dreading the anger of the pope, not long after died miserably, and as was supposed of a broken heart.2 Luther, in fulfilment of his promises to Miltitz, on the 3rd of March wrote the following letter to the pope:—

“Blessed Father! will your Blessedness deign to turn your paternal ears, which are like those of Christ himself, towards your poor sheep and kindly listen to its bleat. What shall I do, Most Holy Father! I am unable to bear the fierceness of your anger, and know not how to escape from it. I am asked to retract, and would hasten to do so could it lead to the end which is proposed by it. But, owing to the persecutions of my enemies, my writings have been circulated far and wide, and are too deeply engraven on men’s hearts to be effaced. A recantation would only add to the dishonour of the Church of Rome, and raise an universal cry of accusation against her. Most Holy Father! I declare before God and all his creatures, that I have never wished, and do not now wish, either by

force or guile, to attack the authority of the Roman Church or of your Holiness. I acknowledge that there is nothing in heaven or on the earth which ought to be put above this Church, unless it be Jesus Christ the Lord of all."

These words might seem strange and even reprehensible in the mouth of Luther, did we not reflect that the light did not break in upon him all at once, but by slow and progressive steps. They show, and this is very important, that the Reformation was not simply an opposition to the papacy. Its accomplishment was not effected by warring against this or that form, or by means of this or that negative tendency. Opposition to the pope was only one of its secondary features. Its creating principle was a new life, a positive doctrine—"Jesus Christ, the Lord of all and paramount to all—to Rome herself," as Luther says in the conclusion of his letter. To this principle the revolution of the 16th century is truly to be ascribed.

It is probable that at an earlier period a letter from the monk of Wittemberg, positively refusing to retract, would not have been allowed by the pope to pass without animadversion. But Maximilian was dead, the topic of engrossing interest was the election of his successor, and amid the political intrigues which then agitated the pontifical city, Luther's letter was overlooked. The Reformer was employing his time to better purpose than his powerful antagonist. While Leo X, engrossed by his interests as a temporal prince, was straining every nerve to prevent a dreaded neighbour from reaching the Imperial throne, Luther was daily growing in knowledge and in faith. He studied the Decretals of the popes, and made discoveries which greatly modified his views. Writing Spalatin he says, "I am reading the Decretals of the popes, and, let me say it in your ear, I know not whether the pope is Antichrist himself or only his apostle; to such a degree in these Decretals is Christ outraged and crucified."

Still he continued to respect the ancient Church of Rome, and had no thought of separating from her. "Let the Roman Church," said he in the explanation which he had promised Miltitz to publish, "be honoured of God above all others. On this point there cannot be a doubt. St. Peter, St. Paul, forty-six popes, and several hundred thousand martyrs, have shed their blood in her bosom, and there vanquished hell and the world, so that the eye of God specially rests upon her. Although every thing about her is now in a very sad condition that is no ground for separating from her. On the contrary the worse things are, the more firmly we should cling to her. Our separation is not the means by which she can be improved. We must not abandon God because there is a devil; nor the children of God who are still at Rome because the majority are wicked. No sin, no wickedness, can justify us in destroying charity or violating unity; for charity can do all things, and nothing is difficult to unity."

It was not Luther that separated from Rome, but Rome that separated from Luther, and by so doing rejected the ancient catholic faith of which he was then the representative. Nor was it Luther that deprived Rome of her power and compelled her bishop to descend from an usurped throne. The doctrines which he announced, the doctrine of the Apostles, again divinely proclaimed throughout the Church with great force and admirable purity, alone could prevail against a power by which the Church had for ages been enslaved.

These declarations, which Luther published at the end of February, did not fully satisfy Miltitz and De Vio. These two vultures, after both missing their prey, had retired within the ancient walls of Trèves. There, seconded by the Prince-archbishop, they hoped jointly to accomplish the object in

which they had failed individually. The two nuncios were aware that nothing more was to be expected from Frederick, now invested with supreme power in the empire. They saw that Luther persisted in his refusal of retractation. The only plan, therefore, was to withdraw the heretical monk from the protection of the Elector, and entice him into their own neighbourhood. If the Reformer were once in Trèves, in a state subject to a prince of the Church, he would be dexterous indeed if he got away without giving full satisfaction to the sovereign pontiff. The scheme was immediately proceeded with. “Luther,” said Miltitz to the Elector-archbishop of Trèves, “has accepted your Grace as arbiter; call him therefore before you.” The Elector of Trèves accordingly (3rd May) wrote to the Elector of Saxony, and requested him to send Luther. De Vio, and afterwards Miltitz himself, also wrote, announcing that the rose of gold had arrived at Augsburg, at the house of Fugger. Now, thought they, is the moment to strike the decisive blow. But things were changed, and neither Frederick nor Luther felt alarmed. The Elector, understanding his new position, had no longer any fear of the pope and far less of his servants. The Reformer, seeing Miltitz and De Vio in concert, had some idea of the fate which awaited him if he complied with their invitation. “Everywhere,” says he, “on all hands, and in all ways, they seek my life.” Besides, he had requested the pope to decide; but the pope, engrossed with crowns and intrigues, had given no answer. Luther thus wrote to Miltitz: “How could I undertake the journey, without an order from Rome, amid the troubles which shake the empire? How could I face so many dangers and subject myself to so much expence, I who am the poorest of men?” The Elector of Trèves, a man of wisdom and moderation, and a friend of Frederick, was willing to meet his views. He had no desire, moreover, to involve himself in the affair without being positively called upon. He therefore agreed with the Elector of Saxony to defer the investigation till the next diet. Two years elapsed before this diet assembled at Worms.

While the hand of Providence successfully warded off all the dangers which threatened him, Luther was boldly advancing to a result of which he was not himself aware. His reputation was extending, the cause of truth was gaining strength, and the number of the students of Wittemberg, among whom were the most distinguished young men in Germany, rapidly increased. “Our town,” wrote Luther, “can scarcely contain all who come to it;” and on another occasion, “The number of students increases out of measure, like a stream overflowing its banks.” But Germany was no longer the only country in which the voice of the Reformer was heard. It had passed the frontiers of the empire, and begun to shake the foundations of the Roman power in the different states of Christendom. Frobenius, the famous printer of Bâle, had published the collected Works of Luther, which were rapidly disposed of. At Bâle even the bishop applauded Luther; and the Cardinal of Sion, after reading his work, exclaimed somewhat ironically, and punning on his name, “O, Luther, thou art a true Luther!” (a true purifier, Lauterer.)

Erasmus was at Louvain when Luther’s works arrived in the Netherlands. The prior of the Augustins of Antwerp, who had studied at Wittemberg, and according to the testimony of Erasmus, held true primitive Christianity, and many other Belgians besides, read them with avidity. “But,” says the scholar of Rotterdam, “those who sought only their own interest, and entertained the people with old wives’ fables, gave full vent to their grovelling fanaticism.” “It is not in my power,” says Erasmus, in a letter to Luther, “to describe the emotions, the truly tragic scenes, which your writings have produced.

Frobenius sent six hundred copies of the works into France and Spain. They were publicly sold at Paris, and, as far as appears, the doctors of Sorbonne then read them with approbation. “It was time,” said several of them, “that those engaged in the study of the Holy Scriptures should speak thus freely.” In England the Works were received with still greater eagerness. Spanish merchants at Antwerp caused them to be translated into their native tongue, and sent them into Spain. “Assuredly,” says Pallavicini, “these merchants were of Moorish blood.”

Calvi, a learned bookseller of Pavia, carried a great number of copies of the works into Italy, and circulated them in all the transalpine towns. This learned man was animated not by a love of gain but a desire to contribute to the revival of piety. The vigour with which Luther maintained the cause of godliness filled him with joy. “All the learned of Italy,” exclaimed he, “will concur with me, and we will see you celebrated in stanzas composed by our most distinguished poets.”

Frobenius, in transmitting a copy of the publication to Luther, told him all these gladdening news, and added, “I have disposed of all the copies except ten, and never had so good a return.” Other letters also informed Luther of the joy produced by his works. “I am glad,” says he, “that the truth gives so much pleasure, although she speaks with little learning, and in a style so barbarous.”

Such was the commencement of the revival in the different countries of Europe. In all countries, if we except Switzerland, and even France where the gospel had previously been heard, the arrival of Luther’s writings forms the first page in the history of the Reformation. A printer of Bâle diffused these first germs of the truth. At the moment when the Roman pontiff entertained hopes of suppressing the work in Germany, it began in France, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, England, and Switzerland; and now, even should Rome hew down the original trunk, what would it avail? The seeds are already diffused over every soil.

CHAP. II The War seems ended in Germany—Eck Revives the Contest—Debate between Eck and Carlstadt—The Question of the Pope—Luther Replies—Alarm of Luther’s Friends—Luther’s courage—Truth triumphs single-handed—Refusal of Duke George—Delight of Mosellanus and Fears of Erasmus.

While the combat was only beginning beyond the limits of the empire it seemed to him almost ceased within it. The most blustering soldiers of Rome, the Franciscan monks of Jûterbock, after having imprudently attacked Luther, had, after a vigorous rejoinder from the Reformer, hastened to resume silence. The partisans of the pope were quiet; and Tezel was unfit for service. Luther’s friends conjured him not to persist in the contest, and he had promised to comply. The theses were beginning to be forgotten. By this perfidious peace the eloquent tongue of the Reformer was completely paralysed; and the Reformation seemed to be arrested. “But,” says Luther afterwards, when speaking of this period, “men were imagining vain things, for the Lord had arisen to judge the nations.” “God,” says he in another place, “does not lead but urges and hurries me along. I am not my own master. I would fain be at rest, but am precipitated into the midst of tumult and revolution.”3 The person who renewed the contest was Eck the schoolman, Luther’s old friend, and the author of the Obelisks. He was sincerely attached to the papacy, but seems to have been devoid of genuine religious sentiment, and to have belonged to a class of men, at all times too numerous, who value learning, and even theology and religion, merely as a means of gaining a name in the world. Vain glory lurks under the priest’s cassock as well as the soldier’s helmet. Eck had studied the art of disputation according to the scholastic rules, and was an acknowledged

master in this species of warfare. While the knights of the middle ages, and the warriors at the period of the Reformation, sought glory in tournaments, the schoolmen sought it in the syllogistic disputations, which were often exhibited in universities. Eck, who was full of himself, stood high in his own opinion, and was proud of his talents, of the popularity of his cause, and the trophies which he had won in eight universities in Hungary, Lombardy, and Germany, eagerly longed for an opportunity of displaying his power and dexterity in debate with the Reformer. He had spared nothing to secure the reputation of being one of the most celebrated scholars of the age. He was ever seeking to stir up new discussions, to produce a sensation, and by means of his exploits procure access to all the enjoyments of life. A tour which he made in Italy had, by his own account been only a series of triumphs. The most learned of the learned had been constrained to subscribe to his theses. A practised bravado, he fixed his eyes on a new field of battle, where he thought himself secure of victory. That little monk, who had grown up all at once into a giant, that Luther, whom no one had hitherto been able to vanquish, offended his pride, and excited his jealousy. It might be that Eck, in seeking his own glory, might destroy Rome … but scholastic vanity was not to be arrested by any such consideration. Theologians, as well as princes, have repeatedly sacrificed the general interest to their individual glory. Let us attend to the circumstances which gave the doctor of Ingolstadt an opportunity of entering the lists with his troublesome rival. The zealous but too ardent Carlstadt was still of one mind with Luther—the special bond of union between them being their attachment to the doctrine of grace, and their admiration of St. Augustine. Carlstadt, who was of an enthusiastic temperament, and possessed little prudence, was not a man to be arrested by the address and policy of a Miltitz. In opposition to the Obelisks of Dr. Eck, he had published theses in which he defended Luther and their common faith. Eck had replied, and Carlstadt, determined not to leave him the last word, had rejoined. The combat grew warm. Eck, eager to avail himself of so favourable an opportunity, had thrown down the gauntlet; and the impetuous Carlstadt had taken it up. God employed the passions of these two men to accomplish his designs. Though Luther had taken no part in these debates, he was destined to be the hero of the fight. There are men whom the force of circumstances always brings upon the scene. Leipsic was fixed upon, and hence the origin of the celebrated discussion which bears its name.

Eck cared little about combating with Carlstadt, and even vanquishing him. Luther was the opponent whom he had in view. He accordingly employed every means to bring him into the field; and with this view published thirteen theses, directed against the leading doctrines which had been espoused by the Reformer. The thirteenth was in these terms:—“We deny that the Roman Church was not superior to other Churches before the time of Pope Sylvester; and we acknowledge at all times, that he who has occupied the see of St. Peter and professed his faith,2 is the successor of St. Peter and the vicar of Jesus Christ.” Sylvester lived in the time of Constantine the Great; and hence Eck, in this thesis, denied that the primacy which Rome enjoyed was conferred on her by that emperor.

Luther, whose consent to remain silent had not been given without reluctance, was strongly excited when he read these propositions. He saw that he was the person aimed at, and felt that he could not, with honour, evade the contest. “This man,” said he, “names Carlstadt as his antagonist, and at the same time makes his assault upon me. But God reigns, and knows what result he designs to bring out of this tragedy. The question is not between Dr. Eck and me. God’s purpose

will be accomplished. Thanks to Eck, this affair, which hitherto has been mere sport, will at length become serious, and give a fatal blow to the tyranny of Rome and the Roman Pontiff."

Rome herself broke the agreement. She did more; when she renewed the signal for battle, she directed it to a point which Luther had not previously attacked. The subject which Dr. Eck singled out for his antagonists was the primacy of the pope. In thus following the dangerous example which Tezel had given, Rome invited the blows of the champion; and if she left her mangied members on the arena, she had herself to blame for the punishment inflicted by his mighty arm. The pontifical supremacy being once overthrown, the whole of the Roman platform fell to pieces. Hence the papacy was in imminent peril; and yet neither Miltitz nor Cajetan took any steps to prevent this new contest. Did they imagine that the Reformation would be vanquished, or were they smitten with that blindness by which the ruin of the mighty is accomplished?

Luther, who, by his long silence, had given an example of rare moderation, boldly met the challenge of his antagonist, whose theses he immediately opposed by counter theses. The last was in these terms:—"The primacy of the Church of Rome is defended by means of miserable decretals of the Roman pontiffs, composed within the last four hundred years; whereas this primacy is contradicted by the authentic history of eleven centuries, the declarations of Holy Scripture, and the canons of the Council of Nice, which is the purest of all Councils." At the same time Luther thus wrote to the Elector:—"God knows it was my firm determination to be silent; and I rejoiced to see the game at length brought to a close. So faithfully have I observed the paction concluded with the pope's commissioner, that I did not reply to Sylvester Prierias, notwithstanding of the taunts of adversaries and the counsels of friends. But now Dr. Eck attacks me, and not only me, but the whole University of Wittemberg besides. I cannot allow it to be thus covered with obloquy." At the same time Luther wrote to Carlstadt, "I am unwilling, excellent Andrew, that you should engage in this quarrel, since I am the person aimed at." "I will gladly lay aside my serious labours and enter into the sports of these flatterers of the Roman pontiff." Then apostrophising his adversary with disdain, and calling from Wittemberg to Ingolstadt, he exclaims—"Now, then, my dear Eck, be courageous, and gird thy sword upon thy thigh, thou mighty man.4 Having failed to please you as mediator, perhaps I will please you better as antagonist. Not that I have any thought of vanquishing you, but after all the trophies which you have gained in Hungary, Lombardy, and Bavaria, (at least if we are to take your account for it,) I will give you an opportunity of acquiring the name of the conqueror of Saxony and Misnia, so that you will be for ever saluted by the glorious title of Augustus."

All Luther's friends did not share his courage, for up to this hour none had been able to withstand the sophistry of Dr. Eck. But what alarmed them most was the subject of dispute—the primacy of the pope!… How does the poor monk of Wittemberg dare to encounter this giant who for ages has crushed all his enemies? The courtiers of the Elector begin to tremble. Spalatin the confidant of the prince, and intimate friend of the Reformer, is full of anxiety. Frederick, too, feels uneasy: even the sword of the Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, with which he had been armed at Jerusalem, would be unequal to this warfare. Luther alone feels no alarm. His thought is, "The Lord will deliver him into my hands." The faith with which he is animated enables him to strengthen his friends. "I beg of you, my dear Spalatin," said he, "not to give yourself up to fear; you know well that if Christ was not with me, all that I have done up to this hour must have been my ruin. Was it not lately written from Italy, to the chancellor of the Duke of Pomerania, that I had upset Rome, and that, not knowing

how to appease the tumult, they were purposing to attack me not according to the forms of justice, but by Roman finesse, (the very words used,) that is, I presume, by poison, ambush, and assassination?"

"I restrain myself, and from love to the Elector, and the university, keep back many things which I would employ against Babylon, were I elsewhere. O! my poor Spalatin! it is impossible to speak of Scripture and of the Church without irritating the beast. Never, therefore, hope to see me at rest, at least, until I renounce theology If this work is of God, it will not be terminated before all my friends have forsaken me, as Christ was forsaken by his disciples. Truth will endure single-handed, and triumph in virtue of its own prowess, not mine or yours, or any man's. If I fall, the world will not perish with me. But, wretch that I am, I fear I am not worthy to die in such a cause." "Rome," he again wrote about this time, "Rome is burning with eagerness to destroy me, while I sit quiet and hold her in derision. I am informed that, in the field of Flora at Rome, one Martin Luther has been publicly burned in effigy, after being loaded with execrations. I abide their fury.2 The whole world," continues he, "is in agitation, heaving to and fro. What will happen? God knows. For my part, I foresee wars and disasters. The Lord have mercy on us."

Luther wrote letter after letter to Duke George, in whose states Leipsic is, entreating permission to repair thither and take part in the debate, but received no answer. The grandson of the Bohemian king, Podiebrad, alarmed at Luther's proposition concerning the pope, and afraid of seeing Saxony involved in the wars of which Bohemia had so long been the theatre, was unwilling to grant the doctor's request. Luther, therefore, determined to publish explanations of his thirteenth Thesis. But this treatise, far from persuading Duke George, on the contrary, confirmed him in his resolution. Positively refusing to give the Reformer authority to debate, he merely allowed him to be present as a spectator. This was a great disappointment to Luther. Nevertheless, as he had only one wish, and that was to obey God—he resolved to attend as a spectator, and await the result. The prince at the same time did every thing in his power to forward the discussion between Eck and Carlstadt. Duke George was devoted to the ancient doctrine; but he was upright and sincere, and friendly to free enquiry, and did not think that an opinion was to be charged with heresy, merely because it displeased the court of Rome. The Elector, moroever, urged his cousin to permit the discussion; and the duke, confirmed by Frederick's statements, ordered it to take place.

Bishop Adolphus of Merseburg, in whose diocese Leipsic is situated, was more alive than Miltitz and Cajetan, to the danger of trusting such important questions to the chances of single combat. Rome could not expose the fruit of the labours of so many ages to such hazard. All the theologians of Leipsic were equally alarmed, and implored their bishop to prevent the discussion. Adolphus accordingly presented most energetic remonstrances to Duke George, who replied with much good sense. "I am surprised at seeing a bishop so terrified at the ancient and laudable custom of our fathers in examining doubtful questions as to matters of faith. If your theologians refuse to defend their doctrines, the money given to them would be far better employed in the maintenance of aged women and young children who would be able at least to spin and sing." This letter had little effect on the bishop and his theologians. There is in error a secret consciousness which makes it dread enquiry even when making loud professions of being favourable to it. After an imprudent advance it makes a cowardly retreat. Truth did not give the challenge, but firmly stood its ground. Error gave it, and ran off. Moreover, the prosperity of the university of Wittemberg, excited the jealousy of that of Leipsic. The monks and priests inveighed from the pulpits of that

city, urging the people to shun the new heretics, slandering Luther, and painting him, as well as his friends, in the blackest colours, in order to stir up the fanaticism of the populace against the Reformers. Tezel, who was still alive, awoke to cry from the depth of his retreat,—"It is the devil that is forcing on this contest."2

All the professors of Leipsic, however, did not participate in these apprehensions. Some belonged to the indifferent class, consisting of persons who are always ready to laugh at the faults of both parties. Of this class was the Greek professor Peter Mosellanus, who cared very little for John Eck, Carlstadt, and Martin Luther, but anticipated great amusement from the strife. Writing to his friend Erasmus, he says, "John Eck, who is the most illustrious of pen gladiators and rhapsodists, and like the Socrates of Aristophanes, contemns even the gods, is to have a turn in debate with Andrew Carlstadt. The battle will end in uproar, and there will be laughter in it for ten Democratuses." The timid Erasmus, on the contrary, was frightened at the idea of a combat, and his prudence, ever ready to take alarm, would fain have prevented this discussion. In a letter to Melancthon, he says, "If you will be advised by Erasmus, you will be more anxious to promote the advancement of sound literature than to attack the enemies of it. My belief is that, in this way, our progress will be greater. Above all, while engaged in this struggle, let us not forget that victory must be obtained, not only by eloquence, but also by moderation and meekness." Neither the alarms of priests, nor the prudence of pacificators, could now prevent the combat. The parties made ready their weapons.

CHAP. III

Arrival of Eck and the Wittembergers—Amsdorf—The Students—Carlstadt's accident—Placard—Eck and Luther—Pleissenburg—Shall Judges be appointed?—Luther objects. At the time when the Electors met at Frankfort to give an emperor to Germany, (June, 1519,) theologians met at Leipsic for an act which, though unnoticed by the world, was destined to be not less important in its results.

Eck was the first who arrived at the place of rendezvous. On the 21st June he entered Leipsic in company with Poliander, a young man whom he had brought from Ingolstadt to report the debate. All kinds of honours were paid to the scholastic doctor, who, on the Fête Dieu, paraded the town in full canonicals, and at the head of a numerous procession. There was a general eagerness to see him. According to his own account, all the inhabitants were in his favour. "Nevertheless," adds he, "a rumour was current in the town that I was to be worsted in the encounter." The day after the fête, viz., Friday, 24th June, (St. John's Day,) the Wittembergers arrived. Carlstadt, Eck's destined opponent, came first in a chariot by himself. Next, in an open carriage, came Duke Barnim of Pomerania, who was then studying at Wittemberg under the direction of a tutor, and had been elected rector of the University. On each side of him sat the two great theologians, the fathers of the Reformation, Melancthon and Luther. Melancthon had been unwilling to quit his friend. He had said to Spalatin, "Martin, the soldier of the Lord, has stirred up this fetid marsh. I cannot think of the shameful conduct of the pope's theologians without indignation. Be firm, and adhere to us." Luther himself had expressed a desire that his Achates, as he has been called, should accompany him.

John Lange, vicar of the Augustins, some doctors in law, several masters of arts, two licentiates in theology, and other ecclesiastics, among whom Nicolas Amsdorf was conspicuous, closed the rear. Amsdorf, the member of a noble family in Saxony, disregarding the brilliant career which his

birth might have opened to him, had devoted himself to theology. The theses on indulgences having brought him to the knowledge of the truth, he had forthwith made a bold profession of the faith. Vigorous in intellect and vehement in temper, Amsdorf often pushed on Luther, by nature abundantly ardent, to acts which were perhaps imprudent. Born to high rank, he was not overawed by the great, and occasionally addressed them with a freedom bordering on rudeness. “The gospel of Jesus Christ,” said he one day in an assembly of nobles, “belongs to the poor and afflicted, and not to you princes, lords, and courtiers, whose lives are passed in luxury and joy.”3 But we have not yet mentioned the whole train from Wittemberg. A large body of students accompanied their teachers. Eck affirms that the number amounted to two hundred. Armed with pikes and halberds, they walked beside the carriages of the doctors ready to defend them, and proud of their cause.

Such was the order in which the body of Reformers entered Leipsic. Just as they passed the Grimma gate, which is in front of St. Paul’s cemetery, one of the wheels of Carlstadt’s carriage broke down. The archdeacon, who, with great self-complacency, was enjoying the solemn entry, tumbled into the mire. He was not hurt, but was obliged to proceed to his lodgings on foot. Luther’s chariot, which was immediately behind Carlstadt’s, moved rapidly forward, and delivered the Reformer safe and sound. The inhabitants of Leipsic, who had assembled to witness the entry of the Wittemberg champions, considered the accident as a bad omen for Carlstadt; and the inference was soon current over the town, viz., that he would be defeated in the combat, but that Luther would come off victorious.

Adolphus of Merseberg did not remain idle. As soon as he learned the approach of Luther and Carlstadt, and even before they had lighted from their carriages, he caused a notice to be posted up on all the church-doors forbidding the discussion under pain of excommunication. Duke George, astonished at his presumption, ordered the town council to tear down the bishop’s placard, and imprison the individual which had been employed to put it up. The Duke George, who had come in person to Leipsic, attended by all his court—among others by Jerôme Emser, with whom Luther spent the famous evening at Dresden, sent the disputants the usual presents.3 “The duke,” boasted Eck, “presented me with a fine stag, and gave Carlstadt only a roebuck.”

Eck was no sooner informed of Luther’s arrival than he called upon him—“What!” said he, “it is said that you refuse to debate with me.”

Luther.—“How can I when the duke forbids me?”

Eck.—“If I cannot debate with you, I am not anxious to have any thing to do with Carlstadt. It was for you I came here.” Then, after a short pause, he added—“If I obtain the duke’s permission, will you take the field?”

Luther (joyfully).—“Obtain it, and we shall debate.”

Eck forthwith repaired to the duke, and tried to dissipate his fears, representing to him that he was certain of victory, and that the authority of the pope, so far from suffering by the discussion, would come out of it more glorious. “We must strike at the head. If Luther stands erect, so do all his adherents—if he falls, they all fall.” George granted permission. The duke had caused a large hall to be prepared in his palace of Pleissenburg. Two desks had been erected opposite to each other, tables arranged for the notaries who were to take down the discussion in writing, and benches for

the spectators. The desks and benches were covered with rich tapestry. At the doctor of Wittemberg's desk was suspended the protrait of St. Martin, after whom he was named; and at that of Dr Eck, the portrait of the knight of St. George. "We shall see," said the arrogant Eck, with his eye on the emblem, "whether I do not, with my steed, trample down my enemies." Every thing bespoke the importance which was attached to the combat. On 25th June, the parties met in the castle to arrange the order of proceeding. Eck, who had more confidence in his declamation and gesture than in his arguments, exclaimed, "We will debate freely, off hand, and the notaries will not take down our words in writing.

Carlstadt.—"The agreement was, that the discussion should be written down, published, and submitted to the judgment of all men."

Eck.—"To write down every thing is to wear out the spirit of the disputants, and protract the battle. In that case there can be no hope of the vivacity requisite in an animated debate. Do not lay an arrest on the flow of eloquence."

Dr. Eck's friends supported his proposal, but Carlstadt persisted in his objection, and Eck was obliged to yield.

Eck.—"Be it so, let there be writing; but, at all events, the debate, when taken down by the notaries, is not to be published before it has been submitted to the decision of judges."

Luther.—"The truth of Dr. Eck and the Eckians fears the light."

Eck.—"There must be judges."

Luther.—"And what judges?"

Eck.—"After the debate is over we will agree upon them." The object of the partisans of Rome was evident. If the theologians of Wittemberg accepted judges, their cause was lost. It was obvious beforehand who the persons were whom their opponents would suggest; and yet the Reformers, if they refused them, would be covered with obloquy, as it would be circulated every where that they were afraid of submitting to impartial judges. The judges whom the Reformers desired were not individuals whose opinion was already declared, but the whole of Christendom. Their appeal was made to the general voice. It mattered little who condemned them, if, in pleading their cause in presence of the Christian world, they succeeded in bringing some individuals to the light. "Luther," says a Roman historian, "demanded all the faithful for judges—in other words, demanded a tribunal so numerous that there could be no urn large enough to hold its votes." The meeting broke up. "See their stratagem," said Luther and his friends to each other. "They would to a certainty ask to have the pope or the universities for judges." In fact, the theologians of Rome, next morning, sent one of their party to Luther, with a proposal that the judge should be … the pope!… "The pope!" said Luther, "how could I accept him?"

"Beware," exclaimed all his friends, "of accepting conditions so unjust." Eck and his friends having consulted anew, gave up the pope, and proposed certain universities. "Don't take from us the liberty which you have already granted us," replied Luther. "We cannot yield this point," resumed Eck. "Then," exclaimed Luther, "I don't debate."

They again parted, and what had just passed was talked of over the whole town. The Romans kept crying every where, “Luther won’t debate—he refuses to accept of any judge!” Commenting on, and torturing his words, they endeavoured to represent them in the most unfavourable light. “What! truly? he will not debate?” say the best friends of the Reformer, and hasten to him to express their alarm. “You decline the contest,” exclaim they. “Your refusal will bring eternal disgrace on your university and your cause.” This was to attack Luther in his most tender point. “Very well,” replied he, his heart filled with indignation, “I accept the terms which are imposed on me; but I reserve a right of appeal, and I decline the Court of Rome.”

CHAP. IV The Procession—Mass—Mosellanus—Veni, Sancte Spiritus!—Portraits of Luther and Carlstadt—Doctor Eck—Carlstadt’s Books—Merit of Congruity—Natural Powers—Scholastic distinction—Point where Rome and the Reformation separate—Grace gives man freedom—Carlstadt’s Note-Book—Commotion in the auditory—Melancthon during the debate—Manœuvres of Eck—Luther Preaches—The Citizens of Leipsic—Quarrels of Students and quarrels of Teachers. The 27th of June was the day fixed for the commencement of the discussion. In the morning the parties met in the hall of the university, and thereafter walked in procession to the Church of St. Thomas, where high mass was celebrated by the order and at the expence of the duke. After service, those present proceeded to the ducal castle. At their head walked Duke George, and the Duke of Pomerania; next came counts, abbots, knights, and other persons of distinction; and, lastly, the doctors of the two parties. A guard composed of seventy-six citizens, carrying halberds, accompanied the procession, with colours flying, and drums beating, and halted at the castle gate. On the arrival at the palace, each took his place in the hall where the debate was to take place—Duke George, the hereditary Prince John, Prince George of Anhalt, a boy of twelve, and the Duke of Pomerania, occupying the seats allotted to them.

Mosellanus, by order of the duke, mounted a pulpit, to remind the theologians of the manner in which the discussion was to be carried on. “If you begin to quarrel,” said the orator to them, “what difference will there be between a theological disputant and a swaggering duellist? What is victory here but just to recall a brother from his error?… Each, it would seem, should be more desirous to be conquered than to conquer.” At the conclusion of the address, sacred music echoed along the aisles of the Pleissenberg, the whole assembly knelt down, and the ancient hymn of invocation to the Holy Spirit, “Veni, Sancte Spiritus,” was sung. Solemn hour in the annals of the Reformation! The invocation was thrice repeated; and, while the solemn chant was pealing, the defenders of the ancient, and the champions of the new doctrines, the men of the Church of the middle ages, and those desirous of re-establishing the Church of the apostles, mingling together without distinction, in lowly attitude bent their faces to the ground. The ancient tie of one single communion still united all these different minds, and the same prayer still proceeded from all these lips as if a single heart had dictated it.

These were the last moments of external lifeless unity for which a new spiritual living unity was about to be substituted. The Holy Spirit was invoked in behalf of the Church, and the Holy Spirit was about to answer by a revival of Christendom. When the hymn and prayer were finished, the assembly rose up. The discussion should have now commenced; but, as the hour of noon had arrived, there was an adjournment of two hours. The leading personages who proposed to attend the debate, having dined with the duke, returned with him after dinner to the castle hall, which was filled with spectators. Meetings of this description were the public assemblies in which the

representatives of the age discussed questions of general and engrossing interest. The orators were soon at their post. That a better idea may be formed of them, we will give their portraits as drawn by one of the most impartial witnesses of the debate.

“Martin Luther is of middle size; and so emaciated by hard study that one might almost count his bones. He is in the vigour of life, and his voice is clear and sonorous. His learning and knowledge of the Holy Scriptures are beyond compare: he has the whole word of God at command. In addition to this he has great store of arguments and ideas. It were perhaps to be wished that he had a little more judgment in arranging his materials. In conversation he is candid and courteous; there is nothing stoical or haughty about him; he has the art of accommodating himself to every individual. His address is pleasing, and replete with good humour. He displays firmness, and is never discomposed by the menaces of his adversaries, be they what they may. One is, in a manner, compelled to believe that, in the great things which he has done, God must have assisted him. He is blamed, however, for being more sarcastic in his rejoinders than becomes a theologian, especially when he announces new religious ideas.

“Carlstadt is of smaller stature; his complexion is dark and sallow, his voice disagreeable, his memory less retentive, and his temper more easily ruffled than Luther’s. Still however he possesses, though in an inferior degree, the same qualities which distinguish his friend.

“Eck is tall and broad shouldered. He has a strong and truly German voice, and such excellent lungs that he would be well heard on the stage, or would make an admirable town-crier. His accent is rather coarse than elegant, and he has none of the gracefulness so much lauded by Cicero and Quintilian. His mouth, his eyes, and his whole features, suggest the idea of a soldier or a butcher, rather than a theologian. His memory is excellent, and were his intellect equal to it he would be faultless. But he is slow of comprehension, and wants judgment, without which all other gifts are useless. Hence, when he debates, he piles up, without selection or discernment, passages from the Bible, quotations from the Fathers, and arguments of all descriptions. His assurance, moreover, is unbounded. When he finds himself in a difficulty he darts off from the matter in hand, and pounces upon another; sometimes, even, he adopts the view of his antagonist, and changing the form of expression, most dexterously charges him with the very absurdity which he himself was defending.”

Such, according to Mosellanus, were the men who drew the eyes of the crowds who were then thronging into the great hall of Pleissenburg. The discussion was opened by Eck and Carlstadt.

Eck, for some moments, fixed his eyes on the books which lay on the little table in front of his opponent’s desk, and seemed to give him uneasiness: they were the Bible and the Fathers. “I decline the discussion,” exclaimed he suddenly, “if you are allowed to bring books with you.” A theologian have recourse to his books in discussion! The astonishment of Dr. Eck was still more astonishing. “It is merely a fig leaf which this Adam is employing to hide his shame,” said Luther. “Did Augustine consult no books in combating the Manichees?” No matter! Eck’s partisans made a great noise. Carlstadt remonstrated. “The man is altogether devoid of memory,” said Eck. At last it was decided, agreeably to the desire of the chancellor of Ingolstadt, that each disputant should have the use only of his memory and his tongue. “Thus then,” said several, “the object in this debate will not be to discover truth, but to show off the eloquence and memory of the disputants.” The discussion lasted seventeen days; but as it is impossible to give the whole of it, we must, as a

historian says, imitate painters who, in representing a battle, place the most distinguished exploits in front, and leave the others in the back ground. The subject of discussion between Eck and Carlstadt was important. “Before conversion,” said Carlstadt, “the will of man is incapable of doing good; every good work comes entirely and exclusively from God, who gives first the will to do, and afterwards the ability to perform.” This truth is proclaimed by the Scriptures, which say, “It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure,” and by Augustine, who, in disputing with the Pelagians, delivers it in almost the very same terms. Every work in which there is neither love to God nor obedience to his will, is, in his sight, devoid of the only quality which could render it truly good, even should it be in other respects dictated by the most honourable human motives. Now there is in man a natural enmity to God—an enmity which he is utterly unable to suppress. He has not the power to do so—he even wants the will. If ever, therefore, it is to be suppressed, it must be by the power of God. This is the doctrine of free will, so much declaimed against in the world, and yet so simple. It had been the doctrine of the church. But the schoolmen had explained it in a manner which caused it to be misunderstood. “No doubt,” said they, “the natural will of man cannot do any thing which is truly pleasing to God; but it can do much to render man more capable and more worthy of receiving divine grace. These preparatives they termed merit of congruity; “because,” as St. Thomas expressed it, “it is congruous for God to bestow peculiar favour on those who make a good use of their will.” In regard, again, to the conversion which man must undergo, it is no doubt true that, according to the schoolmen, the grace of God behoved to accomplish it, but still without excluding his natural powers. “These powers,” said they, “have not been annihilated by sin; sin only puts an obstacle in the way of their development; but as soon as this obstacle is removed (and this, according to them, was what the grace of God had to do,) these powers begin again to act.” To use one of their favourite comparisons—“the bird whose legs are tied does not thereby lose either its powers, or forget the art of flying, though it must be loosed by some other hand before it can be able again to use its wings.” “The same,” said they, “is the case with man.”3

Such was the question discussed between Eck and Carlstadt. At first Eck seemed to deny Carlstadt’s propositions out and out, but feeling the difficulty of maintaining his ground, said, “I grant that the will has not power to do a good work, but receives it from God.” “Confess then,” rejoined Carlstadt, overjoyed at obtaining such a concession, “that every good work comes entirely from God.” “Every good work comes indeed from God,” replied the schoolman subtlely, “but not entirely.” “There,” exclaimed Melancthon, “goes a discovery well worthy of theological science.” “An apple,” added Eck, “is all produced by the sun, but not altogether, and without the co-operation of the tree.” Assuredly no man ever thought of maintaining that an apple is all produced by the sun.

“Very well,” said his opponents, going still deeper into this delicate question, so important in philosophy and in religion, “let us consider how God acts on man, and how man conducts himself when so acted on. “I acknowledge,” said Eck, “that in conversion the first impulse comes from God, and that the human will is entirely passive.” So far the disputants were agreed. “I acknowledge,” said Carlstadt, on his part, “that after this first action on the part of God, something must come from man, something which St. Paul calls the will, and which the fathers designate by consent.” Here again both parties were agreed—but at this point the separation began. “This consent of man,” said Eck, “comes partly from our natural will, and partly from the grace of God.”

“No,” said Carlstadt, “this will in man is entirely created by God.”4 Hereupon Eck began to express astonishment and indignation at words so well fitted to impress man with a sense of his utter nothingness. “Your doctrine,” exclaims he, “makes man a stone or a block, incapable of any counter action.…” “What,” replied the Reformers, “does not the faculty of receiving the powers which God produces in him (a faculty which we admit that he possesses) sufficiently distinguish him from a stone and a block?” “But,” resumed their antagonist, “by denying man all natural power, you contradict experience.” “We deny not,” was the reply, “that man possesses certain powers, and has in him a faculty of reflecting, meditating, and choosing. We only consider these powers and faculties as mere instruments, incapable of doing any thing that is good until the hand of God sets them in motion. They are like the saw in the hands of the sawyer.” The great question of liberty was here debated, and it was easy to demonstrate that the doctrine of the Reformers did not divest man of the liberty of a moral agent or make him a passive machine. The liberty of a moral agent consists in the power of acting conformably to his choice. Every action done without external constraint, and in consequence of the determination of the mind itself, is a free action. The mind is determined by motives, but we constantly see that the same motives act differently on different minds. Many do not act conformably to the motives which their judgment approves. This inefficiency of motives is attributable to the obstacles which they meet with in the corruption of the understanding and the heart. Now, God, by giving a new heart and a new spirit, removes those obstacles, and thereby so far from depriving man of freedom, on the contrary, removes what prevented him from acting freely, and in obedience to the dictates of his conscience. In the language of the gospel it renders him “free indeed.” (John 8:36) A slight incident for a short time interrupted the debate. Carlstadt (this is Eck’s account) had prepared different heads of argument; and, as is done by many of the orators of our day, read what he had written. Eck saw in this only a school boy’s tactics, and objected. Carlstadt embarrassed, and fearing he might be taken at a disadvantage if deprived of his note-book, insisted on retaining it. “Ah!” said the scholastic doctor, quite proud of the advantage which he thought he had over him, “his memory is shorter than mine.” The point having been submitted to arbiters, it was decided that quotations from the Fathers might be read, but that in other respects the discussion should be extempore. This first part of the discussion often met with interruption from the audience. They ruffed and screamed. Any proposition offensive to the ears of the majority instantly aroused their clamour, and then, as in our day, it was necessary to call to order. The disputants also occasionally allowed themselves to be carried away in the heat of discussion.

Melancthon sat near Luther, and attracted almost equal attention. He was of short stature, and would scarcely have been thought more than eighteen. Luther, who was a whole head taller, seemed to be united to him by the closest friendship; they came in, went out, and walked together. “To look at Melancthon,” says a Swiss theologian, who studied at Wittemberg, “one would think him a mere boy, but in judgment, learning, and talent he is a giant. It is difficult to comprehend how so much wisdom and genius can be contained within so puny a body.” Between the sittings, Melancthon conferred with Carlstadt and Luther. He assisted them in preparing for the debate, and suggested arguments drawn from the stores of his vast erudition; but during the discussion he remained quietly seated among the spectators, giving close attention to every thing that was said by the theologians. Occasionally, however, he came to the aid of Carlstadt.2 When the latter was on the point of giving way under the powerful declamation of the chancellor of Ingolstadt, the young professor whispered a word in his ear, or slipt a paper to him on which he had noted down

the answer. Eck on one occasion perceived this, and indignant that this grammarian, as he called him, should presume to intermeddle with the discussion, turned towards him, and haughtily said, “Be silent, Philip, keep to your own studies, and give me no disturbance.” Perhaps Eck had already a presentiment of the formidable adversary he was afterwards to encounter in this young man. Luther was offended at the rude insult given to his friend; “The judgment of Philip,” said he, “weighs more with me than that of a thousand doctor Ecks.” The calm Melancthon easily discerned the weak points of this discussion. “We can only be surprised,” says he with the wisdom and grace conspicuous in all his words, “when we think of the violence which was brought to the discussion of such subjects. How could any advantage be derived from it? The Spirit of God loves retreat and silence: there dwell those whose hearts he penetrates. The bride of Christ does not stand in streets and public places, but conducts the Bridegroom into her mother’s house.”

Both parties claimed the victory. Eck employed all his address to make it appear that he had gained it. As the points of divergence almost met, he often exclaimed that he had brought over his opponent to his opinion, or like a new Proteus, as Luther calls him, turning suddenly round, he stated Carlstadt’s own opinion in different words, and then asked, with an air of triumph, if he did not feel constrained to yield. The unskilful, who were unable to detect the sophist’s manœuvre, applauded and triumphed with him.… In several respects the match was unequal. Carlstadt was slow, and sometimes left his opponent’s objections unanswered till next day. Eck, on the contrary, was master of his subject, and could lay his hand at once on whatever he required. He came forward with a haughty air, mounted his desk with a firm step, and when there, stamped with his foot, moved backwards and forwards, made the ceiling ring with his powerful voice, gave some sort of reply to every argument, and astonished the audience with his memory and adroitness. Still Eck, without perceiving it, conceded much more in the discussion than he had intended. His partizans shouted and laughed at each of his turns, “but,” says Luther, “I strongly suspect they only made a show of laughing, and were exceedingly vexed at heart when they saw their chief, who had commenced with so much bravado, quit his standard, abandon his army, and become a shameless deserter.”

Three or four days after the discussion had commenced, it was interrupted by the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul. The Duke of Pomerania requested Luther to preach before him, on the occasion, in his chapel. Luther gladly complied. The chapel was soon filled, and crowds still arriving, it became necessary to remove to the great hall of the castle, where the discussion was held. Luther preached from the text of the day, on the grace of God, and the power of Peter, and gave a popular exposition of the views which he was wont to maintain before a learned audience. Christianity causes the light of truth to penetrate alike into the highest and the humblest intellects, and is in this way distinguished from all other religions, and from all philosophical systems. The theologians of Leipsic, who had been present at the sermon, hastened to acquaint Eck with the expressions which had offended them. “These subtile errors,” exclaimed they, “must be answered, must be publicly refuted.” This was just what Eck wished. All the churches were open to him, and on four successive occasions he mounted the pulpit to declaim against Luther and his sermon. Luther’s friends were indignant, and demanded that the theologian of Wittemberg should be heard in his turn. But they demanded in vain. The pulpits were open to the enemies of evangelical truth, but shut against those who proclaimed it. “I kept silence,” says Luther, “and was obliged to submit to attacks, insults, and calumnies, without being able to exculpate and defend myself.” The

ecclesiastics were not the only persons who displayed hostility to the evangelical doctrine: the citizens of Leipsic were in this respect of one mind with their clergy, and yielded themselves up with blind fanaticism to the falsehoods and animosities which were industriously propagated. The principal inhabitants did not visit either Luther or Carlstadt. They left them unnoticed when they met them in the street, and tried to prejudice the duke against them. On the other hand they visited and gave daily entertainments to the doctor of Ingolstadt, who enjoyed their good cheer, and learnedly discussed the comparative merits of Saxony and Bavarian beer. His manners, somewhat free, did not indicate a very strict morality. The only thing offered to Luther was the customary present of wine to the disputants. Moreover, even those who wished him well were anxious that others should not know it; several Nicodemites visited him by night or in secret. There were only two who did themselves honour by publicly declaring their friendship. These were Dr. Auerback, whom we have already met at Augsburg, and Dr. Pistor, junior. The greatest excitement prevailed in the town. The two parties formed, as it were, two hostile camps, and sometimes came to blows. In taverns, frequent quarrels took place between the students of Leipsic and Wittemberg. It was openly averred, even at meetings of the clergy, that Luther carried about with him a devil, confined in a little box. “Whether the devil is in a box, or only under his frock,” said Eck, maliciously, “I know not; but most assuredly he is in one or other of them.”

During the discussion several doctors of both parties lodged with the printer Herbipolis; and the dispute ran so high that the host was obliged to station a town-officer at the top of the table with a halbert to keep the peace, and prevent the guests from coming to blows. One day Baumgartner, a vender of indulgences, had a scuffle with a gentleman, a friend of Luther, and fell into such a rage that he dropt down dead. Fröschel, who gives the account, says, “I was one of those who carried him to the grave.” The general agitation which prevailed was thus manifested. Then, as now, the discourses of the desk were re-echoed in the drawing-room and in the streets.

Duke George, though very decidedly in favour of Eck, did not betray so much passion as his subjects. He invited Eck, Luther, and Carlstadt to dine together with him. He even asked Luther to pay him a visit in private, but soon showed how strongly he was prejudiced against him. “By your book on the Lord’s Prayer,” said the duke to him, with bitterness, “you have led many consciences astray. There are persons who complain of not having been able to say one pater for more than four days.”

CHAP. V

Hierarchy and Rationalism—Two Peasants’ Sons—Eck and Luther begin—The head of the Church—The primacy of Rome—Equality of Bishops—Peter the Foundation—Christ the Foundation—Eck insinuates that Luther is a Hussite—Luther on the doctrine of Huss—Agitation in the audience—Pleasantry of Dr. Eck—The Word alone—The Court Fool—Luther at Mass—Saying of the Duke—Purgatory—Close of the Discussion. On the 4th of July the debate between Eck and Luther commenced. Every thing announced that it would be keener, more decisive, and more interesting than that which had just been concluded, and during which the audience had gradually thinned away. The two antagonists descended into the arena, resolved not to lay down their arms till victory should declare in favour of one of them. All were in eager expectation, for the subject to be debated was the primacy of the pope. Christianity has two great adversaries: hierarchism and rationalism. Rationalism, as applied to the doctrine of man’s natural

powers, had been attacked by the Reformation in the former branch of the Leipsic discussion. Hierarchism, viewed with reference to what is at once its apex, and its base, viz., the doctrine of the pope, was now to be considered. On the one side appeared Eck boasting of the debates in which he had been engaged, as a general boasts of his battles. On the other side stood Luther, to whom the contest seemed to promise only persecution and obloquy, but who came forward with a good conscience, a firm resolution to sacrifice everything for the cause of truth, and a confident expectation founded on faith in God and the deliverance which he affords. New convictions had sunk deep into his mind; as yet they were not arranged into a system, but in the heat of debate they flashed forth like lightning. Grave and intrepid, he manifested a decision which set all trammels at defiance. His features bore marks of the storms which had raged within his soul, and of the courage with which he was prepared to face new tempests. Two peasants' sons, representatives of the two systems which still divide Christendom, were on the eve of a contest, the issue of which would go far to decide the future destiny of the State and the Church. At seven in the morning the two antagonists were in their desks, in the midst of a numerous and attentive assembly.

Luther rose and, in the exercise of a necessary precaution, modestly said:—

"In the name of the Lord! Amen. I declare, that the respect which I feel for the Sovereign Pontiff would have disposed me to avoid this discussion had the excellent Dr. Eck left me any alternative."

Eck.—"In thy name, dear Jesus! before I descend into the arena I protest in your presence, mighty lords, that whatever I shall say is under correction of the first of all sees, and the master who occupies it."

After a momentary pause, Eck continued—"There is in the church of God a primacy derived from Jesus Christ himself. The church militant is an image of the church triumphant. But the latter is a monarchical hierarchy, rising step by step up to the sole head, who is God, and, accordingly, Christ has established the same gradation upon earth. What kind of monster should the Church be if she were without a head!" …

Luther, (turning towards the audience).—"The doctor is correct in saying that the universal Church must have a head. If there is any one here who maintains the contrary, let him stand up? the remark does not at all apply to me."

Eck.—"If the Church militant has never been without a monarch, I should like to know who that monarch is, if he is not the pontiff of Rome?"

Luther.—"The head of the Church militant is not a man, but Jesus Christ himself. This I believe on the testimony of God." "Christ," says the Scripture, "must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet." We cannot therefore listen to those who would confine Christ to the Church triumphant in heaven. His reign is a reign of faith. We cannot see our Head, and yet we have him."3

Eck, not admitting that he was beaten, had recourse to other arguments, and resumed, "According to St. Cyprian, sacerdotal unity is derived from Rome."

Luther.—"Granted in regard to the Western Church. But is not the Church of Rome herself a descendant of the Church of Jerusalem, which is properly the mother and nurse of all the

churches?”

Eck.—“St. Jerome declares, that unless an extraordinary power, superior to all other powers, is given to the pope, churches will have as many schisms as pontiffs.”

Luther.—“Granted, that is to say, this power might, by human authority, be attributed to the Roman pontiff, provided all the faithful consent to it. And, in like manner, I, for my part, deny not that if all the faithful throughout the world were to concur in acknowledging the bishop, either of Rome, or of Paris, or of Magdeburg, as prime and sovereign pontiff, it would be necessary to acknowledge him as such in deference to this universal consent of the Church. The thing, however, never has been, and never will be seen. Even in our own day does not the Greek Church refuse her assent to Rome?” At this period Luther was quite ready to acknowledge the pope as first magistrate of the Church, elected by her own free choice; but he denied that he was of divine institution. At a later period he denied that subjection was due to him in any respect, and this denial he owed to the discussion at Leipsic. Eck had come upon ground which he did not know so thoroughly as Luther. The latter, it is true, could not maintain his thesis, that the papacy had not been in existence for more than four centuries. Eck quoted authorities of an earlier date, and these Luther was unable to obviate, criticism not having yet attacked the spurious decretals. But the nearer the discussion was brought to primitive times, the more Luther’s strength increased. Eck appealed to the Fathers. Luther quoted the Fathers in reply, and all the hearers were struck with his superiority to his rival.

“That my exposition,” said he, “is that of St. Jerome, I prove by St. Jerome’s own Epistle to Evagrius, in which he says, “Every bishop, whether at Rome, or Eugubium, or Constantinople, or Rhegium, or Alexandria, or Tanis, has the same merit, and the same priesthood. The power of riches, and the humiliation of poverty, constitute the only precedence or inferiority among bishops.” From the writings of the Fathers, Luther passed to the decrees of Councils which regard the bishop of Rome as only a first among equals.

“We read,” says he, “in the decree of the Council of Africa,” “The bishop of the first see must not be called either prince of the the pontiffs, or sovereign pontiff, or any other similar name, but only bishop of the first see. Were the supremacy of the bishop of Rome of divine institution, would not these words be heretical?”

Eck replied by one of those subtile distinctions which were so familiar to him.

“The bishop of Rome, if you will so have it, is not universal bishop, but bishop of the universal church.”

Luther.—“I am quite willing to leave this reply unanswered: let our hearers judge for themselves.”

“Assuredly,” said he, afterwards, “the gloss is worthy of a theologian, and well fitted to satisfy a disputant thirsting for glory. My expensive sojourn in Leipsic has not been for nothing, since I have learned that the pope, though not indeed the universal bishop, is the bishop of the universal church.”

Eck.—“Very well, I come to the essential point. The venerable doctor calls upon me to prove that the primacy of the church of Rome is of divine institution—I prove it by these words of Christ: ‘Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church.’ St. Augustine, in one of his epistles, has thus expounded the passage, ‘Thou art Peter, and upon this rock, that is to say, on this Peter, I will

build my Church.' It is true, Augustine has elsewhere said that, by this rock must be understood Christ himself, but he never retracted his former exposition."

Luther.—"If the reverend doctor would attack me, he should first reconcile these contrary statements of Augustine. It is undeniable that St. Augustine has again and again said that the rock was Christ, and he may perhaps have once said that it was Peter himself. But even should St. Augustine and all the Fathers say that the apostle is the rock of which Christ speaks, I would combat their view on the authority of an apostle, in other words, divine authority; for it is written, 'No other foundation can any man lay than that is laid, namely, Jesus Christ.' Peter himself calls Christ, 'the chief and corner stone on which we are built up a spiritual house.' "

Eck.—"I am astonished at the humility and modesty with which the reverend doctor undertakes single-handed to combat so many distinguished Fathers, and to know better than sovereign pontiffs, councils, doctors, and universities.… It would, certainly, be astonishing that God should have concealed the truth from so many saints and martyrs … and not revealed it until the advent of the reverend father!"

Luther.—"The Fathers are not against me. The distinguished doctors, St. Augustine, and St. Ambrose, speak as I do. 'Super isto articulo fidei, fundata est ecclesia,' says St. Ambrose, when explaining what must be understood by the rock on which the church is built. Let my opponent then bridle his tongue. To express himself as he does is to stir up strife, not to discuss like a true doctor."

Eck had not expected that his opponent would possess so much knowledge of the subject, and be able to disentangle himself from the labyrinth in which he tried to bewilder him. "The reverend doctor," said he, "has entered the lists after carefully studying his subject. Your highnesses will excuse me for not presenting them with such exact researches. I came to debate and not to make a book." Eck was astonished, but not beaten. Having no more arguments to give, he had recourse to a mean and despicable artifice, which, if it did not vanquish his opponent, would at least subject him to great embarrassment. If the charge of being a Bohemian, a heretic, a Hussite fastens upon Luther, he is vanquished, for the Bohemians were detested in the Church. The scene of discussion was not far from the frontiers of Bohemia. Saxony, which, immediately after the condemnation of John Huss by the Council of Constance, had been subjected to all the horrors of a long and ruinous war, was proud of the resistance which she had then given to the Hussites. The university of Leipsic had been founded to oppose their tenets, and the discussion was in presence of nobles, princes, and citizens, whose fathers had fallen in that celebrated struggle. To make out that Luther was at one with Huss was almost like giving him the finishing blow, and this was the stratagem to which the doctor of Ingolstadt had recourse. "From primitive times downwards," says he, "it was acknowledged by all good Christians, that the Church of Rome holds its primacy of Jesus Christ himself and not of man. I must confess, however, that the Bohemians, while obstinately defending their errors, attacked this doctrine. The venerable father must pardon me if I am an enemy of the Bohemians, because they are the enemies of the Church, and if the present discussion has reminded me of these heretics; for, … according to my weak judgment, … the conclusions to which the doctor has come are all in favour of their errors. It is even affirmed that the Hussites loudly boast of this."

Eck had calculated well. All his partizans received the insinuation with acclamation, and an expression of applause was general throughout the audience. “These slanders,” said the Reformer at a later period. “tickled their fancy much more agreeably than the discussion itself.”

Luther.—“I love not a schism and I never shall. Since the Bohemians, of their own authority, separate from our unity, they do wrong even were divine authority decisive in favour of their doctrine; for at the head of all divine authority is charity and the unity of the Spirit.”

It was at the morning sitting, on the 5th July, that Luther thus expressed himself. Shortly after, the meeting adjourned for dinner. Luther felt uneasy. Had he not gone too far in thus condemning the Christians of Bohemia? Have they not maintained the doctrine which Luther is maintaining at this hour? He sees all the difficulty of the step before him. Will he declare against the Council which condemned John Huss, or will he abjure the grand idea of an universal Christian Church, an idea deeply imprinted on his mind? Resolute Luther hesitated not. “I must do my duty come what may.” Accordingly, when the assembly again met at two o’clock, he rose and said firmly:—

“Certain of the tenets of John Huss and the Bohemians are perfectly orthodox. This much is certain. For instance, ‘That there is only one universal church,’ and again, ‘That it is not necessary to salvation to believe the Roman Church superior to others.’ Whether Wickliffe or Huss has said so I care not.… It is the truth.” This declaration of Luther produced an immense sensation in the audience. The abhorred names of Huss and Wickliffe pronounced with eulogium by a monk in the heart of a Catholic assembly!… A general murmur was heard. Duke George himself felt as much alarmed, as if he had actually seen the standard of civil war, which had so long desolated the states of his maternal ancestors, unfurled in Saxony. Unable to conceal his emotion, he struck his thigh, shook his head, and exclaimed, loud enough to be heard by the whole assembly, “The man is mad!” The whole audience was extremely excited. They rose to their feet, and every one kept talking to his neighbour. Those who had fallen asleep, awoke. Luther’s opponents expressed their exultation, while his friends were greatly embarrassed. Several persons, who till then had listened to him with pleasure, began to doubt his orthodoxy. The impression produced upon the mind of the duke by this declaration was never effaced; from this moment he looked upon the Reformer with an unfavourable eye, and became his enemy.

Luther was not intimidated by this explosion of disapprobation One of his leading arguments was, that the Greeks had never recognised the pope, and yet had never been declared heretics; that the Greek Church had subsisted, was subsisting, and would subsist without the pope, and was a Church of Christ as much as the Church of Rome. Eck, on the contrary, boldly affirmed that the Christian Church and the Roman Church were one and the same; that the Greeks and Orientals, by abandoning the Church, had also abandoned Christian faith, and unquestionably were heretics. “What!” exclaimed Luther, “Are not Gregory of Nanzianzen, Basil the Great, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, and an immense number of other Greek bishops in bliss? and yet they did not believe that the Church of Rome was superior to other churches!… It is not in the power of the pontiff of Rome to make new articles of faith. The Christian believer has no other authority than the Holy Scriptures—they alone constitute divine law. I pray the illustrious doctor to admit that the pontiffs of Rome were men, and have the goodness not to make gods of them.”

Eck had recourse to one of those witticisms which at small cost give a little air of triumph to the person employing them.

“The reverend father,” says he, “not being well versed in the culinary art, makes an odd mixture of Greek saints and heretics, so that the perfume of holiness in the one disguises the poison in the other.

Luther—(hastily interrupting Eck.)—“The worthy doctor is impertinent. I do not hold that there is any communion between Christ and Belial.”

Luther had taken a large step in advance. In 1516, and 1517, he had only attacked the discourses of the venders of indulgences, and had respected the decrees of the popes. At a later period he had rejected these decrees, but had appealed from them to a council. Now he had discarded this last authority also, declaring that no council can establish a new article of faith, or claim to be infallible. Thus all human authorities had successively fallen before him. The sand brought along by the rain and the floods had disappeared; and now, for building up the ruins of the Lord’s house, there remained only the eternal rock of the Word of God. “Venerable father!” said Eck to him, “if you believe that a council, lawfully assembled, can err, you are to me only a heathen man and a publican.”

Such were the discussions between the two doctors. The audience were attentive but occasionally began to flag, and hence were pleased with any incident which enlivened the scene and gave them a momentary relaxation. The gravest matters have their comic interludes; and so it was at Leipsic.

Duke George, according to the custom of the time, had a court fool, to whom some wags said, “Luther maintains that a court fool may marry. Eck maintains the contrary.” On this the fool took a great dislike to Eck, and, every time he came into the hall with the servants of Duke George, eyed the theologian with a menacing air. The chancellor of Ingolstadt, not disdaining to descend to pleasantly, one day shut one eye, (the fool was blind of one,) and with the other began to squint at the poor creature, who, in a perfect rage, let fly a volley of abuse. “The whole assembly,” says Peiffer, “burst into laughter.” This amusing incident somewhat relieved their minds from the stretch on which they had been kept. At the same time, both in the town and in the churches scenes occurred which showed how much the partisans of Rome were horrified at Luther’s bold assertions. An outcry was raised against him, especially in the convents attached to the pope.

Luther had one day walked into the church of the Dominicans, before high mass. The only persons present were some monks, saying low mass at the side altars. No sooner was it told in the cloister that the heretic Luther was in the church than the monks came down in all haste, laid hold of the ostensorium, and carrying it into the tabernacle shut it up, carefully watching it, lest the holy sacrament should be profaned by the heretical eye of the Augustin of Wittemberg. At the same time, those who were saying mass hastily gathered up their articles, quitted the altar, ran across the church, and took refuge in the sacristy, “just,” says a historian, “as if the devil had been at their heels.” The discussion became the general subject of conversation. In the inns, at the university, and the court, every one gave his opinion. Duke George, whatever his irritation may have been, did not obstinately shut his ears against conviction. One day, when Eck and Luther were dining with him, he interrupted their conversation, saying, “Let the pope be pope, whether by divine or human law; at all events he is pope.” Luther was much pleased with the expression. “The prince,” says he, “never would have uttered it, if my arguments had not made some impression on him.” The discussion on the primacy of the pope had lasted during five days. On the 8th of July, the

doctrine of purgatory was discussed, and occupied two days. Luther was still a believer in the existence of purgatory; but he denied that the doctrine, as held by the schoolmen and his opponent, was taught either in the Scriptures or by the Fathers. “Our Doctor Eck,” said he, referring to the superficial knowledge of his opponent, “has to-day run over the Holy Scriptures almost without touching them, just as an insect skims the water.” On the 11th July indulgences were discussed. “It was mere sport and burlesque,” says Luther. “Indulgences gave way at once, and Eck was almost entirely of my opinion.” Eck himself said, “Had I not disputed with Doctor Martin on the primacy of the pope, I could almost agree with him.”3 The discussion afterwards turned on repentance, absolution by the priest, and satisfactions. Eck, as usual, quoted the schoolmen, the dominicans, and the canons of the pope. Luther closed the discussion with these words:—

“The reverend doctor flees before the Holy Scriptures, as the devil does before the cross. For my part, with all due deference to the Fathers, I prefer the authority of Scripture, and recommend it to our judges.” This closed the debate between Eck and Luther, but Carlstadt and the doctor of Ingolstadt continued for two days longer to discuss the subject of human merit and good works. On the 16th July, the whole proceeding, after having lasted twenty days, was closed by a discourse from the rector of Leipsic. The moment the discourse was finished, thrilling music burst forth, and the whole concluded with the Te Deum.

But, during this solemn chant, the feelings of the audience no longer were what they had been during the Veni Spiritus. The presentiments which several persons had expressed seemed to be actually realised. The blows struck by the champions of the two systems had made a large wound in the papacy.

CHAP. VI

Interest felt by the Laity—Luther’s Opinion—Admissions and Boastings of Dr. Eck—Effects of the Discussion—Poliander—Cellarius—The Young Prince of Anhalt—The Students of Leipsic—Cruciger—Calling of Melancthon—Emancipation of Luther.

These theological discussions, to which the worldly-minded of the present day would not devote a few short moments, had been attended and listened to with eagerness, during twenty days—laymen, knights, and princes, taking a deep interest in them to the last. Duke Barnim, and Duke George, seemed particularly attentive, whereas some of the theologians of Leipsic, friends of Dr. Eck, slept, as an eye-witness expresses it, “quite soundly.” It was even necessary to awake them on the adjournments, that they might not lose their dinner.

Luther was the first to quit Leipsic, and next Carlstadt. Eck remained several days after they were gone. No formal decision was given on the points discussed. Every one spoke as he thought. “There was at Leipsic,” says Luther, “loss of time, and no investigation of truth. During the two years in which we have been examining the doctrines of our opponents, we have counted all their bones. Eck, on the contrary, has hardly skimmed the surface;2 but he cried more in one hour than we did in two long years.”

Eck, when writing privately to his friends, admitted his defeat to a certain extent, though he was at no loss for an explanation. “The Wittembergers,” wrote he to Hochstraten on the 24th July, “defeated me on several points—first, because they brought books with them—secondly, because

they took down the debate in writing, and examined it at home at their leisure—and thirdly, because they were more numerous. Two doctors, (Carlstadt and Luther,) Lange, vicar of the Augustins, two licentiates, Amsdorff, and a very arrogant nephew of Reuchlin, (Melancthon,) three doctors of law, and several masters of arts, lent their assistance both in public and private, whereas I stood alone, having nothing but a good cause for my companion." Eck forgot Emser, and all the doctors of Leipsic.

Though these concessions escaped Eck in familiar correspondence, he acted otherwise in public. The doctor of Ingolstadt, and the theologians of Leipsic, made a great noise with what they called their victory. They everywhere set false reports in circulation, while all the tongues of the party reiterated their expressions of self-complacency. "Eck goes about triumphing," wrote Luther. There were disputes, however, in the camp of Rome, in regard to the laurels. "Had we not come to the help of Eck," said the theologians of Leipsic, "the illustrious doctor would have been overthrown." "The theologians of Leipsic," said Eck on his part, "are well enough, but I had hoped too much from them—I did the whole myself." "You see," said Luther to Spalatin, "how they are chanting a new Iliad, and a new Æneid. They are kind enough to make me a Hector or a Turnus, while Eck is their Achilles, or Æneas. Their only doubt is whether the victory was gained by the arms of Eck, or by those of Leipsic. All I can say to throw light on the matter is, that Eck uniformly kept bawling, and the Leipsickers as uniformly held their peace."2

"Eck," says the elegant, clever, and sagacious Mosellanus "has triumphed in the estimation of those who do not understand the subject, and who have grown old in poring over the schoolmen; but, in the estimation of all men of learning, intellect, and moderation, Luther and Carlstadt are the victors." The Leipsic discussion, however, was not destined to vanish into smoke. Every work which is devoutly performed bears fruit. The words of Luther had penetrated the minds of his hearers with irresistible force. Several of those who had daily thronged the castle hall were subdued by the truth, whose leading conquests were made among her most decided opponents. Even Poliander, the secretary, familiar friend and disciple of Eck, was gained to the Reformation, and began, in 1522, to preach the gospel at Leipsic. John Camerarius, professor of Hebrew, one of the keenest opponents of the Reformation, impressed by the words of the mighty teacher, began to examine the Holy Scriptures more thoroughly; and, shortly after throwing up his situation, came to Wittemberg to study at the feet of Luther. He was afterwards pastor at Frankfort and Dresden.

Among those who had taken their place on the seats reserved for the Court, and accompanied Duke George, was George of Anhalt, a young prince, twelve years of age, of a family which had distinguished itself in the wars against the Saracens. At this time he was studying at Leipsic with his tutor. Great ardour for science, and a strong attachment to truth, had already become the characteristics of the illustrious young prince. He was often heard to repeat the words of Solomon, falsehood ill becomes a prince. The Leipsic discussion inspired this child with serious reflection, and with a decided leaning to Luther. Some time after a bishopric was offered to him. His brother, and all his family, with the view of raising him to high honour in the Church, urged him to accept it, but he resolutely declined. His pious mother, who was secretly favourable to Luther, having died, he became possessed of all the Reformer's writings. He was constant and fervent in prayer to God, to incline his heart to the truth; and, often in the solitude of his chamber, exclaimed, with tears, "Deal mercifully with thy servant, and teach me thy statutes." His prayers were heard.

Carried forward by his convictions, he fearlessly joined the ranks of the friends of the gospel. In vain did his guardians, and particularly Duke George, besiege him with entreaties and remonstrances. He remained inflexible, and the Duke, half convinced by his pupil's reasons, exclaimed, "I cannot answer him; still, however, I will keep by my Church—I am too old a dog to be trained." We will afterwards see in this amiable prince one of the finest characters of the Reformation, one who himself preached the word of life to his subjects, and to whom the saying of Dion respecting the emperor Marcus Antoninus, has been applied, "He was through life consistent with himself, he was a good man, a man free from guile."3 But Luther's words met with an enthusiastic reception, especially from the students. They felt the difference between the spirit and life of the doctor of Wittemberg, and the sophistical distinctions, and vain speculations, of the chancellor of Ingolstadt. They saw Luther founding upon the word of God, and they saw Dr. Eck founding only on human traditions. The effect was soon visible. The classes of the university of Leipsic almost emptied after the discussion. One circumstance partly contributed to this. The plague threatened to make its appearance—but there were many other universities—for example, Erfurt, or Ingolstadt, to which the students might have repaired. The force of truth drew them to Wittemberg, where the number of the students was doubled.

Among those who removed from the one university to the other was a youth of sixteen, of a melancholy air, who spoke little, and often amid the conversation and games of his fellow-students seemed absorbed by his own thoughts. His parents at first thought him of weak intellect, but they soon found him so apt to learn, and so completely engrossed by his studies, that they conceived high hopes of him. His integrity, his candour, his modesty, and his piety, made him a general favourite, and Mosellanus singled him out as a model to all the university. He was called Gaspard Cruciger, and was originally from Leipsic. This new student of Wittemberg was afterwards the friend of Melancthon, and the assistant of Luther in the translation of the Bible. The Leipsic discussion produced results still more important, in as much as the theologian of the Reformation then received his call. Modest and silent, Melancthon had been present at the discussion almost without taking any part in it. Till then his attention had been engrossed by literature, but the discussion gave him a new impulse, and gained him over to theology. Henceforth his science did homage to the word of God. He received the evangelical truth with the simplicity of a child. His audience heard him expound the doctrines of salvation with a grace and clearness by which all were charmed. He boldly advanced in this, which was to him a new career; "for," said he, "Christ will never leave his people." From this moment the two friends walked side by side, contending for liberty and truth, the one with the energy of St. Paul, and the other with the meekness of St. John. Luther has admirably expressed the difference of their calling:—"I was born," said he, "to enter the field of battle, and contend with factions and demons. Hence, my writings breathe war and tempest. I must root up the trunks, remove the thorns and the brambles, and fill up the marshes and pools. I am the sturdy wood-cutter who must clear the passage and level the ground; but master Philip advances calmly and softly; he digs and plants, sows, and waters joyously, in accordance with the gifts which God has, with so liberal a hand, bestowed upon him."3

If Melancthon, the quiet sower, was called to the work by the discussion of Leipsic, Luther, the hardy wood-cutter, felt his arm strengthened, and his courage still more inflamed by it. The mightiest result of this discussion was produced in Luther himself. "Scholastic theology," said he, "sunk entirely in my estimation, under the triumphant presidency of Dr. Eck." In regard to the

reformer, the veil which the School and the Church had hung up in front of the sanctuary was rent from top to bottom. Constrained to engage in new enquiries, he arrived at unexpected discoveries. With equal astonishment and indignation he saw the evil in all its magnitude. While poring over the annals of the Church, he discovered that the supremacy of Rome had no other origin than ambition on the one hand, and credulous ignorance on the other. The narrow point of view under which he had hitherto looked at the Church was succeeded by one both clearer and wider. In the Christians of Greece and the East he recognised true members of the Catholic Church; and, instead of a visible head, seated on the banks of the Tiber, he adored, as sole Head of his people, that invisible and eternal Redeemer, who, according to his promise, is always, and in all parts of the world, in the midst of those who believe in his name. The Latin Church Luther no longer regarded as the universal Church. The narrow barriers of Rome were thrown down; and he shouted for joy when he saw the glorious domain of Jesus Christ stretching far beyond them. Henceforth he felt that he could be a member of the Church of Christ without belonging to the Church of the pope. In particular, the writings of John Huss made a strong impression on him. To his great surprise, he discovered in them the doctrine of St. Paul and St. Augustine, the doctrine to which he had himself arrived, after so many struggles. “I believed,” said he, “and without knowing it, taught all the doctrines of John Huss. So did Staupitz. In short, without suspecting it, we are all Hussites, as are also St. Paul and St. Augustine. I am confounded at it, and know not what to think.… O what dreadful judgments have not men merited from God! Evangelical truth, when unfolded, and published more than a century ago, was condemned, burned, and suppressed.… Woe! Woe to the earth!”

Luther disengaged himself from the papacy, regarding it with decided aversion and holy indignation. All the witnesses, who in every age had risen up against Rome came successively before him to testify against her, and unveil some of her abuses or errors. “O darkness!” exclaimed he.

He was not allowed to be silent as to these sad discoveries. The pride of his adversaries, their pretended triumph, and the efforts which they made to extinguish the light, fixed his decision. He advanced in the path in which God was leading him, without any uneasiness as to the result. Luther has fixed upon this as the moment of his emancipation from the papal yoke—“Learn by me,” said he, “how difficult it is to disencumber oneself of errors which the whole world confirms by its example, and which, from long habit, have become a second nature. For seven years I had been reading, and, with great zeal, publicly expounding the Holy Scriptures, so that I had them almost entirely by heart.2 I had also all the rudiments of knowledge and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,—that is to say, I knew that we were not justified and saved by our works, but by faith in Christ: and I even maintained openly, that the pope is not head of the Christian Church by divine authority. And yet … I could not see the inference, viz.—that certainly and necessarily the pope is of the devil. For whatever is not of God must, of necessity, be of the devil.” Further on, Luther adds—“I no longer vent my indignation against those who are still attached to the pope, since I myself, after reading the Holy Scriptures so carefully, and for so many years, still clung to the pope with so much obstinacy.”4

Such were the true results of the discussion of Leipsic—results far more important than the discussion itself, and resembling those first successes which discipline an army and inflame its courage.

CHAP. VII

Eck attacks Melancthon—Melancthon's defence—Interpretation of Scripture—Luther's firmness—The Bohemian Brethren—Emser—Staupitz.

Eck abandoned himself to all the intoxication of what he would fain have passed off as a victory. He kept tearing at Luther, and heaped accusation upon accusation against him. He also wrote to Frederick. Like a skilful general, he wished to take advantage of the confusion which always succeeds a battle, in order to obtain important concessions from the prince. Preparatory to the steps which he meant to take against his opponent personally, he invoked the flames against his writings, even those of them which he had not read. Imploring the Elector to convene a provincial council, the coarse-minded doctor exclaimed, "Let us exterminate all this vermin before they multiply out of measure."6

Luther was not the only person against whom he vented his rage. He had the imprudence to call Melancthon into the field. Melancthon, who was in terms of the greatest intimacy with the excellent Œcolampadius, gave him an account of the discussion, and spoke of Eck in eulogistic terms. Nevertheless, the pride of the chancellor of Ingolstadt was offended, and he immediately took up the pen against this "grammarian of Wittemberg, who, it is true," said he, "was not ignorant of Latin and Greek, but had dared to publish a letter in which he had insulted him, Dr. Eck."2

Melancthon replied. It is his first theological writing, and displays the exquisite urbanity which characterised this excellent man. Laying down the fundamental principles of Hermeneutics, he shows that the Holy Scriptures ought not to be explained according to the Fathers, but the Fathers according to the Holy Scriptures. "How often," says he, "did not Jerome commit mistakes, how often Augustine, how often Ambrose; how often do they differ in opinion, how often do they retract their own errors; … there is only one volume inspired by the Spirit of heaven—pure and true throughout."

"Luther," it is said, "does not follow some ambiguous expositions of the ancients, and why should he follow them? When he expounds the passage of St. Matthew, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church," he agrees with Origen, who by himself alone is worth a host; with Augustine in his homily, and Ambrose in his sixth book on St. Luke, to say nothing of others. What, then, you will say, do the Fathers contradict each other? Is it surprising that they should? I believe in the Fathers, because I believe in the Holy Scriptures. The meaning of Scripture is one, and simple, like heavenly truth herself. We arrive at it by comparing different passages together; we deduce it from the thread and connection of the discourse.5 There is a philosophy enjoined us in regard to the Book of God, and it is to employ it as the touch-stone by which all the opinions and maxims of men must be tried."

It was a long time since these great truths had been so elegantly expounded. The Word of God was restored to its proper place, and the Fathers to theirs. The simple method by which we ascertain the meaning of Scripture was distinctly traced. The Word had precedence over all the difficulties and the expositions of the School. Melancthon furnished the answer to those who, like Dr. Eck, would envelope this subject in the mists of a remote antiquity. The feeble grammarian had risen up, and the broad and sturdy shoulders of the scholastic gladiator had bent under the first pressure of his arm. The weaker Eck was, the more noise he made, as if his rhodomontades and

accusations were to secure the victory which he had failed to obtain in debate. The monks and all the partisans of Rome re-echoing his clamour, Germany rang with invectives against Luther, who, however, remained passive. “The more I see my name covered with opprobrium,” said he in finishing the expositions which he published, on the propositions of Leipsic, “the prouder I feel; the truth, in other words, Christ, must increase, but I must decrease. The voice of the Bridegroom and the bride delights me more than all this clamour dismays me. Men are not the authors of my sufferings, and I have no hatred against them. It is Satan, the prince of evil, who would terrify me. But he who is in us is greater than he who is in the world. The judgment of our contemporaries is bad; that of posterity will be better.”

If the Leipsic discussion multiplied Luther’s enemies in Germany, it also increased the number of his friends abroad; “What Huss was formerly in Bohemia, you, O Martin, are now in Saxony,” wrote the brothers of Bohemia to him; “wherefore pray and be strong in the Lord.”

About this time war was declared between Luther and Emser, now a professor of Leipsic. The latter addressed a letter to Dr. Zach, a zealous Roman Catholic of Prague, in which his professed object was to disabuse the Hussites of the idea that Luther was of their party. Luther could not doubt that under the semblance of defending him, the learned Leipsicker’s real purpose was to fasten on him a suspicion of adhering to the Bohemian heresy, and he resolved to tear aside the veil under which his old Dresden host was endeavouring to shroud his enmity. With this view he published a letter addressed to the “goat Emser,” Emser’s arms being a goat. Luther concludes with a sentiment which well delineates his own character, “To love all, but fear none.”

While new friends and new enemies thus appeared, old friends seemed to draw off from Luther. Staupitz, who had been the means of bringing the Reformer out of the obscurity of the cloister of Erfurt, began to show him some degree of coolness. Luther was rising too high for Staupitz to follow him.—“You abandon me,” wrote Luther to him. “The whole day I have been exceedingly grieved on your account, like a child just weaned and weeping for its mother. Last night,” continues the Reformer, “I dreamed of you, you were keeping aloof from me, and I was sobbing and shedding tears; then you gave me your hand, and told me to dry up my tears, for you would return to me.” The pacificator, Miltitz, wished to make a new attempt at conciliation. But what hold can be had on men while still under the excitement of the contest? His endeavours led to no result. He brought the famous rose of gold, but the Elector did not even take the trouble to receive it in person. Frederick knew the artifices of Rome, and was not to be imposed upon.3

CHAP. VIII

Epistle to the Galatians—Christ for us—Blindness of Luther’s Adversaries—First Ideas on the Supper—Is the Sacrament Sufficient without Faith?—Luther a Bohemian—Eck attacked—Eck sets out for Rome.

Far from drawing back, Luther uniformly continued to advance, and at this time struck one of his severest blows at error, by publishing his first commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. It is true, the second commentary was superior to the first; but still the first contained a forcible exposition of the doctrine of justification by faith. Every expression of the new apostle was full of life, and God employed him to imbue the hearts of the people with divine knowledge. “Christ gave himself for our sins,” said Luther to his contemporaries.5 “It was not silver or gold that he gave for

us, nor was it a man or angels. He gave himself—himself, out of whom there is no true greatness; and this incomparable treasure he gave … for our sins. Where, now, are those who proudly boast of the powers of our will? where are the lessons of moral philosophy? where the power and strength of the law? Our sins being so great that they cannot possibly be taken away without an immense ransom, shall we pretend to acquire righteousness by the energy of our will, by the power of the law, and the doctrines of men? What will all these cunning devices, all these illusions, avail us? Ah! we will only cover our iniquities with a spurious righteousness and convert ourselves into hypocrites, whom no worldly power can save." But while Luther thus proves that man's only salvation is in Christ, he also shows how this salvation changes his nature, and enables him to abound in good works. "The man," says he, who has truly heard the word of Christ, and keeps it, is immediately clothed with the spirit of charity. If thou lovest him who has made thee a present of twenty florins, or done thee some service, or in some way given thee a proof of his affection, how much more oughtest thou to love him, who, on thy account, has given not silver or gold, but himself, received so many wounds, endured a bloody sweat, and even died for thee; in one word, who, in paying for all thy sins, has annihilated death, and secured for thee a Father full of love in heaven!… If thou lovest him not, thy heart has not listened to the things which he has done; thou hast not believed them; for faith works by love." "This epistle," said Luther, in speaking of the Epistle to the Galatians, "is my epistle—I am married to it." His opponents caused him to proceed at a quicker pace than he would otherwise have done. At this time Eck instigated the Franciscans of Juterbock to make a new attack upon him; and Luther, in his reply, not satisfied with repeating what he had already taught, attacked errors which he had recently discovered. "I would fain know," says he, "in what part of Scripture the power of canonising saints has been given to the popes; and also what the necessity, or even the utility is, of canonising them?" … "However," adds he, ironically, "let them canonise as they will."2

These new attacks of Luther remained unanswered. The blindness of his enemies was as favourable to him as his own courage. They passionately defended secondary matters, and said not a word when they saw the foundations of Roman doctrine shaking under his hand. While they were eagerly defending some outworks, their intrepid adversary penetrated into the heart of the citadel, and there boldly planted the standard of truth; and hence their astonishment, when they saw the fortress sapped, blazing, and falling to pieces amid the flames, at the moment when they thought it impregnable, and were hurling defiance at their assailants. Thus it is that great changes are accomplished. The sacrament of the Lord's supper began, at this time, to engage Luther's attention. He looked for it in the mass, but in vain. One day, shortly after his return from Leipsic, he mounted the pulpit. Let us mark his words, for they are the first which he pronounced, on a subject which afterwards divided the Church and the Reformation into two parties. "In the holy sacrament of the altar," says he, "there are three things which it is necessary to know; the sign, which must be external, visible, and under a corporal form; the thing signified, which is internal, spiritual, and within the mind; and faith, which avails itself of both." Had the definitions not been pushed farther, unity would not have been destroyed.

Luther continues. "It were good that the Church should, by a general council, decree that both kinds shall be distributed to all the faithful: not, however, on the ground that one kind is insufficient, for faith by itself would be sufficient." These bold words pleased his audience, though some were astonished and offended, and exclaimed, "This is false and scandalous." The preacher continues.

“There is no union closer, deeper, or more inseparable than that between food and the body which is nourished by it. In the sacrament, Christ unites himself to us so closely that he acts in us as if he were identified with us. Our sins attack him. His righteousness defends us.” But Luther, not deeming it enough to expound the truth, attacks one of the most fundamental errors of Rome. The Roman Church pretends that the sacrament operates by itself, independently of the disposition of him who receives it. Nothing can be more convenient than such an opinion, since to it, both the eagerness with which the sacrament is sought, and the profits of the clergy are to be ascribed. Luther attacks this doctrine,4 and maintains its opposite—viz., that faith and a right disposition of heart are indispensable. This energetic protestation was destined to overthrow ancient superstitions; but, strange to say, it attracted no attention. Rome overlooked what might have made her scream in agony, and impetuously attacked the unimportant observation which Luther threw out at the commencement of his discourse, concerning communion in two kinds. The discourse having been published in December, a general cry of heresy was raised. “It is just the doctrine of Prague unadulterated,” was the exclamation at the Court of Dresden, where the sermon arrived during the Christmas festivals. “It is written, moreover, in German, in order to make it accessible to the common people.” The devotion of the prince was troubled, and on the third day of the festival he wrote to his cousin Frederick. “Since the publication of this discourse, the number of persons who receive the sacrament in two kinds has received an increase of 6000. Your Luther, from being a professor of Wittemberg, is on the eve of becoming a bishop of Prague, and an arch-heretic.” … The cry was, “he was born in Bohemia, of Bohemian parents, he was brought up at Prague, and trained in the writings of Wickliffe.”

Luther judged it right to contradict these rumours in a writing in which he gravely detailed his parentage. “I was born at Eisleben,” said he, “and was baptised in St. Peter’s church. The nearest town to Bohemia in which I have ever been, is Dresden.” The letter of Duke George did not prejudice the Elector against Luther, for a few days after he invited him to a splendid entertainment which he gave to the Spanish ambassador, and at which Luther valiantly combated the minister of Charles. The Elector’s chaplain had, by his master’s order, requested Luther to use moderation in defending his cause. “Excessive folly displeases man,” replied Luther to Spalatin, “but excessive wisdom displeases God. The gospel cannot be defended without tumult and scandal. The word of God is sword, war, ruin, scandal, destruction, poison;”4 and, hence, as Amos expresses it, “it presents itself like a bear in the path, and a lioness in the forest. I ask nothing, I demand nothing. There is one greater than I who asks and demands. Whether he stands or falls, I am neither gainer nor loser.”

It was obvious that faith and courage were about to become more necessary to Luther than ever. Eck was forming projects of revenge. Instead of the laurels which he had counted on gaining, he had become a laughing-stock to all men of intellect throughout the nation. Cutting satires were published against him. Eck was cut to the very heart by “An Epistle of Ignorant Canons,” written by Œcolompadius, and a complaint against him probably by the excellent Pirckheimer of Nuremberg, exhibiting a combination of sarcasm and dignity of which the ‘Provincial Letters’ of Pascal alone can give some idea.

Luther expressed his dissatisfaction with some of these writings. “It is better,” said he, “to attack openly than to keep barking behind a hedge.”

How greatly the chancellor of Ingolstadt had miscalculated! His countrymen abandon him, and he prepares for a journey beyond the Alps, to invoke the aid of strangers. Wherever he goes he vents his threatenings against Luther, Melancthon, Carlstadt, and the Elector himself. “From the haughtiness of his expressions,” says the doctor of Wittemberg, “one would say he imagines himself to be God Almighty.” Inflamed with rage, and thirsting for vengeance, Eck, having in February, 1520, published a work on the primacy of St. Peter,—a work devoid of sound criticism, in which he maintained that this apostle, the first of the popes, resided for twenty-five years at Rome—set out for Italy in order to receive the reward of his pretended triumphs, and to forge at Rome, near the papal capitol, thunders mightier than the frail scholastic arms which had given way in his hands.

Luther was aware of all the dangers to which the journey of his antagonist would expose him—but he feared not. Spalatin, alarmed, urged him to make proposals of peace. “No,” replied Luther, “so long as he clamours, I cannot decline the contest. I commit the whole affair to God, and leave my bark to the winds and waves. It is the battle of the Lord. How can it be imagined that Christ will advance his cause by peace? Did he not combat even unto death, and have not all the martyrs since done the same?”

Such was the position of the two combatants of Leipsic, at the commencement of the year 1520. The one was stirring up the whole papacy to strike a blow at his rival, who, on his part, waited for war as calmly as if he had been waiting for peace. The year on which we are entering will see the bursting of the storm.

BOOK SIXTH The bull of rome

1520

CHAP. I

Character of Maximilian—The Competitors for the Empire—Charles—Francis I—Inclination of the Germans—The Crown offered to Frederick—Charles is Elected. A new character was going to appear upon the stage. God saw meet to place the monk of Wittemberg in presence of the most powerful monarch who had appeared in Christendom since Charlemagne. He chose a prince, in the fervid vigour of youth, to whom every thing presaged a reign of long duration—a prince whose sceptre extended over a considerable portion both of the old and the new world; so that, according to a celebrated expression, the sun never set on his vast dominions—and opposed him to this humble Reformation, which began with the anguish and sighs of a poor monk, in the obscure cell of a convent at Erfurt. The history of this monarch and his reign seems to have been destined to give a great lesson to the world. It was to show the nothingness of all “the power of man,” when it presumes to contend with “the weakness of God.” Had a prince, friendly to Luther, been called to the empire, the success of the Reformation would have been attributed to his protection. Had even an emperor opposed to the new doctrine, but feeble, occupied the throne, the triumphant success of the work would have been accounted for by the feebleness of the monarch. But it was the proud conqueror of Pavia who behoved to humble his pride before the power of the Divine Word, that all the world might see how he, who had found it easy to drag Francis I a captive to Madrid, was compelled to lower his sword before the son of a poor miner. The Emperor Maximilian was dead, and the electors had met at Frankfort to give him a successor. In the circumstances in which

Europe was placed, this election was of vast importance, and was regarded with deep interest by all Christendom. Maximilian had not been a great prince; but his memory was dear to the people, who took a pleasure in remembering his presence of mind and good-humoured affability. Luther often talked of him to his friends, and one day related the following anecdote. A beggar had kept running after him asking charity, and addressing him as his brother; “for,” said he, “we are both descended from the same father, Adam. I am poor,” continued he, “but you are rich, and it is your duty to assist me.” At these words the emperor turned round and said to him—“Hold, there’s a penny: go to your other brothers, and if each gives you as much, you will soon be richer than I am.” The person about to be called to the empire was not a good-natured Maximilian. Times were to undergo a change; ambitious potentates were competing for the imperial throne of the West; the reins of the empire were to be seized by an energetic hand; profound peace was to be succeeded by long and bloody wars. At the assembly of Frankfort, three kings aspired to the crown of the Cæsars. A youthful prince, grandson of the last emperor, born at the opening of the century, and consequently nineteen years of age, first presented himself. He was named Charles, and was born at Ghent. His paternal grandmother, Mary, daughter of Charles the Bold, had left him Flanders and the rich States of Burgundy. His mother, Joan, daughter of Ferdinand of Arragon and Isabella of Castile, and wife of Philip, son of the Emperor Maximilian, had transmitted to him the united kingdoms of Spain, Naples, and Sicily, to which Christopher Columbus had added a new world, while the recent death of his grandfather put him in possession of the hereditary States of Austria. This young prince, who was endowed with great talents. To a turn for military exercises (in which the dukes of Burgundy had long been distinguished)—to the finesse and penetration of the Italians—to the reverence for existing institutions which still characterises the house of Austria, and promised the papacy a firm defender, he joined a thorough knowledge of public affairs, acquired under the direction of Chièvres, having from fifteen years of age taken part in all the deliberations of his cabinet. These diversified qualities were, in a manner, shrouded under Spanish reserve and taciturnity. In personal appearance he was tall in stature, and had somewhat of a melancholy air. “He is pious and tranquil,” said Luther, “and I believe does not speak as much in a year as I do in a day.”3 Had the character of Charles been formed under the influence of freedom and Christianity, he would perhaps have been one of the most admirable princes on record; but politics engrossed his life, and stifled his great and good qualities. Not contented with all the sceptres which he grasped in his hand, young Charles aspired to the imperial dignity. “It is like a sunbeam, which throws lustre on the house which it illumines,” said several, “but put forth the hand to lay hold of it and you will find nothing.” Charles, on the contrary, saw in it the pinnacle of all earthly grandeur, and a means of acquiring a magic influence over the spirit of the nations.

Francis I was the second of the competitors. The young paladins of the court of this chivalric king were incessantly representing to him that he was entitled, like Charlemagne, to be the emperor of all the West, and reviving the exploits of the ancient knights, to attack the crescent which was menacing the empire, discomfit the infidels, and recover the holy sepulchre.

“It is necessary,” said the ambassadors of Francis to the electors, “it is necessary to prove to the Dukes of Austria, that the imperial crown is not hereditary. Besides, in existing circumstances, Germany has need not of a young man of nineteen, but of a prince who, to an experienced judgment, joins talents which have already been recognised. Francis will unite the arms of Franco and Lombardy to those of Germany, and make war on the Mussulmans. Sovereign of the duchy of

Milan, he is already a member of the imperial body." These arguments, the French ambassadors supported by four hundred thousand crowns, which they distributed in purchasing votes and in festivities, by which they endeavoured to gain over their guests. The third competitor was Henry VIII, who, jealous of the influence which the choice of the electors might give to Francis or Charles, also entered the lists, but soon left his powerful rivals sole disputants for the crown. The electors were not disposed to favour either. Their subjects thought they would have in Francis a foreign master, and a master who might deprive the electors themselves of their independence, as he had lately deprived the nobles of his own dominions. As to Charles, it was an ancient rule with the electors not to choose a prince who was already playing an important part in the empire. The pope shared in these fears. He wished neither the king of Naples, who was his neighbour, nor the king of France, whose enterprising spirit filled him with alarm; "Choose rather some one from amongst yourselves," was his message to the electors. The elector of Trèves proposed Frederick of Saxony, and the imperial crown was laid at the feet of Luther's friend. This choice would have obtained the approbation of all Germany. Frederick's wisdom, and affection for his people, were well known. During the revolt of Erfurt, he had been urged to take the town by assault, and refused, in order to spare blood. "But it will not cost five men." "A single man would be too many," replied the prince. The triumph of the Reformation seemed on the eve of being secured by the election of its protector. Ought not Frederick to have regarded the offer of the electors as a call from God himself? Who could have presided better over the destinies of the empire than a prince of so much wisdom? Who could have been stronger to oppose the Turks than an emperor strong in faith? The refusal of the Elector of Saxony, so much lauded by historians, was perhaps a fault. For the contests which afterwards tore Germany to pieces he is perhaps partly to blame. But it is difficult to say whether Frederick deserves censure for his want of faith or honour for his humility. He thought that even the safety of the empire made it his duty to refuse the crown.2 "To save Germany," said this modest and disinterested prince, "an emperor more powerful than I is requisite." The legate of Rome seeing that the choice would fall upon Charles, intimated that the pope withdrew his objections; and on the 28th of June, the grandson of Maximilian was elected. "God," said Frederick afterwards, "gave him to us in mercy and in anger." The Spanish envoys sent a present of thirty thousand gold florins to the Elector of Saxony, as a mark of their master's gratitude; but the prince refused it, and charged his ministers not to accept of any present. At the same time he secured the German liberties by an engagement, to which the envoys of Charles took an oath in his name. The circumstances in which the latter prince encircled his head with the imperial crown seemed still better fitted than the oath to secure the Germanic liberties, and the success of the Reformation. The young prince was jealous of the laurels which his rival, Francis I, had gained at Marignan. The struggle was to be continued in Italy, and in the meantime the Reformation would doubtless be made secure. Charles left Spain in May, 1520, and was crowned on the 22nd of October, at Aix-la-Chapelle.

CHAP. II

Luther writes to the Emperor—Luther's dangers—Instructions of Frederick to the court of Rome—Luther's sentiments—Melancthon's fears—The German nobles favourable to the Reformation—Schaumburg—Seckingen—Ulric de Hütten—Luther's Confidence—Luther's Greater Freedom—Faith the source of Works—What Faith gives—Luther judging his own writings.

Luther had foreseen that the cause of the Reformation would soon be brought before the new emperor; and, when Charles was still at Madrid, addressed a letter to him, in which he said, “If the cause which I defend is worthy of being presented before the heavenly Majesty, it cannot be unworthy of engaging the attention of a prince of this world. O, Charles! prince of the kings of the earth, I cast myself as a suppliant at the feet of your most serene majesty, and beseech you to deign to take under the shadow of your wings, not me, but the very cause of eternal truth, for the defence of which God has entrusted you with the sword.” The young king of Spain threw aside this odd letter from a German monk, and returned no answer.

While Luther was turning in vain toward Madrid, the storm seemed gathering around him. Fanaticism was rekindled in Germany. Hochstraten, indefatigable in his efforts at persecution, had extracted certain theses from Luther’s writings, and obtained their condemnation by the universities of Cologne and Louvain. That of Erfurt, which had always had a grudge at Luther, for having given Wittemberg the preference, was on the eve of following their example. But the doctor, having been informed of it, wrote Lange, in terms so energetic that the theologians of Erfurt took fright, and said nothing. Still, however, there was enough to inflame the minds of men in the condemnation pronounced by Cologne and Louvain. More than this; the priests of Misnia who had espoused Emser’s quarrel said openly (such is Melancthon’s statement) that there would be no sin in killing Luther. “The time is come,” said Luther, “when men think they will do Jesus Christ service by putting us to death.” The murderous language of the priests did not fail of its effect.

“One day,” says a biographer, “when Luther was in front of the Augustin convent, a stranger, with a pistol hid under his arm, accosted him, and said, Why do you walk about thus quite alone?” “I am in the hands of God,” replied Luther; “He is my strength and my shield.” “Thereupon,” adds the biographer, “the stranger grew pale, and fled trembling.” About the same time Serra Longa, the orator of the conference of Augsburg, wrote to the Elector, “Let not Luther find any asylum in the states of your highness, but, repulsed by all, let him be stoned to death in the face of heaven. This would please me more than a gift of ten thousand crowns.”2 But the sound of the gathering storm was heard, especially in the direction of Rome. Valentine Teutleben, a noble of Thuringia, vicar of the Archbishop of Mentz, and a zealous partisan of the papacy, was the representative of the Elector of Saxony at Rome. Teutleben, ashamed of the protection which his master gave to the heretical monk, could not bear to see his mission paralysed by this imprudent conduct; and imagined that, by alarming the Elector, he would induce him to abandon the rebel theologian. Writing to his master, he said, “I am not listened to, because of the protection which you give to Luther.” But the Romans were mistaken if they thought they could frighten sage Frederick. He knew that the will of God and the movements of the people were more irresistible than the decrees of the papal chancery. He ordered his envoy to hint to the pope that, far from defending Luther, he had always left him to defend himself, that he had moreover told him to quit Saxony and the university, that the doctor had declared his readiness to obey, and would not now be in the electoral states had not the legate, Charles de Miltitz, begged the prince to keep him near himself, from a fear that in other countries he would act with still less restraint than in Saxony. Frederick did still more; he tried to enlighten Rome. “Germany,” continues he, in his letter, “now possesses a great number of learned men distinguished for scholarship and science; the laity themselves begin to cultivate their understanding, and to love the Holy Scriptures. Hence, there is great reason to fear that, if the equitable proposals of Doctor Luther are not accepted, peace will never be

reestablished. The doctrine of Luther has struck its roots deep in many hearts. If, instead of refuting it by passages from the Bible, an attempt is made to crush him by the thunders of ecclesiastical power, great scandal will be given, and pernicious and dreadful outbreaks will ensue."4 The Elector, having full confidence in Luther, caused Teutleben's letter to be communicated to him, and also another letter from cardinal St. George. The Reformer was moved on reading them. He at once saw all the dangers by which he was surrounded, and for an instant his heart sank. But it was in such moments as these that his faith displayed its full power. Often, when feeble and ready to fall into despondency, he rallied again, and seemed greater amid the raging of the storm. He would fain have been delivered from all these trials; but, aware of the price that must have been paid for repose, he spurned it with indignation. "Be silent!" said he, "I am disposed to be so, if I am allowed—that is to say, if others are silent. If any one envies my situation he is welcome to it. If any one is desirous to destroy my writings, let him burn them. I am ready to remain quiet, provided gospel truth is not compelled to be quiet also. I ask not a cardinal's hat; I ask neither gold, nor aught that Rome esteems. There is nothing which I will not concede, provided Christians are not excluded from the way of salvation.2 All their threatenings do not terrify—all their promises cannot seduce me."

Animated by these sentiments, Luther soon resumed his warlike temperament, preferring the Christian combat to the calmness of solitude. One night was sufficient to revive his desire of over throwing Rome. "My part is taken," wrote he next day. "I despise the fury of Rome, and I despise her favour. No more reconciliation, nor more communication with her for ever. Let her condemn and burn my writings! I, in my turn, will condemn and publicly burn the pontifical law, that nest of all heresies. The moderation which I have shown up to this hour has been useless, and I have done with it!" His friends were far from feeling equally tranquil. Great alarm prevailed at Wittemberg. "We are waiting in extreme anxiety," said Melancthon. "I would sooner die than be separated from Luther. Unless God come to our assistance we perish." Writing a month later, in his anxiety, he says, "Our Luther still lives, and God grant he long may; for the Roman sycophants are using every mean to destroy him. Pray for the life of him who is sole vindicator of sound theology."5

These prayers were not in vain. The warnings which the Elector had given Rome, through his envoy, were not without foundation. The word of Luther had been every where heard, in cottages, and convents, at the firesides of the citizens, in the castles of nobles, in academies, and in the palaces of kings. He had said to Duke John of Saxony, "Let my life only have contributed to the salvation of a single individual, and I will willingly consent that all my books perish." Not a single individual, but a great multitude, had found light in the writings of the humble doctor; and hence, in all quarters, there were men ready to protect him. The sword which was to attack him was on the anvil of the Vatican; but there were heroes in Germany who would interpose their bodies as his buckler. At the moment when the bishops were waxing wroth, when princes were silent, when the people were awaiting the result, and when the thunder was already grumbling on the seven hills, God raised up the German nobility, and placed them as a rampart around his servant. At this time Sylvester of Schaumburg, one of the most powerful nobles of Franconia, sent his son to Wittemberg with a letter for the Reformer, in which he said, "Your life is exposed to danger. If the support of electors, princes, or magistrates fails you, I beg you to beware of going into Bohemia, where, of old, very learned men had much to suffer; come rather to me; God willing, I shall soon have collected more than a hundred gentlemen, and with their help, will be able to keep you free

from harm."

Francis of Seckingen, the hero of his age, whose intrepid courage we have already seen, loved the Reformer, because he found that he was worthy of love, and also because he was hated by the monks.4 "My person, my property, and services, all that I possess," wrote he to him, "is at your disposal. Your wish is to maintain Christian truth, and in that I am ready to assist you." Harmuth of Cronberg, spoke in similar terms. Ulric von Hütten, the poet and valiant knight of the sixteenth century, ceased not to speak in commendation of Luther. But how great the contrast between these two men! Hütten wrote to the Reformer—"We must have swords, bows, javelins, and bullets, to destroy the fury of the devil." Luther, on receiving these letters, exclaimed—"I have no wish that men should have recourse to arms and carnage In order to defend the gospel. It was by the Word the world was overcome, by the Word the Church has been saved, and by the Word will she be re-established." "I despise not his offers," said he on receiving the above letter from Schaumburg, "but still I wish to lean on none but Christ." So spake not the pontiffs of Rome when they waded in the blood of the Vaudois and Albigenses. Hütten was sensible of the difference between his cause and Luther's, and accordingly wrote with noble frankness: "I am occupied with the things of man, but you, rising to a far greater height, give yourself wholly to those of God."2 After thus writing, he set out to try, if possible, to gain over Ferdinand and Charles V to the truth.

Thus, on the one hand, Luther's enemies assail him, and on the other, his friends rise up to defend him. "My bark," says he, "floats here and there at the pleasure of the winds, … hope and fear reign by turns, but what matters it?" Still his mind was not uninfluenced by the marks of sympathy which he received. "The Lord reigns," said he, "and so visibly as to be almost palpable."5 Luther saw that he was no longer alone; his words had proved faithful, and the thought inspired him with new courage. Now that he has other defenders prepared to brave the fury of Rome, he will no longer be kept back by the fear of compromising the Elector. He becomes more free, and, if possible, more decided. This is an important period in the development of Luther's mind. Writing at this time to the Elector's chaplain, he says, "Rome must be made aware, that though she should succeed, by her menaces, in exiling me from Wittemberg, she will only damage her cause. Those who are ready to defend me against the thunders of the papacy are to be found not in Bohemia, but in the heart of Germany. If I have not yet done to my enemies all that I am preparing for them, they must ascribe it neither to my moderation nor to their tyranny, but to my fear of compromising the name of the Elector, and the prosperity of the university of Wittemberg. Now, that I have no longer any such fears, I will rush with new impetuosity on Rome and her courtiers."

Still Luther's hope was not placed on the great. He had often been urged to dedicate a book to Duke John, the Elector's brother, but had never done it. "I fear," he had said, "that the suggestion comes from himself. The Holy Scriptures must be subservient only to the glory of God's name." Luther afterwards laid aside his suspicions, and dedicated his discourse on good works to Duke John, a discourse in which he gives a forcible exposition of the doctrine of justification by faith, a mighty doctrine, whose power he rates far higher than the sword of Hütten, the army of Seckingen, or the protection of dukes and electors.

"The first, the noblest, the sublimest of all works," says he, "is faith in Jesus Christ. From this work all other works should proceed; they are all the vassals of faith, and from it alone derive their efficacy.

“If a man’s own heart assures him, that what he is doing is agreeable to God, the work is good should it be merely the lifting up of a straw, but in the absence of this assurance the work is not good, though it should be the raising of the dead. A pagan, a Jew, a Turk, a sinner, can do all other works, but to trust firmly in the Lord, and feel assured of pleasing him, are works of which none are capable but the Christian strengthened by grace.

“A Christian, who has faith in God, acts, at all times, with freedom and gladness, whereas, the man who is not at one with God is full of cares, and is detained in thraldom; he anxiously asks how many works he ought to do, he runs up and down interrogating this man and that man, and, nowhere finding any peace, does everything with dissatisfaction and fear.

“Hence, I have always extolled faith. But it is otherwise in the world: there the essential point is to have many works, works great and high, and of all dimensions, while it is a matter of indifference whether or not faith animates them. Thus men build their peace, not on the good pleasure of God, but on their own merits, that is to say, on the sand.… (Matthew 7:27)

“To preach faith is, it is said, to prevent good works; but though a single man should have in himself the powers of all men, or even of all creatures, the mere obligation of living by faith would be a task too great for him ever to accomplish. If I say to a sick person, be in health and you will have the use of your members—will it be said that I forbid him to use his members? Must not health precede labour? The same holds true in the preaching of faith; it must be before works, in order that works themselves may exist.

“Where then, you will ask, is this faith found, and how is it received? This, indeed, is the most important of all questions. Faith comes solely from Jesus Christ, who is promised, and given gratuitously.

“O, man! represent Christ to thyself, and consider how in him God manifests his mercy to thee without being anticipated by any merit on thy part. In this image of his grace receive the faith and assurance that all thy sins are forgiven thee. Works cannot produce it. It flows from the blood, the wounds, and the death of Christ, whence it wells up in the heart. Christ is the rock out of which come milk and honey. (Deuteronomy 32:1-52) Not being able to give an account of all Luther’s works, we have quoted some short fragments of this discourse on good works, on account of the opinion which the Reformer himself had of it. “It is in my judgment,” said he, “the best work that I have published.” He immediately subjoins this profound observation. “But I know that when any thing I write pleases myself, the infection of this bad leaven prevents it from pleasing others.” Melancthon, in sending a copy of this discourse to a friend, thus expressed himself, “Of all Greek and Latin authors none has come nearer the spirit of St. Paul than Luther.”3

CHAP. III The Papacy Attacked—Appeal to the Nobility—The Three Walls—All Christians are Priests—The Magistrate’s duty to Correct the Clergy—Abuses of Rome—Ruin of Italy—Dangers of Germany—The Pope—The Legates—The Monks—The Marriage of Priests—Celibacy—Festivals—The Bohemians—Charity—The Universities—The Empire—The Emperor must retake Rome—A Book not Published—Luther’s Modesty—Success of the Address. But the substitution of a system of meritorious works for the idea of grace and amnesty was not the only evil existing in the Church. A domineering power had risen up among the humble pastors of Christ’s flock. Luther must attack this usurped authority. A vague and distant rumour of Eck’s

intrigues and success at Rome awakened a warlike spirit in the Reformer, who, amid all his turmoil, had calmly studied the origin, progress, and usurpations of the papacy. His discoveries having filled him with surprise, he no longer hesitated to communicate them and strike the blow which was destined, like the rod of Moses of old, to awaken a whole nation out of a lethargy, the result of long bondage. Even before Rome had time to publish her formidable bull, he published his declaration of war. “The time of silence,” exclaims he, “is past; the time for speaking has arrived. The mysteries of Antichrist must at length be unveiled.” On the 24th June, 1502, he published his famous ‘Appeal to his Imperial Majesty, and the Christian Nobility of Germany, on the Reformation of Christianity.’ This work was the signal of the attack which was at once to complete the rupture and decide the victory.

“It is not from presumption,” says he, at the outset of this Treatise, “that I, who am only one of the people, undertake to address your lordships. The misery and oppression endured at this moment by all the States of Christendom, and more especially by Germany, wring from me a cry of distress. I must call for aid; I must see whether God will not give his Spirit to some one of our countrymen, and stretch out a hand to our unhappy nation. God has given us a young and generous prince, (the Emperor Charles V,) and thus filled our hearts with high hopes. But we too must, on our own part, do all we can.

“Now, the first thing necessary is, not to confide in our own great strength, or our own high wisdom. When any work otherwise good is begun in self-confidence, God casts it down, and destroys it. Frederick I, Frederick II, and many other emperors besides, before whom the world trembled, have been trampled upon by the popes, because they trusted more to their own strength than to God. They could not but fall. In this war we have to combat the powers of hell, and our mode of conducting it must be to expect nothing from the strength of human weapons—to trust humbly in the Lord, and look still more to the distress of Christendom than to the crimes of the wicked. It may be that, by a different procedure, the work would begin under more favourable appearances, but suddenly in the heat of the contest confusion would arise, bad men would cause fearful disaster, and the world would be deluged with blood. The greater the power, the greater the danger, when things are not done in the fear of the Lord.”

After this exordium, Luther continues:—

“The Romans, to guard against every species of reformation, have surrounded themselves with three walls. When attacked by the temporal power, they denied its jurisdiction over them, and maintained the superiority of the spiritual power. When tested by Scripture, they replied, that none could interpret it but the pope. When threatened with a council, they again replied, that none but the pope could convene it.

“They have thus carried off from us the three rods destined to chastise them, and abandoned themselves to all sorts of wickedness. But now may God be our help, and give us one of the trumpets which threw down the walls of Jericho. Let us blow down the walls of paper and straw which the Romans have built around them, and lift up the rods which punish the wicked, by bringing the wiles of the devil to the light of day.”

Luther next commences the attack, and shakes to the foundation that papal monarchy which had for ages united the nations of the West into one body under the sceptre of the Roman bishop.

There is no sacerdotal caste in Christianity. This truth, of which the Church was so early robbed, he vigorously expounds in the following terms:—

“It has been said that the pope, the bishops, the priests, and all those who people convents, form the spiritual or ecclesiastical estate; and that princes, nobles, citizens, and peasants, form the secular or lay estate. This is a specious tale. But let no man be alarmed. All Christians belong to the spiritual estate, and the only difference between them is in the functions which they fulfil. We have all but one baptism, but one faith, and these constitute the spiritual man. Unction, tonsure, ordination, consecration, given by the pope or by a bishop, may make a hypocrite, but can never make a spiritual man. We are all consecrated priests by baptism, as St. Peter says, ‘You are a royal priesthood;’ although all do not actually perform the offices of kings and priests, because no one can assume what is common to all, without the common consent. But if this consecration of God did not belong to us, the unction of the pope could not make a single priest. If ten brothers, the sons of one king, and possessing equal claims to his inheritance, should choose one of their number to administer for them, they would all be kings, and yet only one of them would be the administrator of their common power. So it is in the Church. Were several pious laymen banished to a desert, and were they, from not having among them a priest consecrated by a bishop, to agree in selecting one of their number, whether married or not, he would be as truly a priest, as if all the bishops of the world had consecrated him. In this way were Augustine, Ambrose, and Cyprian elected.

“Hence it follows that laymen and priests, princes and bishops, or, as we have said, ecclesiastics and laics, have nothing to distinguish them but their functions. They have all the same condition, but they have not all the same work to perform.

“This being so, why should not the magistrate correct the clergy? The secular power was appointed by God for the punishment of the wicked and the protection of the good, and must be left free to act throughout Christendom without respect of persons, be they pope, bishops, priests, monks, or nuns. St. Paul says to all Christians, ‘Let every soul,’ (and consequently the pope also,) ‘be subject to the higher powers; for they bear not the sword in vain.’ ”

Luther, after throwing down the other two walls in the same way, takes a review of all the abuses of Rome. With an eloquence of a truly popular description he exposes evils which had, for ages, been notorious. Never had a nobler remonstrance been heard. The assembly which Luther addresses is the Church, the power whose abuses he attacks is that papacy which had for ages been the oppressor of all nations, and the Reformation for which he calls aloud is destined to exercise its powerful influence on Christendom, all over the world, and so long as man shall exist upon it.

He begins with the pope. “It is monstrous,” says he, “to see him who calls himself the vicar of Jesus Christ displaying a magnificence, unequalled by that of any emperor. Is this the way in which he proves his resemblance to lowly Jesus, or humble Peter? He is, it is said, the lord of the world. But Christ, whose vicar he boasts to be, has said, ‘My kingdom is not of this world.” Can the power of a vicegerent exceed that of his prince?…”

Luther proceeds to depict the consequences of the papal domination. “Do you know of what use the cardinals are? I will tell you. Italy and Germany have many convents, foundations, and

benefices, richly endowed. How could their revenues be brought to Rome?… Cardinals were created; then, on them, cloisters and prelacies were bestowed, and at this hour…. Italy is almost a desert—the convents are destroyed—the bishopricks devoured—the towns in decay—the inhabitants corrupted—worship dying out, and preaching abolished…. Why? Because all the revenues of the churches go to Rome. Never would the Turk himself have so ruined Italy."

Luther next turns to his countrymen.

"And now that they have thus sucked the blood of their own country, they come into Germany. They begin gently, but let us be on our guard. Germany will soon become like Italy. We have already some cardinals. Their thought is—before the rustic Germans comprehend our design they will have neither bishoprick, nor convent, nor benefice, nor penny, nor farthing. Antichrist must possess the treasures of the earth. Thirty or forty cardinals will be elected in a single day; to one will be given Bamberg, to another the duchy of Wurtzburg, and rich benefices will be annexed until the churches and cities are laid desolate. And then the pope will say, 'I am the vicar of Christ, and the pastor of his flocks. Let the Germans be resigned.' "

Luther's indignation rises.

"How do we Germans submit to such robbery and concussion on the part of the pope? If France has successfully resisted, why do we allow ourselves to be thus sported with and insulted? Ah! if they deprived us of nothing but our goods. But they ravage churches, plunder the sheep of Christ, abolish the worship and suppress the word of God."

Luther then exposes the devices of Rome to obtain money and secure the revenues of Germany. Annats, palliums, commendams, administrations, expected favours, incorporations, reservations, etc., all pass in review. Then he says, "Let us endeavour to put a stop to this desolation and misery. If we would march against the Turks—let us begin with the worst species of them. If we hang pickpockets, and behead robbers, let us not allow Roman avarice to escape—avarice, which is the greatest of all thieves and robbers, and that too in the name of St. Peter and Jesus Christ. Who can endure it? Who can be silent? Is not all that the pope possesses stolen? He neither purchased it nor inherited it from St. Peter, nor acquired it by the sweat of his own brow. Where then did he get it?"

Luther proposes remedies for all these evils, and energetically arouses the German nobility to put an end to Roman depredation. He next comes to the reform of the pope himself. "Is it not ridiculous," says he, "that the pope should pretend to be the lawful heir of the empire? Who gave it to him? Was it Jesus Christ, when he said, 'The kings of the earth exercise lordship over them, but it shall not be so with you'? (Luke 22:25-26). How can he govern an empire, and at the same time preach, pray, study, and take care of the poor? Jesus Christ forbade his disciples to carry with them gold or clothes, because the office of the ministry cannot be performed without freedom from every other care; yet the pope would govern the empire, and at the same time remain pope." …

Luther continues to strip the sovereign pontiff of his spoils. "Let the pope renounce every species of title to the kingdom of Naples and Sicily. He has no more right to it than I have. His possession of Bologna, Imola, Ravenna, Romagna, Marche d■Ancona, etc., is unjust and contrary to the commands of Jesus Christ. 'No man,' says St. Paul, 'who goeth a warfare entangleth himself with the affairs of this life,' (2 Timothy 2:2). And the pope, who pretends to take the lead in the war of

the gospel, entangles himself more with the affairs of this life than any emperor or king. He must be disencumbered of all this toil. The emperor should put a bible and a prayer book into the hands of the pope, that the pope may leave kings to govern, and devote himself to preaching and prayer."

Luther is as averse to the pope's ecclesiastical power in Germany as to his temporal power in Italy. "The first thing necessary is to banish from all the countries of Germany, the legates of the pope, and the pretended blessings which they sell us at the weight of gold, and which are sheer imposture. They take our money—and why? For legalising ill gotten gain, for loosing oaths, and teaching us to break faith, to sin, and go direct to hell.… Hearest thou, O, pope! not pope most holy, but pope most sinful.… May God, from his place in heaven, cast down thy throne into the infernal abyss!" The Christian tribune pursues his course. After citing the pope to his bar, he cites all the abuses in the train of the papacy, and endeavours to sweep away from the Church all the rubbish by which it is encumbered. He begins with the monks.

"And now I come to a lazy band which promises much, but performs little. Be not angry, dear Sirs, my intention is good; what I have to say is a truth at once sweet and bitter; viz., that it is no longer necessary to build cloisters for mendicant monks. Good God! we have only too many of them, and would they were all suppressed.… To wander vagabond over the country never has done, and never will do good." The marriage of ecclesiastics comes next in course. It is the first occasion on which Luther speaks of it.

"Into what a state have the clergy fallen, and how many priests are burdened with women and children and remorse, while no one comes to their assistance? Let the pope and the bishops run their course, and let those who will, go to perdition; all very well! but I am resolved to unburden my conscience and open my mouth freely, however pope, bishops, and others may be offended!… I say, then, that according to the institution of Jesus Christ and the apostles, every town ought to have a pastor or bishop, and that this pastor may have a wife, as St. Paul writes to Timothy, "Let the bishop be the husband of one wife," (1 Timothy 3:2) and as is still practised in the Greek Church. But the devil has persuaded the pope, as St. Paul tells Timothy (1 Timothy 4:1-3), to forbid the clergy to marry. And hence, evils so numerous, that it is impossible to give them in detail. What is to be done? How are we to save the many pastors who are blameworthy only in this, that they live with a female, to whom they wish with all their heart to be lawfully united? Ah! let them save their conscience! let them take this woman in lawful wedlock, and live decently with her, not troubling themselves whether it pleases or displeases the pope. The salvation of your soul is of greater moment than arbitrary and tyrannical laws, laws not imposed by the Lord." In this way the Reformation sought to restore purity of morals within the Church. The Reformer continues:—

"Let feast-days be abolished, and let Sunday only be kept, or if it is deemed proper to keep the great Christian festivals, let them be celebrated in the morning, and let the remainder of the day be a working-day as usual. For by the ordinary mode of spending them in drinking and gaming and committing all sorts of sins, or in mere idleness, God is offended on festivals much more than on other days."

He afterwards attacks the dedications of Churches, (which he describes as mere taverns,) and after them fasts and fraternities. He desires not only to suppress abuses, but also to put an end to schisms. "It is time," says he, "to take the case of the Bohemians into serious consideration, that

hatred and envy may cease, and union be again established." He proposes excellent methods of conciliation, and adds—"In this way must heretics be refuted by Scripture, as the ancient fathers did, and not subdued by fire. On a contrary system, executioners would be the most learned of all doctors. Oh! would to God that each party among us would shake hands with each other in fraternal humility, rather than harden ourselves in the idea of our power and right! Charity is more necessary than the Roman papacy. I have now done what was in my power. If the pope or his people oppose it, they will have to give an account. The pope should be ready to renounce the popedom, and all his wealth, and all his honours, if he could thereby save a single soul. But he would see the universe go to destruction sooner than yield a hair-breadth of his usurped power. I am clear of these things."

Luther next comes to universities and schools.

"I much fear the universities will become wide gates to hell, if due care is not taken to explain the Holy Scriptures, and engrave it on the hearts of the students. My advice to every person is, not to place his child where the Scripture does not reign paramount. Every institution in which the studies carried on lead to a relaxed consideration of the Word of God must prove corrupting; a weighty sentiment, which governments, literary men, and parents in all ages would do well to ponder."

Towards the end of his address he returns to the empire and the emperor.

"The popes," says he, "unable to lead the ancient masters of the Roman empire at will, resolved on wresting their title and their empire from them and giving it to us Germans. This they accomplished, and we have become bondmen to the pope. For the pope has possessed himself of Rome, and bound the emperor by oath never to reside in it; and the consequence is, that the emperor is the emperor of Rome without having Rome. We have the name; the pope has the country and its cities. We have the title and the insignia of empire; the pope its treasury, power, privileges, and freedom. The pope eats the fruit, and we amuse ourselves with the husk. In this way our simplicity has always been abused by the pride and tyranny of the Romans.

"But now, may God who has given us such an empire, be our aid! Let us act conformably to our name, our title, our insignia; let us save our freedom, and give the Romans to know that, through their hands it was committed to us by God. They boast of having given us an empire. Very well! let us take what belongs to us. Let the pope surrender Rome, and every part of the empire that he possesses. Let him put an end to his taxes and extortions. Let him restore our liberty, our power, our wealth, our honour, our soul, and our body. Let the empire be all that an empire ought to be; and let the sword of princes no longer be compelled to lower itself before the hypocritical pretensions of a pope." In these words there is not only energy and eloquence, but also sound argument. Never did orator so speak to the nobility of the empire, and to the emperor himself. Far from being surprised that so many German states revolted from Rome we should rather wonder that all Germany did not proceed to the banks of the Tiber, and there resume that imperial power, the insignia of which the popes had imprudently placed on the head of their chief.

Luther thus concludes his intrepid address.

"I presume, however, that I have struck too high a note, proposed many things that will appear impossible, and been somewhat too severe on the many errors which I have attacked. But what can I do? Better that the world be offended with me than God!… The utmost which it can take from

me is life. I have often offered to make peace with my opponents, but, through their instrumentality God has always obliged me to speak out against them. I have still a chant upon Rome in reserve, and if they have an itching ear, I will sing it to them at full pitch. Rome! do ye understand me?" … It is probable that Luther here refers to a treatise on the papacy which he was preparing for publication, but which never was published. Rector Burkhard, writing at this time to Spengler, says, "There is, moreover, a short tract, De Execranda Venere Romanorum, but it is kept in reserve." The title of the work seems to intimate something which would have given great offence, and it is pleasing to think that Luther had moderation not to publish it.

"If my cause is just," continues he, "it must be condemned on the earth, and justified only by Christ in heaven. Therefore, let pope, bishops, priests, monks, doctors, come forward, display all their zeal, and give full vent to their fury. Assuredly they are just the people who ought to persecute the truth, as in all ages they have persecuted it." Where did this monk obtain this clear knowledge of public affairs, which even the states of the empire often find it so difficult to unravel? Whence did this German derive this courage which enables him to hold up his head among his countrymen who had been enslaved for so many ages, and deal such severe blows to the papacy? By what mysterious energy is he animated? Does it not seem that he must have heard the words which God addressed to one of ancient times; "Lo! I have strengthened thy face against their faces, I have made thy forehead like a diamond, and harder than flint; be not then afraid because of them"? This exhortation, being addressed to the German nobility, was soon in the hands of all those for whom it was intended. It spread over Germany with inconceivable rapidity. Luther's friends trembled, while Staupitz, and those who wished to follow gentle methods, thought the blow too severe. "In our days," replied Luther, "whatever is treated calmly falls into oblivion, and nobody cares for it." At the same time, he displayed extraordinary simplicity and humility. He was unconscious of his own powers. "I know not," writes he, "what to say of myself; perhaps I am the precursor of Philip (Melancthon). Like Elias, I am preparing the way for him, in spirit and in power, that he may one day trouble Israel, and the house of Ahab."2 But there was no occasion to wait for any other than he who had appeared. The house of Ahab was already shaken. The Address to the German Nobility was published on the 26th of June, 1520, and, in a short time, 4000 copies were sold, a number at that period unprecedented. The astonishment was universal, and the whole people were in commotion. The vigour, spirit, perspicuity, and noble boldness by which it was pervaded, made it truly a work for the people, who felt that one who spoke in such terms truly loved them. The confused views which many wise men entertained were enlightened. All became aware of the usurpations of Rome. At Wittemberg, no man had any doubt whatever, that the pope was Antichrist. Even the Elector's court, with all its timidity and circumspection, did not disapprove of the Reformer, but only awaited the issue. The nobility and the people did not even wait. The nation was awakened, and, at the voice of Luther, adopted his cause, and rallied around his standard. Nothing could have been more advantageous to the Reformer than this publication. In palaces, in castles, in the dwellings of the citizens, and even in cottages, all are now prepared, and made proof, as it were, against the sentence of condemnation which is about to fall upon the prophet of the people. All Germany is on fire, and the bull, come when it may, never will extinguish the conflagration.

CHAP. IV

Preparations at Rome—Motives to resist the Papacy—Eck at Rome—Eck gains the Day—The Pope is the World—God produces the Separation—A Swiss Priest pleads for Luther—The Roman Consistory—Preamble of the Bull—Condemnation of Luther. At Rome every thing necessary for the condemnation of the defender of the liberty of the Church was prepared. Men had long lived there in arrogant security. The monks of Rome had long accused Leo X of devoting himself to luxury and pleasure, and of spending his whole time in hunting, theatricals, and music, while the Church was crumbling to pieces. At last, through the clamour of Dr. Eck, who had come from Leipsic to invoke the power of the Vatican, the pope, the cardinals, the monks, all Rome awoke and bestirred themselves to save the papacy.

Rome, in fact, was obliged to adopt the severest measures. The gauntlet had been thrown down, and the combat was destined to be mortal. Luther attacked not the abuses of the Roman pontificate, but the pontificate itself. At his bidding, the pope was humbly to descend from his throne, and again become a simple pastor, or bishop, on the banks of the Tiber. All the dignitaries of the Roman hierarchy were required to renounce their riches and worldly glory, and again become elders or deacons of the churches of Italy. All the splendour and power which had for ages dazzled the West behoved to vanish away and give place to the humble and simple worship of the primitive Christians. These things God could have done, and will one day do, but they were not to be expected from men. Even should a pope have been disinterested enough, and bold enough to attempt the overthrow of the ancient and sumptuous edifice of the Romish Church, thousands of priests and bishops would have rushed forward to its support. The pope had received power under the express condition of maintaining whatever was entrusted to him. Rome deemed herself appointed of God to govern the Church; and no wonder, therefore, that she was prepared with this view to adopt the most decisive measures. And yet, at the outset, she did show hesitation. Several cardinals and the pope himself, were averse to severe proceedings. Leo had too much sagacity not to be aware that a decision, the enforcement of which depended on the very dubious inclinations of the civil power, might seriously compromise the authority of the Church. He saw, moreover, that the violent methods already resorted to had only increased the evil. “Is it impossible to gain this Saxon monk?” asked the politicians of Rome. “Would all the power of the Church, and all the wiles of Italy, be ineffectual for this purpose? Negotiation must still be attempted.”

Eck accordingly encountered formidable obstacles. He neglected nothing to prevent what he termed impious concessions. Going up and down Rome, he gave vent to his rage, and cried for vengeance. The fanatical faction of the monks having immediately leagued with him he felt strong in this alliance, and proceeded with new courage to importune the pope and the cardinals. According to him all attempts at conciliation were useless. “The idea of it,” said he, “is only the vain dream of those who slumber at a distance from the scene. But he knew the danger; for he had wrestled with the audacious monk. The thing necessary was to amputate the gangrened limb, and so prevent the disease from attacking the whole body. The blustering disputant of Leipsic solves objections one after another, and endeavours, but finds it difficult to persuade the pope. He wishes to save Rome in spite of herself. Sparing no exertion, he spent whole hours in deliberation in the cabinet of the pontiff, and made application both to the court and the cloisters, to the people and the Church. “Eck is calling to the depth of depths against me,” said Luther, “and setting on fire the forests of Lebanon.”2 At length he succeeded. The fanatics in the councils of the papacy

vanquished the politicians. Leo gave way, and Luther's condemnation was resolved. Eck began again to breathe, and his pride felt gratified by the thought that his own efforts had procured the ruin of his heretical rival, and thereby saved the church. "It was well," said he, "that I came to Rome at this time, for little was known of Luther's errors. It will one day be seen how much I have done in this cause." No one exerted himself so much in seconding Dr. Eck as the master of the sacred palace, Sylvester Mazzolini De Prierio, who had just published a work, in which he maintained, that not only to the pope alone appertained the infallible decision of all debateable points, but also that papal ascendancy was the fifth monarchy of Daniel, and the only true monarchy; that the pope was the prince of all ecclesiastical, and the father of all secular princes, the chief of the world, and even in substance the world itself. In another writing he affirmed, that the pope is as much superior to the emperor as gold is to lead;5 that the pope can appoint and depose emperors and electors, establish and annul positive rights; and that the emperor, with all the laws and all the nations of Christendom, cannot decide the smallest matter contrary to the pope's will. Such was the voice which came forth from the palace of the sovereign pontiff, such the monstrous fiction which, in union with scholastic dogmas, aimed at suppressing reviving truth. Had this fiction not been unmasked, as it has been, and that even by learned members of the Catholic Church, there would have been neither true history nor true religion. The papacy is not merely a lie in regard to the Bible, it is also a lie in regard to the annals of nations. And hence the Reformation, by destroying its fascinating power, has emancipated not only the Church, but also kings and nations. The Reformation has been described as a political work, and in this secondary sense it truly was so.

Thus God sent a spirit of delusion on the doctors of Rome. The separation between truth and error must now be accomplished, and it is to error that the task is assigned. Had a compromise been entered into, it must have been at the expense of truth; for to mutilate truth in the slightest degree is to pave the way for her complete annihilation. Like the insect, which is said to die on the loss of one of its antennæ, she must be complete in all her parts, in order to display the energy which enables her to gain great and advantageous victories, and propagate herself through coming ages. To mingle any portion of error with truth is to throw a grain of poison into a large dish of food. The grain suffices to change its whole nature, and death ensues slowly, it may be; but yet surely. Those who defend the doctrine of Christ against the attacks of its adversaries keep as jealous an eye on its farthest outposts as on the citadel itself, for the moment the enemy gains any footing at all he is on the highway to conquest. The Roman pontiff determined at the period of which we now treat to rend the Church; and the fragment which remained in his hand, how splendid soever it may be, in vain endeavours under pompous ornaments to hide the deleterious principle by which it is attacked. It is only where the word of God is, that there is life. Luther, however great his courage was, would probably have been silent had Rome been so and made some faint show of concession. But God did not leave the Reformation to depend on a weak human heart. Luther was under the guidance of a clearer intellect than his own. The pope was the instrument in the hand of Providence to sever every tie between the past and the future, and launch the Reformer on a new, unknown, and to him uncertain career, and the difficult avenues to which he would, if left to himself, have been unable to find. The papal bull was a writing of divorce sent from Rome to the pure Church of Jesus Christ, as personified in him who was then her humble but faithful representative. And the Church accepted the writing on the understanding that she was thenceforth to depend on none but her heavenly Head.

While at Rome, Luther's condemnation was urged forward with so much violence, a humble priest, dwelling in one of the humble towns of Helvetia, and who had never had any correspondence with the Reformer, was deeply moved when he thought of the blow which was aimed at him; while even the friends of the Wittemberg doctor trembled in silence, this mountaineer of Switzerland resolved to employ every means to stay the formidable bull. His name was Ulrick Zwingle. William des Faucons, who was secretary to the papal Legate in Switzerland, and managed the affairs of Rome during the Legate's absence, was his friend, and a few days before had said to him, "while I live you may calculate on obtaining from me everything that a true friend can be expected to give." The Helvetian priest, trusting to this declaration, repaired to the Roman embassy. This, at least, may be inferred from one of his letters. For himself, he had no fear of the dangers to which evangelical faith exposed him, knowing that a disciple of Jesus Christ must always be ready to sacrifice his life; "All I ask of Christ for myself," said he to a friend to whom he was unbosoming his solicitude on Luther's account, "all I ask is to be able to bear like a man whatever evils await me. I am a vessel of clay in his hands. Let him break or let him strengthen me as seemeth to him good." But the Swiss evangelist had fears for the Christian Church, should this formidable blow reach the Reformer, and he endeavoured to persuade the representative of Rome to enlighten the pope, and employ all the means in his power to prevent him from launching an excommunication at Luther.2 "The dignity of the holy see itself," said he to him, "is here at stake, for if matters are brought to such a point, Germany, in the height of her enthusiasm for the gospel, and for its preacher, will despise the pope and his anathemas." The efforts of Zwingle were in vain. It appears, indeed, that when he was making them, the blow had been already struck. Such was the first occasion on which the paths of the Saxon doctor and the Swiss priest met. The latter we will again meet with in the course of this history, and will see him gradually expanding and growing until he obtain a high standing in the Church of the Lord.

After Luther's condemnation was at last resolved upon, new difficulties arose in the Consistory. The theologians wished to proceed at once to fulmination, whereas the lawyers were for beginning with a citation, asking their theological colleagues, "Was not Adam first cited? 'Adam, where art thou?' said the Lord. It was the same with Cain, the question asked at him was, 'where is thy brother, Abel?' " These strange arguments, drawn from Scripture, the canonists strengthened by appealing to the principles of the law of nature. "The certainty of a crime," said they, "cannot deprive the criminal of his right of defence." It is pleasing to find a sense of justice still existing in a Roman consistory. But these scruples did not suit the theologians, who, hurried on by passion, thought only of proceeding to business with despatch. It was at length agreed that the doctrine of Luther should be immediately condemned, and that a period of sixty days should be granted to him and his adherents; after which, provided they did not retract, they should all be, ipso facto, excommunicated. De Vio, who had returned from Germany in ill health, was carried to the meeting, that he might not lose this little triumph, which carried with it some degree of consolation. Having been defeated at Augsburg, he longed to be able at Rome to condemn the invincible monk, before whom his knowledge, finesse, and authority had proved unavailing. Luther not being there to reply, De Vio felt himself strong. A last conference, which Eck attended, was held in presence of the pope himself, in his villa at Malliano. On the 15th of June the sacred college resolved on condemnation, and approved of the famous bull.

“Arise, O Lord!” said the Roman pontiff, speaking at this solemn moment as vicar of God and head of the Church, “arise and be judge in thy own cause. Remember the insults daily offered to thee by infatuated men. Arise, O Peter, remember thy holy Roman Church, the mother of all churches, and mistress of the faith! Arise, O Paul, for here is a new Porphyry, who is attacking thy doctrines and the holy popes our predecessors! Arise, in fine, assembly of all the saints, holy Church of God, and intercede with the Almighty!” The pope afterwards quotes as pernicious, scandalous, and poisonous, forty-one propositions in which Luther had expounded the holy doctrine of the gospel. Among these propositions we find the following:—

“To deny that sin remains in an infant after baptism, is to trample St. Paul and our Lord Jesus Christ under foot.”

“A new life is the best and noblest penance.”

“To burn heretics is contrary to the will of the Holy Spirit, etc.” The moment this Bull is published,” continued the pope, “it will be the duty of the bishops to make careful search for the writings of Martin Luther, which contain these errors, and to burn them publicly and solemnly in presence of the clergy and laity. In regard to Martin himself, good God! what have we not done! Imitating the goodness of the Almighty, we are ready, even yet, to receive him into the bosom of the Church, and we give him sixty days to transmit his retractation to us in a writing sealed by two prelates; or, what will be more agreeable to us, to come to Rome in person, that no doubt may be entertained as to his submission. Meanwhile, and from this moment, he must cease to preach, teach, or write, and must deliver his works to the flames. If, in the space of sixty days, he do not retract, we, by these presents, condemn him and his adherents as public and absolute heretics.” The pope afterwards pronounces a multiplicity of excommunications, maledictions, and interdicts against Luther and all his adherents, with injunctions to seize their persons and send them to Rome. It is easy to conjecture what the fate of these noble confessors of the gospel would have been in the dungeons of the papacy. A thunder storm was thus gathering over the head of Luther. Some had been able to persuade themselves, after Reuchlin’s affair, that the Court at Rome would not again make common cause with the Dominicans and the Inquisitors. These, however, were again in the ascendant, and the old alliance was solemnly renewed. The Bull was published, and for ages the mouth of Rome had never pronounced a sentence of condemnation without following it up with a death blow. This murderous message was about to issue from the seven hills, and attack the Saxon monk in his cloister. The moment was well chosen. There were good grounds for supposing that the new emperor, who, for many reasons, was anxious to obtain the friendship of the pope, would hasten to merit it by the sacrifice of an obscure monk. Leo X, the cardinals, and all Rome, were exulting in the belief that their enemy was already in their power.

CHAP. V

Wittemberg—Melancthon—His Marriage—Catharine—Domestic Life—Beneficence—Good Humour—Christ and Antiquity—Labour—Love of Letters—His Mother—Outbreak among the Students.

While the inhabitants of the eternal city were thus agitated more tranquil events were occurring at Wittemberg, where Melancthon was shedding a soft but brilliant light. From 1500 to 2000 hearers, who had flocked from Germany, England, the Netherlands, France, Italy, Hungary, and Greece,

often assembled around him. He was twenty-four years of age, and had not taken orders. Every house in Wittemberg was open to this learned and amiable young professor. Foreign universities, in particular Ingolstadt, were desirous to gain him, and his Wittemberg friends wished to get him married, and thereby retain him among them. Luther, though he concurred in wishing that his dear Philip should have a female companion, declared openly that he would give no counsel in the matter. The task was undertaken by others. The young doctor was a frequent visitor of Burgomaster Krapp. The burgomaster was of an ancient family, and had a daughter named Catharine, remarkable for the mildness of her dispositions, and her great sensibility. Melancthon was urged to ask her in marriage; but the young scholar was buried among his books, and could talk of nothing else. His Greek authors and his New Testament were all his delight. He combated the arguments of his friends; but at length his consent was obtained, and all the arrangements having been made by others, Catharine became his wife. He received her with great coolness, and said, with a sigh, “God has willed it; so I must renounce my studies and my delights, to follow the wishes of my friends.”2 Still he appreciated the good qualities of Catharine. “The disposition and education of the girl,” said he, are such as I might have asked God to give her, δεξι■ ■ Θε■ς τεκμα■ροιτο. She certainly deserved a better husband.” The matter was settled in August. The espousals took place on the 25th of September, and the marriage was celebrated in the end of November. Old John Luther and his wife came with their daughters to Wittemberg on the occasion. Many learned and distinguished persons were also present. The young bride was as warm in her affection as the young professor was cold. Ever full of anxiety for her husband, Catharine took the alarm the moment she saw him threatened with even the semblance of danger. If Melancthon proposed to take any step which might compromise him, she urged and entreated him to abandon it. “On one of these occasions,” wrote Melancthon, “I was obliged to yield to her weakness.… It is our lot.” How much unfaithfulness in the Church has had a similar origin. To the influence of Catharine ought, perhaps, to be attributed the timidity and fears with which her husband has often been reproached. Catharine was as fond a mother as a wife. She gave liberally to the poor. “O God, leave me not in my old age, when my hair shall begin to turn grey!” Such was the frequent prayer of this pious and timorous soul. Melancthon was soon won by the affection of his wife. When he had tasted the pleasures of domestic society he felt how sweet they were, for he was of a nature to feel them. His happiest moments were beside his Catharine and her children. A French traveller having one day found the “preceptor of Germany” rocking his infant with one hand, and with a book in the other, started back in surprise; but Melancthon, without being discomposed, so warmly explained to him the value of children in the sight of God, that the stranger left the house, (to use his own words,) “wiser than he had entered it.” The marriage of Melancthon gave a domestic hearth to the Reformation. There was, thenceforth, in Wittemberg, a family whose house was open to all those whom the principle of a new life now animated. The concourse of strangers was immense. Melancthon was waited on for a thousand different affairs, and his rule was never to deny himself to any body.2 The young professor was particularly skilful in concealing his own good deeds. If he had no more money he secretly carried his silver plate to some merchant, never hesitating to part with it, provided he had the means of assisting those who were in distress. “Hence,” says his friend, Camerarius, “it would have been impossible for him to provide for his own wants and those of his family had not a divine and hidden blessing from time to time furnished him with the means.” He carried his good nature to an extreme. He had some antique medals of gold and silver, which were extremely curious. One day when showing them to a stranger who was

visiting him, Melancthon said, “Take any one of them you wish.” “I wish them all,” replied the stranger. “I confess,” says Philip, “I was at first offended at the selfishness of the request; however I gave them to him. Melancthon’s writings had a savour of antiquity. This, however, did not prevent them from exhaling the sweet savour of Christ, while it gave them an inexpressible charm. There is not one of his letters to his friends which does not contain some very apt allusion to Homer, Plato, Cicero, and Pliny, while Christ is always brought forward as his master and his God. Spalatin had asked him for an explanation of our Saviour’s words—“Without me ye can do nothing,” (John 15:5). Melancthon refers him to Luther—“Cur agam gestum spectante Roscio? as Cicero expresses it;” and then continues, “This passage means that we must be absorbed by Christ, so that it is no longer we that act, but Christ that liveth in us. As in his person the Divine has been incorporated with the human nature, so must man be incorporated with Jesus Christ by faith.” The distinguished scholar’s habit was to go to bed shortly after supper, and get up to his studies at two or three in the morning. During these early hours his best works were composed. His manuscripts usually lay on his table exposed to the view of all who came and went, so that several were stolen. When he had a party of his friends, he asked one or other of them, before they sat down to table, to read some short composition in prose or verse. During his journeys he was always accompanied by some young persons with whom he conversed in a manner at once instructive and amusing. If the conversation flagged, each of them had to repeat in his turn some passage taken from the ancient poets. He often had recourse to irony, but always tempered it with great gentleness. “He stings and cuts,” said he of himself, “but still without doing any harm.” The acquisition of knowledge was his ruling passion. The aim of his life was to diffuse literature and instruction. Let us not forget, that with him the first place in literature was given to the Holy Scriptures, and only a secondary place to the ancient classics. “My sole object,” said he, “is the defence of literature; we must, by our example, inspire youth with an admiration of literature, and make them love it for itself, and not for the pecuniary profit which it may be made to yield. The downfall of literature involves the destruction of all that is good—of religion and morals—of things human and divine.3 … The better a man is, the more ardently does he exert himself in favour of learning, for he knows that the most pernicious of all pests is ignorance.”

Some time after his marriage, Melancthon went to Bretten, in the Palatinate, accompanied by Camerarius and other friends, to pay a visit to his affectionate mother. On coming in sight of his native town, he dismounted from his horse, threw himself on his knees, and thanked God for permitting him to see it again. Margaret, on embracing her son, almost fainted with joy. She would have had him reside at Bretten, and earnestly entreated him to continue in the faith of his fathers. On this head, Melancthon excused himself, but with great tenderness, that he might not give offence to the conscientious feelings of his mother; he had great difficulty in parting with her, and whenever a traveller brought him news of his native town, he rejoiced, to use his own expression, as if he had renewed the joys of his childhood. Such was the character of one of the greatest instruments employed in the religious revolution of the sixteenth century. The domestic calmness and studious activity of Wittemberg was, however, disturbed by a commotion, the consequence of a rupture which took place between the students and the citizens. The Rector betrayed great weakness. One may suppose how deeply Melancthon was grieved when he saw these disciples of literature committing such excesses. Luther felt indignant, and had no idea of trying to gain them over by a false condescension. The disgrace which these disorders brought upon the university stung him to the heart. Having mounted the pulpit, he inveighed in strong terms against these

commotions, calling upon both parties to submit to the authorities.2 His discourse produced great irritation; “Satan,” says he, “unable to attack us from without, is trying to do us mischief from within. Him I fear not, but I fear lest the wrath of God be kindled against us for not having duly received his word. During the three last years I have been thrice exposed to great danger. In 1518, at Augsburg; in 1519, at Leipsic; and now, in 1520, at Wittemberg. It is neither by wisdom nor by arms that the renovation of the Church will be accomplished, but by humble prayers, and by an intrepid faith which puts Jesus Christ on our side. O, my friend! unite your prayers to mine, that the evil spirit may not be able, by means of this small spark, to kindle a vast conflagration.”

CHAP. VI The Gospel in Italy—Discourse on the Mass—The Babylonish Captivity of the Church—Baptism—Abolition of Vows—Progress of the Reformation. But fiercer combats awaited Luther. Rome was brandishing the sword with which she had resolved to attack the gospel. Her threatened sentence, however, so far from dispiriting the Reformer increased his courage. The blows of this arrogant power gave him little concern. He will himself give more formidable blows, and thereby neutralize those of his adversaries. While Transalpine consistories are fulminating their anathemas against him, he will, with the sword of the gospel, pierce to the very heart of the Italian states. Luther having been informed, by letters from Venice, of the favourable reception which had been given to his opinions, felt an ardent desire to carry the gospel over the Alps. Evangelists must be found to transport it. “I wish,” said he, “that we had living books, I mean preachers, and that we could multiply them, and afford them protection in all quarters, in order that they might convey the knowledge of holy things to the people. The prince could not do a work more worthy of him. Were the inhabitants of Italy to receive the truth our cause would be unassailable.” It does not appear that this project of Luther was realised. It is true that, at a later period, evangelists, even Calvin himself, sojourned for a while in Italy, but at this time the design was not followed out. He had applied to one of the great ones of the earth. Had he made his appeal to men low in station, but full of zeal for the kingdom of God, the result might have been very different. The idea at this period was, that every thing behoved to be done by governments. The association of private individuals, by which so much is now accomplished in Christendom, was almost unknown.

If Luther did not succeed in his plans of spreading the truth in a distant country, he was only the more zealous in proclaiming it himself. At this time his discourse, ‘On the Holy Mass,’ was delivered at Wittemberg. In it he inveighed against the numerous sects of the Romish Church, and justly reproached it with its want of unity. “The multiplicity of spiritual laws,” said he, “has filled the world with sects and divisions. Priests, monks, and laics, have shown more hatred of each other than subsists between Christians and Turks. What do I say? Priests are mortal enemies of priests, and monks of monks. Each is attached to his particular sect, and despises all others. There is an end of Christian love and unity.” He then attacks the idea that the mass is a sacrifice, and has any efficacy in itself. “The best thing in every sacrament, and consequently in the Supper, is the word and promises of God. Without faith in this word, and these promises, the sacrament is dead; a body without a soul, a flagon without wine, a purse without money, a type without an antitype, the letter without the spirit, a casket without its diamond, a scabbard without its sword.”

Luther’s voice, however, was not confined to Wittemberg; and if he failed to procure missionaries to carry his instructions to distant lands, God provided him with a missionary of a new description. The art of printing supplied the place of evangelists. The press was destined to make a breach in

the Roman fortress. Luther had prepared a mine, the explosion of which shook the Roman edifice to its very foundations. This was his famous treatise on the Babylonish Captivity of the Church, which appeared 6th October, 1520. Never had man displayed such courage in such critical circumstances. In this writing he first enumerates, with a kind of ironical pride, all the advantages for which he is indebted to his enemies.

“Whether I will or not,” says he, “I daily become more learned, spurred on as I am by so many celebrated masters. Two years ago I attacked indulgences, but with so much fear and indecision, that I am now ashamed of it. But, after all, the mode of attack is not to be wondered at, for I had nobody who would help me to roll the stone.” He returns thanks to Prierio, Eck, Emser, and his other opponents, and continues—“I denied that the papacy was of God, but I granted that it had the authority of man. Now, after reading all the subtleties by which these sparks prop up their idol, I know that the papacy is only the kingdom of Babylon, and the tyranny of the great hunter Nimrod. I therefore beg all my friends, and all booksellers, to burn the books which I wrote on this subject, and to substitute for them the single proposition—‘The papacy is a general chace, by command of the Roman pontiff, for the purpose of running down and destroying souls.’ ”

Luther afterwards attacks the prevailing errors on the sacraments, on monastic vows, etc. The seven sacraments of the Church he reduces to three—viz., baptism, penitence, and the Lord’s supper. He then proceeds to baptism, and when discussing it dwells especially on the excellence of faith, and makes a vigorous attack upon Rome. “God,” says he, “has preserved this single sacrament to us clear of human traditions. God has said, ‘Whoso believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.’ This divine promise must take precedence of all works however splendid, of all vows, all satisfactions, all indulgences, all that man has devised. On this promise, if we receive it in faith, all our salvation depends. If we believe, our heart is strengthened by the divine promise, and though all else should abandon the believer, this promise will not abandon him. With it he will resist the adversary who assaults his soul, and will meet death though pitiless, and even the judgment of God himself. In all trials his comfort will be to say, ‘God is faithful to his promises, and these were pledged to me in baptism; if God be for me, who can be against me?’ Oh, how rich the Christian, the baptized! Nothing can destroy him but his own refusal to believe.”

“It may be that, to my observations on the necessity of faith will be opposed the baptism of little children. But as the Word of God is powerful to change even the heart of the wicked, though neither less deaf, nor less impotent than a little child; so the prayer of the Church, to which all things are possible, changes the little child by means of the faith which God is pleased to pour into its soul, and so cleanses and renews it.”

After explaining the doctrine of baptism, Luther employs it as a weapon against the papacy. In fact, if the Christian finds complete salvation in the renewal which accompanies the baptism of faith, what need has he of the prescriptions of Rome?

“Wherefore,” says Luther, “I declare that neither the pope, nor the bishop, nor any man whatever, is entitled to impose the smallest burden on a Christian—at least without his consent. Whatsoever is done otherwise is done tyrannically. We are free of all men. The vow which we made in baptism is sufficient by itself alone, and is more than all we could ever accomplish.3 Therefore, all other vows may be abolished. Let every one who enters the priesthood, or a religious order, consider well that the works of a monk or a priest, how difficult soever they may be, are, in the view of God,

in no respect superior to those of a peasant labouring in the field, or a woman attending to the duties of her house. God estimates all these things by the rule of faith. And it often happens that the simple labour of a man-servant, or a maid-servant, is more agreeable to God than the fastings and works of a monk, these being deficient in faith.… The Christian people is the people of God led away into captivity, to Babylon, and there robbed of their baptism."

Such were the weapons by which the religious revolution whose history we are tracing was accomplished. First, the necessity of faith was established, and then the reformers used it as a hammer to break superstition in pieces. They attacked error with that divine power which removes mountains. These, and many similar passages of Luther circulated in towns, convents, and the country, were the leaven which leavened the whole lump. The conclusion of this famous production on the captivity of Babylon is in the following terms:—

"I learn that a new papal excommunication has been prepared against me. If so, the present book may be regarded as part of my future recantation. In proof of my obedience, the rest will soon follow, and the whole will, with the help of Christ, form a collection, the like to which Rome never saw or heard before."

CHAP. VII

New Negotiations—Miltitz and the Augustins of Eisleben—Deputation to Luther—Miltitz and the Elector—Conference at Lichtemberg—Luther's Letter to the Pope—Book Presented to the Pope—Union of the Believer with Christ—Freedom and Bondage.

After this publication, all hope of reconciliation between the pope and Luther must have vanished. Persons of the least possible discernment must have been struck with the incompatibility of the Reformer's belief with the doctrine of the Church; and yet, at this very moment, new negotiations were about to commence. In the end of August, 1520, five weeks before the publication of the 'Captivity of Babylon,' the general Chapter of the Augustins had assembled at Eisleben. At this meeting, the venerable Staupitz resigned his office of vicar-general of his order, and Winceslas Link, he who accompanied Luther to Augsburg, was invested with it. Suddenly, in the middle of the Chapter, arrived the indefatigable Miltitz, burning with eagerness to reconcile Luther and the pope. His avarice, and, above all, his jealousy and hatred, were interested. Eck and his swaggering had galled him; he knew that the doctor of Ingolstadt had spoken disparagingly of him at Rome, and there was nothing he would not have sacrificed in order to defeat the designs of this troublesome rival by means of a speedily concluded peace. The interest of religion gave him no concern. One day, by his own account, he was dining with the bishop of Leipsic. After the guests had drunk very freely, a new work of Luther's was brought in. On being opened and read, the bishop flew into a passion, and the official swore, but Miltitz laughed with all his heart.2 The Reformation was treated by Miltitz as a man of the world, and by Eck as a theologian.

Aroused by the arrival of Dr. Eck, Miltitz addressed the Chapter of the Augustins, in a discourse which he delivered with a very marked Italian accent, thinking thus to overawe his countrymen. "The whole Augustin order is compromised by this affair." said he. "Show me some method of silencing Luther."2 "We have nothing to do with the doctor," replied the Fathers, "and we know not what counsel to give you." They founded doubtless on what Staupitz had done at Augsburg, when he loosed Luther from his vows of obedience to the order. Miltitz insisted, "Let a deputation from

this venerable Chapter wait upon Luther, and solicit him to write a letter to the pope, assuring him that he has never plotted in any respect against his person. That will be sufficient to terminate the affair." The Chapter gave their consent, and assigned the task of conferring with Luther, no doubt at the nuncio's request, to the ex-vicar-general, Staupitz, and his successor Link. The deputation forthwith set out for Wittemberg with a letter from Miltitz to the doctor filled with expressions of the highest respect. "There is no time to be lost," said he, "the thunder already hovering over the head of the Reformer, will soon burst, and then all is over."

Neither Luther nor the deputies, who concurred in his opinions, hoped any thing from a letter to the pope. That however was a reason for not refusing to write it, as it would only be a mere matter of form, and might serve to bring out Luther's rights. "This Italian of Saxony (Miltitz), "thought Luther," in making this demand has doubtless his own particular interest in view. Very well, be it so, I will write, as I can with truth, that I have never objected to the pope personally. I will even endeavour to guard against severity in attacking the see of Rome. Still it shall have its sprinkling of salt."5

Luther having shortly after been informed of the arrival of the bull in Germany, declared to Spalatin, on the 3rd of October, that he would not write the pope, and, on the 6th of the same month, published his book on the 'Captivity of Babylon.' Miltitz did not even yet despair of success. His eagerness to humble Eck made him believe an impossibility. On the 2nd of October, he had written the Elector, in high spirits. "Every thing will go well, but, for the love of God, delay no longer to order payment of the pension which I have had from you and your brother for some years. I must have money in order to make new friends at Rome. Write the pope, and do homage to the young cardinals, the relatives of his holiness, with gold and silver pieces, from the mint of your electoral highness, and add some for me also, for I was robbed of those which you gave me."

Even after Luther was acquainted with the bull, the intriguing Miltitz was not discouraged, and requested a conference with Luther at Lichtemberg. The Elector ordered Luther to repair thither. But his friends, and especially the affectionate Melancthon, opposed it.3 "What, thought they, at the moment when a bull has appeared ordering Luther to be seized and carried off to Rome, to accept a conference with the pope's nuncio in a retired spot! Is it not evident that, because Dr. Eck from having too openly proclaimed his hatred is not able to approach the Reformer, the wily chamberlain has been employed to ensnare Luther in his nets?"

These fears could not deter the doctor of Wittemberg. The prince has commanded, and he will obey. "I am setting out for Lichtemberg," wrote he, to the chaplain on the 11th of October, "pray for me." His friends would not quit him. The same day, towards evening, Luther entered Lichtemberg on horse-back, amid thirty horsemen, one of whom was Melancthon. The papal nuncio arrived almost at the same time with only four attendants. Was this modest escort a stratagem to throw Luther and his friends off their guard?

Miltitz urged Luther with the most pressing solicitations, assuring him that the blame would be thrown upon Eck and his foolish boastings, and that every thing would terminate to the satisfaction of both parties. "Very well," replied Luther, "I offer henceforth to keep silence, provided my opponents keep it also. For the sake of peace I will do every thing that it is possible for me to do."6

Miltitz was delighted; and accompanying Luther as far as Wittemberg, the Reformer and the papal nuncio walked arm in arm into this town which Dr. Eck was now approaching, holding menacingly

in his hand the formidable bull which was to overthrow the Reformation. “We will bring the matter to a happy conclusion,” wrote Miltitz forthwith to the Elector; “Thank the pope for his rose, and at the same time send forty or fifty florins to Cardinal Quatuor Sanctorum.”

Luther felt bound to keep his promise of writing the pope. Before bidding Rome an eternal adieu, he wished once more to tell her important and salutary truths. Some perhaps will regard his letter only as a piece of irony—a bitter and insulting satire—but this were to mistake the sentiments by which he was actuated. He sincerely believed that Rome was to blame for all the evils of Christendom; and in this view his words are not insults, but solemn warnings. The more he loved Leo, and the more he loved the Church of Christ, the more he desired to unfold the full magnitude of the disease. The energy of his expressions is proportioned to the energy of his feelings. The crisis has arrived, and he seems like a prophet walking round the city for the last time, upbraiding it for all its abominations, denouncing the judgments of the Almighty, and crying aloud, “Still some days of respite.” The letter is as follows:—

“To the Most Holy Father in God, Leo X, Pope at Rome, Salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

“From amid the fearful war which I have been waging for three years with disorderly men, I cannot help looking to you, O Leo, Most Holy Father in God. And although the folly of your impious flatterers has compelled me to appeal from your judgment to a future council, my heart is not turned away from your Holiness, and I have not ceased to pray God earnestly and with profound sighs, to grant prosperity to yourself and your pontificate.

“It is true I have attacked some antichristian doctrines, and have inflicted a deep wound on my adversaries because of their impiety. Of this I repent not, as I have here Christ for an example. Of what use is salt if it have lost its savour, or the edge of a sword if it will not cut? Cursed be he who does the work of the Lord negligently. Most excellent Leo, far from having conceived any bad thoughts with regard to you, my wish is that you may enjoy the most precious blessings throughout eternity. One thing only I have done: I have maintained the word of truth. I am ready to yield to all in every thing; but, as to this word, I will not, I cannot, abandon it.3 He who thinks differently on this subject is in error.

“It is true that I have attacked the Court of Rome; but neither yourself nor any man living can deny that there is greater corruption in it than was in Sodom and Gomorrah, and that the Impiety which prevails makes cure hopeless. Yes; I have been horrified on seeing how, under your name, the poor followers of Christ were deceived. I have opposed this, and will oppose it still, not that I imagine it possible, in spite of the opposition of flatterers, to accomplish any thing in this Babylon, which is confusion itself; but I owe it to my brethren to endeavour, if possible, to remove some of them from these dreadful evils.

“You know it; Rome has for many years been inundating the world with whatever could destroy both soul and body. The Church of Rome, formerly the first in holiness, has become a den of robbers, a place of prostitution, a kingdom of death and hell; so that Antichrist himself, were he to appear, would be unable to increase the amount of wickedness. All this is as clear as day.

“And yet, O Leo, you yourself are like a lamb in the midst of wolves—a Daniel in the lions’ den. But single-handed, what can you oppose to these monsters? There may be three or four cardinals who to knowledge add virtue. But what are these against so many? You should perish by poison even

before you could try any remedy. It is all over with the Court at Rome—the wrath of God has overtaken and will consume it. It hates counsel—it fears reform—it will not moderate the fury of its ungodliness; and hence it may be justly said of it as of its mother—We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed; forsake her. It belonged to you and your cardinals to apply the remedy; but the patient laughs at the doctor, and the horse refuses to feel the bit.… 4

“Cherishing the deepest affection for you, most excellent Leo, I have always regretted that, formed as you are for a better age, you were raised to the pontificate in these times. Rome is not worthy of you, and those who resemble you; the only chief whom she deserves to have is Satan himself, and hence, the truth is, that in this Babylon he is more king than you are. Would to God, that, laying aside this glory which your enemies so much extol, you would exchange it for a modest pastoral office, or live on your paternal inheritance. Rome’s glory is of a kind fit only for Iscariots.… O, my dear Leo, of what use are you in this Roman court, unless it be to allow the most execrable men to use your name and your authority in ruining fortunes, destroying souls, multiplying crimes, oppressing faith, truth, and the whole Church of God? O Leo, Leo, you are the most unfortunate of men, and you sit upon the most dangerous of thrones. I tell you the truth because I wish your good.

“Is it not true, that, under the vast expanse of heaven there is nothing more corrupt, more hateful, than the Roman Court? In vice and corruption it infinitely exceeds the Turks. Once the gate of heaven, it has become the mouth of hell—a wide mouth which the wrath of God keeps open, so that, on seeing so many unhappy beings thrown headlong into it, I was obliged to lift my voice, as in a tempest, in order that, at least, some might be saved from the fearful abyss. Such, O Leo, my father, was the reason why I inveighed against this death-giving see. Far from attacking your person, I thought I was labouring for your safety, when I valiantly assaulted this prison, or rather this hell in which you are confined. To do all sorts of evil to the Court of Rome were to discharge your own duty; to cover it with shame is to honour Christ; in one word, to be a Christian is to be anything but a Roman.

“Meanwhile, seeing that in succouring the see of Rome, I was losing my labour and my pains, I sent her a letter of divorce I said to her, ‘Adieu, Rome! He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still;’ and devoted myself to the tranquil and solitary study of the sacred volume. Then Satan opened his eyes and awoke his servant, John Eck, a great enemy of Jesus Christ, in order that he might oblige me again to descend into the arena. Eck’s wish was to establish the primacy not of Peter but of himself, and, for that purpose, to lead vanquished Luther in triumph. The blame of all the obloquy which has been cast on the see of Rome rests with him.”

Luther narrates his intercourse with De Vio, Miltitz, and Eck, and then continues.

“Now, then, I come to you, O Most Holy Father, and, prostrated at your feet, pray you, if possible, to put a curb on the enemies of the truth. But I cannot retract my doctrine. I cannot permit rules of interpretation to be imposed on the Holy Scriptures. The Word of God, the source whence all freedom springs, must be left free.

“O, Leo, my father! listen not to those flattering Sirens who tell you that you are not a mere man, but a demi-god, and can ordain what you please. You are the servant of servants, and the seat which you occupy is of all others the most dangerous, and the most unhappy. Give credit not to

those who exalt, but to those who humble you. Perhaps I am too bold in giving advice to so high a majesty, whose duty it is to instruct all men. But I see the dangers which surround you at Rome, I see you driven hither and thither, tossed as it were upon the billows of a raging sea. Charity urges me, and I cannot resist sending forth a warning cry.

“Not to appear empty handed before your Holiness, I present you with a little book, which has appeared under your name, and which will make you aware of the subjects to which I will be able to devote myself, if your flatterers permit me. It is a small matter as regards the size of the volume, but a great one in regard to its contents, for it comprehends a summary of the Christian life. I am poor, and have nothing else to offer; besides, you have no want of any thing but spiritual gifts. I commend myself to your Holiness. May the Lord keep you for ever and ever, amen.” The little book with which Luther did homage to the pope was his ‘Treatise on the liberty of the Christian;’ in which he demonstrates without any polemical discussion, how the Christian, without infringing on the liberty which faith has given him, may submit to every external ordinance in a spirit of freedom and love. Two truths form the basis of the whole discourse, viz., The Christian is free—all things are his: The Christian is a servant subject to all in every thing. By faith he is free, by love he is subject. At first he explains the power of faith to make the Christian free. “Faith unites the soul with Christ, as a bride with the bridegroom. Every thing that Christ has becomes the property of the believer, every thing that the believer has becomes the property of Christ. Christ possesses all blessings, even eternal salvation, and these are thenceforth the property of the believer. The believer possesses all vices and all sins, and these become, thenceforth, the property of Christ. A happy exchange now takes place. Christ who is God and man, Christ who has never sinned, and whose holiness is invincible, Christ, the Omnipotent and Eternal, appropriating to himself by his wedding ring—that is to say, by faith, all the sins of the believer; these sins are swallowed up in him and annihilated; for no sin can exist in presence of his infinite righteousness. Thus, by means of faith, the soul is delivered from all sins, and invested with the eternal righteousness of Jesus Christ the bridegroom. O happy union! Jesus Christ the rich, the noble, the holy bridegroom, takes in marriage this poor, guilty, contemned bride, delivers her from all evil, and decks her in the richest robes … Christ, a King, and Priest, shares this honour and glory with all Christians. The Christian is a king, and consequently possesses all things. He is a priest, and consequently possesses God. And it is faith, not works, which procures him this honour. The Christian is free from all things, and above all things—faith giving him every thing in abundance.” In the second part of the treatise Luther presents the truth in its other point of view. “Although the Christian has thus been made free, he voluntarily becomes a servant that he may act towards his brethren as God has acted towards him through Jesus Christ. I desire,” said he, “freely, joyfully, and gratuitously, to serve a Father who hath thus shed upon me all the riches of his goodness. I wish to become every thing to my neighbour, as Christ has become every thing to me.” … “From faith,” continues Luther, “flows love to God, and from love a life full of liberty, charity, and joy. O how noble and elevated a life the life of the Christian is! But, alas, none know it and none preach it. By faith the Christian rises even to God: by love he descends to man; still, however, remaining always in God. This is true liberty, a liberty as far above every other species of liberty as the heavens are above the earth.”

Such was the treatise which accompanied Luther’s letter to Leo X.

CHAP. VIII The Bull in Germany—Eck's Reception—The Bull at Wittemberg—Interposition of Zuinglius.

While the Reformer was thus addressing the Roman pontiff for the last time, the bull which anathematised him was already in the hands of the Germanic Church, and at Luther's own door. It would seem that no doubt was entertained at Rome as to the success of the measure which had thus been adopted against the Reformation. The pope had charged two high functionaries of his court, Carracioli and Aleander, to be the bearers of it to the Archbishop of Mentz who was requested to see to its execution. But Eck himself appeared in Saxony as the herald and executor of the great pontifical work. No man knew better than the doctor of Ingolstadt how formidable the blows were which Luther had struck. Alive to the danger he had stretched forth his hand to sustain the tottering edifice of Rome. In his own estimation he was the Atlas, destined to support the ancient Roman world on his robust shoulders, when on the point of falling to pieces. Proud of the success of his journey to Rome; proud of the charge which he had received from the sovereign pontiff; proud to appear in Germany with the new title of protonotary and pontifical nuncio; proud of the bull which he held in his hand, and which contained the condemnation of his indomitable rival, he regarded his present mission as a triumph more splendid than all the victories which he had gained in Hungary, Bavaria, Lombardy, and Saxony, and from which he had previously derived so much renown. But this pride was soon to be humbled. The pope, in entrusting the publication of the bull to Eck, had committed a blunder which was destined to neutralise its effect. The proud distinction conferred on a man who did not hold high rank in the Church gave offence to sensitive and jealous spirits. The bishops, accustomed to receive the bulls directly from the pope, were offended at the publication of this one in their dioceses by an upstart nuncio. The nation who had hooted the pretended conqueror of Leipsic at the moment of his flight into Italy, were equally astonished and indignant when they saw him repass the Alps, decked in the insignia of pontifical nuncio, and with the power of crushing whomsoever he chose. The sentence brought by his implacable adversary, Luther regarded as an act of personal revenge. "He regarded it, says Pallavicini, "as the perfidious poniard of a mortal enemy, and not as the legitimate act of a Roman lictor." It was generally viewed as less the bull of the sovereign pontiff, than of Dr. Eck. In this way, the blow was obstructed and weakened before-hand by the very person at whose instigation it was struck. The chancellor of Ingolstadt had hastened back to Saxony, which, as having been the scene of battle, he was desirous should also be the scene of his victory. Having arrived he published the bull at Meissen, Merseburg, and Brandenburg towards the end of September. But in the first of these towns it was posted up in a place where nobody could read it; and the bishops of those three sees were in no haste to publish it. Even Duke George, Eck's great patron, prohibited the Council of Leipsic from making it public, before receiving orders from the Bishop of Merseburg, and these orders did not arrive till the following year. "These are only difficulties of form," said John Eck to himself at first, for every thing else seemed to smile upon him. Duke George sent him a golden cup and some ducats. Even Miltitz, who had hastened to Leipsic, on learning that his rival had arrived, invited him to dinner. The two legates were boon companions; and Miltitz thought he could not have a better opportunity of sounding Eck than over their wine. "After he had drunk pretty freely, he began," says the pope's chamberlain, "to boast in grand style—he displayed his bull, and told how he meant to bring that droli fellow Martin to his senses." But the Ingolstadt doctor soon had occasion to observe that the wind was veering. The course of a year had produced a great change in Leipsic. On St. Michael's day some students posted up placards, in

ten different places, containing a severe attack on the new nuncio, who, in amazement, took refuge in the cloister of St. Paul, where Tetzel had previously found his asylum, and declining every visit, induced the rector to call his youthful opponents to account. By this poor Eck gained little. The students composed a song upon him, and sang it in the streets. Eck must have heard it in his prison. On this all his courage failed him, and the redoubtable champion trembled in every limb. Every day brought him threatening letters. One hundred and fifty students, who had arrived from Wittemberg, spoke out boldly against the papal envoy. For once the poor apostolical nuncio could hold out no longer. “I would not have them kill him,” said Luther, “though I wish his designs to fail.”2 Eck, quitting his retreat at night, clandestinely escaped from Leipsic to go and hide himself at Coburg. Miltitz, who gives the account, triumphed more than the Reformer. His triumph, however, was not of long duration. All the chamberlain’s projects of conciliation failed, and he came at last to a miserable end. One day, when drunk, he fell into the Rhine at Mentz, and was drowned.

Eck gradually recovered courage. Repairing to Erfurt, whose theologians had on more than one occasion betrayed their jealousy of Luther, he insisted on having his bull published in this town, but the students seized the copies, tore them to pieces, and threw them into the river, saying, “since it is a bull, let it swim.” “Now,” said Luther, on being informed of this, “the pope’s paper is a true bull.” Eck durst not make his appearance at Wittemberg; but he sent the bull to the rector with a threat, that if it was not conformed to, he would destroy the university. At the same time he wrote Duke John, Frederick’s brother, and coregent, “Do not take what I do in bad part, I am acting in behalf of the faith, and it costs me many cares, great labour, and much money.”4 The bishop of Brandenburg, supposing him inclined, was not entitled to act at Wittemberg in his capacity of ordinary, the university being protected by its privileges. Luther and Carlstadt, who were condemned by the bull, were asked to take part in the meetings which were held to deliberate on its contents. The rector declared that, as he had not received a letter from the pope along with the bull, he declined to publish it. The university had already acquired greater authority in the surrounding countries than the sovereign pontiff himself. Its declaration served as a model to the government of the Elector; and thus the spirit which was in Luther triumphed over the bull of Rome.

While the German mind was thus strongly agitated by this affair, a grave voice was heard in another quarter of Europe. An individual, foreseeing the immense rent which the papal bull was about to make in the Church, came forward to give a solemn warning, and to defend the Reformer. It was that of the Swiss priest, of whom we have already spoken, viz., Ulrich Zuinglius, who, though not united to Luther by any friendly tie, published a treatise full of wisdom and dignity, the first of his numerous writings. A kind of fraternal affection seemed to draw him towards the doctor of Wittemberg. “The piety of the pontiff,” said he, “requires that he shall joyfully sacrifice whatever is dearest to him for the glory of Christ his King, and for the public peace of the Church. Nothing is more injurious to his dignity than to defend it by pensions or terror. Even before the writings of Luther were read, he had been calumniated to the people as a heretic, a schismatic, and as Antichrist himself. Not one gave him warning, none refuted him. He called for a discussion; but all he could get was a sentence of condemnation. The bull which is published displeases even those who honour the majesty of the pope. For it is everywhere regarded as an expression of the impotent hatred of some monks, and not of the mildness of a pontiff, who ought to be the vicar of a

Saviour full of love. All acknowledge that the true doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ has greatly degenerated, and that a public and thorough reformation of laws and manners is required.2 Consider all men of learning and virtue—the more sincere they are, the stronger is their attachment to evangelical truth, and the less their dissatisfaction with Luther's writings. There is not one who does not acknowledge that he has derived benefit from these books, though he may have met with passages which he was unable to approve. Let men of sound doctrine and acknowledged probity be selected. Let three princes above all suspicion—the emperor Charles, the King of England, and the king of Hungary—name the judges. Let these judges read Luther's writings. Let them hear his defence, and then let their decision, whatever it be, be confirmed. Νικησατω ■ του Χριστου παιδεια και αληθεια" This proposal, which came from the country of the Swiss, led to no result. It was necessary that the great divorce should take place. It was necessary that Christendom should be rent in twain. Her very wounds were destined to be the cure of her diseases.

CHAP. IX

Luther Examines himself in the presence of God—Luther's opinion of the Bull—A neutral Family—Luther on the Bull, and against the Bull of Antichrist—The Pope prohibits Faith—Effects of the Bull—The faggot pile of Louvain. But what signified all this resistance by students, rectors, and priests. If the mighty arm of Charles V is joined to the mighty arm of the pope, will they not crush these scholars and grammarians? Will any one be able to resist the combined power of the pontiff of Christendom and of the emperor of the West? The blow has been struck. Luther is excommunicated, and the gospel seems lost. At this solemn moment the Reformer does not disguise to himself the magnitude of the danger to which he is exposed; but he looks upward, and prepares to receive, as from the hand of the Lord himself, a blow which seems destined to annihilate him. Ho retires within himself, and meditates at the footstool of the throne of God. "What the result is to be," says he, "I know not, and I am not anxious to know; certain as I am that He who sits in heaven has from all eternity foreseen the beginning, the progress, and the end of this affair. Wherever the blow is to strike, I am without fear. The leaf of a tree falls not without our Father's will. How much less shall we fall. It is a small matter to die for the Word, since this Word which became incarnate and that for us has itself first died. If we die with it, we shall rise again with it; and, passing along the same road by which it passed, will arrive where it has arrived, and remain with it throughout eternity." Sometimes, however, Luther could not restrain the contempt which he felt for the manœuvres of his enemies. On these occasions he displays his characteristic combination of sublimity and sarcasm. "I know nothing of Eck," says he, "except that he arrived with a long beard, a long bull, and a long purse.… But I will laugh at his bull." On the third of October he was made acquainted with the papal letter. "At length," says he, "this Roman bull has arrived. I despise it, and defy it as impious, false, and in all respects worthy of Eck. It is Christ himself who is condemned. It gives no reasons; it merely cites me, not to be heard, but simply to sing a palinode. I will treat it as spurious, though I have no doubt it is genuine. O, if Charles V were a man, and would, for the love of Christ, attack these demons! I rejoice in having to endure some hardships for the best of causes. I already feel more liberty in my heart; for at length I know that the pope is Antichrist, and that his see is that of Satan himself."

It was not in Saxony merely that the thunders of Rome had produced alarm. A quiet family of Swabia, a neutral family, saw its peace suddenly broken up. Bilibald Pirckheimer, of Nuremberg,

one of the most distinguished men of his age, having early lost his beloved wife Crescentia, was united in the closest affection with his two young sisters, Charitas, abbess of St. Clair, and Clara, a nun of the same convent. These two pious females served God in solitude, and divided their time between study, the care of the poor, and preparation for eternity. Bilibald, who was a statesman, relaxed from public affairs by maintaining a correspondence with them. They were learned, read Latin, and studied the Fathers; but their favourite volume was the Holy Scriptures. They had never had any other teacher than their brother. The letters of Charitas are written in a delicate and amiable spirit. Tenderly attached to Bilibald she took alarm at the least danger which threatened him. Pirckheimer, to dissipate the fears of this timid spirit, wrote a dialogue between Charitas and Veritas, (Charity and Truth), in which Veritas tries to strengthen Charitas. Nothing can be more touching, or better fitted to solace a tender and agonised heart.

What must have been the terror of Charitas when the rumour spread that in the papal bull Bilibald's name was posted up beside that of Luther, on the doors of cathedrals? In fact, Eck, pushed on by blind fury, had associated with Luther six of the most distinguished men of Germany, viz., Carlstadt, Feldkirchen, and Egranus, (who gave themselves very little concern about it,) and Adelman, Pirckheimer, and his friend Spengler, whose public functions made them particularly alive to the insult. There was great agitation in the Convent of St. Clair. How shall the disgrace of Bilibald be borne? Nothing affects relatives more deeply than such trials. In vain did the city of Nuremberg, the Bishop of Bamberg, and even the dukes of Bavaria interfere in behalf of Spengler and Pirckheimer; these noble-minded men were obliged to humble themselves before Dr. Eck, who made them feel all the importance of a Roman protonotary, and obliged them to write a letter to the pope, declaring that they adhered to the doctrines of Luther only in so far as they were conformable to Christian faith. At the same time Adelman, with whom Eck had once had a scuffle on rising up from table after a discussion on the great question which then occupied all minds, was required to appear before the bishop of Augsburg and purge himself on oath of all participation in the Lutheran heresy. Still, however, anger and revenge had proved bad counsellors to Eck. The names of Bilibald and his friends damaged the bull. The character of these eminent men and their extensive connections increased the general irritation.

Luther at first pretended to doubt the authenticity of the bull. "I learn," says he in the first work which he published after it, "that Eck has brought from Rome a new bull, which resembles him so much, is so stuffed with falsehood and error, that it might well be named Doctor Ech. He gives out that it is the work of the pope, whereas it is only a work of lies." After explaining his reasons for doubting its genuineness, Luther thus concludes, "I must with my own eyes see the lead, the seal, the tape, the conclusion, the signature of the bull—every part of it, in short, or I will not estimate all this clamour at the weight of a straw." But no man doubted, not even Luther himself, that the bull was the pope's. Germany waited to see what the Reformer would do. Would he stand firm? All eyes were fixed on Wittemberg. Luther did not keep his contemporaries long in suspense. On the 4th of November, 1520, he replied with a discharge of thunder, by publishing his treatise 'Against the Bull of Antichrist.'

"What errors, what impostures," said he, "have crept in among the poor people under the cloak of the Church, and the pretended infallibility of the pope! how many souls have thus been lost! how much blood shed! what murders committed! what kingdoms ruined!

Further on he ironically says, “I know very well how to distinguish between art and malice, and set very little value on a malice which has no art. To burn books is so easy a matter that even children can do it; how much more the Holy Father and his doctors. It would become them to show greater ability than is requisite merely to burn books.… Besides, let them destroy my works! I desire nothing more; for all I wished was to guide men to the Bible, that they might thereafter lay aside all my writings.2 Good God! if we had the knowledge of Scripture, what need would there be for my writings?… I am free by the grace of God, and bulls neither solace nor frighten me. My strength and consolation are where neither men nor devils can assail them.”

Luther’s tenth proposition, condemned by the pope, was in the following terms: “No man’s sins are pardoned, if, when the priest absolves him, he does not believe that they are pardoned.” The pope in condemning it denied that faith was necessary in the Sacrament. “They maintain,” exclaims Luther, “that we ought not to believe that our sins are pardoned when we are absolved by the priest. What then are we to do? Listen now, O! Christians, to a new arrival from Rome. Condemnation is pronounced against this article of faith which we profess when we say ‘I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, and the forgiveness of sins.’ Did I know that the pope had really given this bull at Rome,” (he did not doubt it,) “and that it was not the invention of the arch-liar, Eck, I would cry aloud to all Christians that they ought to hold the pope as the true Antichrist spoken of in Scripture. And if he would not desist from proscribing the faith of the Church, … then let the temporal sword resist him even sooner than the Turk!… For the Turks allow belief, but the pope forbids it.”

While Luther was speaking thus forcibly, his perils were increasing. The scheme of his enemies was to drive him out of Wittemberg. If Luther and Wittemberg are separated, both will be destroyed. A single stroke would thus disencumber Rome of both the heretical doctor and the heretical university. Duke George, the bishop of Merseburg, and the theologians of Leipsic were labouring underhand at this work. Luther on being apprised of it said, “I leave this affair in the hands of God.”4 These proceedings were not without result: Adrian, professor of Hebrew at Wittemberg, suddenly turned against the doctor. It required great firmness in the faith to withstand the shock given by the Roman bull. There are characters which follow the truth only a certain distance, and such was Adrian. Frightened at the condemnation he quitted Wittemberg, and repaired to Leipsic to be near Dr. Eck. The bull began to be executed. The voice of the pontiff of Christendom was not an empty sound. Long had fire and sword taught subjection to it. Faggot piles were prepared at his bidding, and everything indicated that a dreadful catastrophe was to put an end to the audacious revolt of the Augustin monk. In October, 1520, all the copies of Luther’s works in the shops of the booksellers at Ingolstadt were seized, and put under seal. The Archbishop-Elector of Mentz, moderate as he was, had to banish Ulric of Hütten from his court, and imprison his printer. The papal nuncios having laid siege to the young Emperor, Charles declared that he would protect the ancient religion; and in some of his hereditary possessions scaffolds were erected, on which the writings of the heretic were reduced to ashes. Princes of the Church and magistrates were present at these auto-da-fe. Alcander was quite elated with his success. “The pope,” said he, in imitation of Pricrio, “may dethrone kings! He may, if he chooses, say to the emperor, Thou art only a tanner! He knows well how to bring one or two miserable grammarians to their senses. We will dispose, moreover, of Duke Frederick also.” To hear the proud nuncio, one would have said that the pile of Mentz which consumed Luther’s books was “le

commencement de la fin" (the beginning of the end.) These flames, it was said at Rome, will carry terror into every quarter. Such, in truth, was the effect on many superstitious and timid spirits; but even in the hereditary states of Charles, where alone it was ventured to execute the bull, the people, and even the grandees, often answered these pontifical demonstrations with derision, or expressions of indignation. "Luther," said the doctors of Louvain, on presenting themselves before Margaret, Regent of the Netherlands, "Luther is subverting the Christian faith." "Who is this Luther?" asked the Princess. "An ignorant monk." "Well, then," replied she, "do you, who are learned, and in such numbers, write against him. The world will credit a multitude of learned men sooner than an isolated, ignorant monk." The doctors of Louvain preferred an easier method. They caused a vast pile to be erected at their own expense. The place of execution was covered with spectators, and students and burghers were seen hastening through the crowd, their arms filled with large volumes, which they threw into the flames. Their zeal edified the monks and doctors; but the trick was afterwards discovered. Instead of the writings of Luther, they had thrown into the fire the Sermones discipuli, Tartaret, and other scholastic and popish books. The Count of Nassau, Viceroy of Holland, when the Dominicans were soliciting the favour of burning the doctor's books, said to them, "Go and preach the gospel as purely as Luther, and you will have nobody to complain of." At a festival, attended by the leading princes of the empire, the Reformer having become the subject of conversation, the Baron of Ravenstein said, aloud, "In the space of four centuries, only one Christian man has dared to lift his head, and the pope is wishing to put him to death."

Luther, conscious of the power of his cause, remained tranquil amid the tumult which the bull had excited. "Did you not urge me so keenly," said he to Spalatin, "I would be silent, well knowing that, by the power and counsel of God, this work must be accomplished."3 The timid man was anxious for speech, the strong man wished to be silent. It was because Luther discerned a power not visible to the eyes of his friend. "Be of good courage," continues the Reformer; "Christ began these things, and Christ will accomplish them, though I should be put to flight or put to death. Jesus Christ is present here, and more powerful is He who is in us, than he who is in the world."

CHAP. X

Decisive steps by the Reformer—Luther's Appeal to a General Council—Struggle at close quarters—The Bull burned by Luther—Meaning of this bold act—Luther in the Academic Chair—Luther against the Pope—New Work by Melancthon—How Luther encourages his Friends—Progress of the Contest—Melancthon's Opinion of the timid—Luther's Work on the Bible—Doctrine of Grace—Luther's Recantation. But duty obliged him to speak, in order to manifest the truth to the world. Rome has struck, and he will make it known how he receives the blow. The pope has put him under the ban of the Church, and he will put the pope under the ban of Christendom. Up to this hour the pope's word has been omnipotent. Luther will oppose word to word, and the world will know which is the more powerful of the two. "I am desirous," said he, "to set my conscience at rest, by making men aware of the danger to which they are exposed." At the same time he prepares to renew his appeal to an universal council. An appeal from the pope to a council was a crime, and hence the mode in which Luther attempts to justify himself is a new act of hostility to papal authority. On the morning of the 17th November, a notary and five witnesses, of whom Cruciger was one, met at ten o'clock, in one of the halls of the Augustin convent in which the doctor resided. There the public officer, Sarctor of Eisleben, having seated himself to draw up

the minute of his protest, the Reformer, in presence of the witnesses, says, with a solemn tone:

“Considering that a general Council of the Christian Church is above the pope, especially in all that concerns the faith;

“Considering that the power of the pope is not above, but beneath Scripture, and that he has no right to worry the sheep of Christ, and throw them into the wolf’s mouth:

“I, Martin Luther, Augustin, doctor of the Holy Scriptures at Wittemberg, do, by this writing, appeal for myself, and for all who shall adhere to me, from the most holy Pope Leo, to a future universal Christian Council.

“I appeal from the said Pope Leo, first, as an unjust, rash, tyrannical judge, who condemns me without hearing me, and without explaining the grounds of his judgment; secondly, as a heretic, a strayed, obdurate apostate, condemned by the Holy Scriptures, inasmuch as he ordains me to deny that Christian faith is necessary in the use of the sacraments; thirdly, as an enemy, an antichrist, an adversary, a tyrant of the Holy Scripture, who dares to oppose his own words to all the words of God; fourthly, as a despiser, a calumniator, a blasphemer of the holy Christian Church and a free Council, inasmuch as he pretends that a Council is nothing in itself.

“Wherefore, I most humbly supplicate the most serene, most illustrious, excellent, generous, noble, brave, sage, and prudent lords, Charles, the Roman emperor, the electors, princes, counts, barons, knights, gentlemen, counsellors, towns, and commonalties, throughout Germany, to adhere to my protestation, and join me in resisting the antichristian conduct of the pope, for the glory of God, the defence of the Church, and of Christian doctrine, and the maintenance of free councils in Christendom. Let them do so, and Christ our Lord will richly recompence them by his eternal grace. But if there are any who despise my prayer, and continue to obey that impious man, the pope, rather than God, I, by these presents, shake myself free of the responsibility. Having faithfully warned their consciences, I leave them, as well as the pope, and all his adherents, to the sovereign judgment of God.”

Such is Luther’s deed of divorce, such his answer to the papal bull. There is great seriousness in this declaration. The accusations which he brings against the pope are very grave, and are not made in a spirit of levity. This protestation spread over Germany, and was sent to the leading courts of Christendom.

Though the step which Luther had just taken seemed the very height of daring, he had a still bolder step in reserve. The monk of Wittemberg will do all that the pope dares to do. The son of the Medicis, and the son of the miner of Mansfeld, have descended into the lists, and in this mortal struggle, which shakes the world, not a blow is given by the one which is not returned by the other. On the 10th December, a notice appeared on the walls of Wittemberg, inviting the professors and students to meet at nine o■clock in the morning, at the east gate, near the holy cross. A great number of teachers and pupils assembled, and Luther, walking at their head, led the procession to the appointed spot. How many faggot piles has Rome kindled in the course of ages! Luther desires to make a better application of the great Roman principle. He only wishes to rid himself of some old papers, and the fire, he thinks, is the fit instrument for that. A scaffold had been prepared. One of the oldest masters of arts applied the torch. At the moment when the flames rose, the redoubted Augustin, dressed in his frock, was seen to approach the pile, holding in his hands the Canon Law,

the Decretals, the Clementines, the Extravagants of the popes, some writings of Eck and Emser, and the papal bull. The Decretals having first been consumed, Luther held up the bull, and saying, “Since thou hast grieved the Lord’s Anointed, let the eternal fire grieve and consume thee,” threw it into the flames. Never was war declared with more energy and resolution. Luther quietly took the road back to the town, and the crowd of doctors, professors, and students, after a loud cheer, returned with him to Wittemberg. “The Decretals,” said Luther, “resemble a body with a head as soft as that of a maiden, limbs as full of violence as those of a lion, and a tail with as many wiles as a serpent. In all the papal laws, there is not one word to teach us who Jesus Christ is. My enemies,” continues he, “have been able, by burning my books, to injure the truth in the minds of the common people, and therefore I have burnt their books in my turn. A serious struggle has now commenced. Hitherto I have only had child’s play with the pope. I began the work in the name of God; it will be terminated without me and by his power. If they burn my books, in which, to speak without vain-glory, there is more of the gospel than in all the books of the pope, I am entitled, a fortiori, to burn theirs, in which there is nothing good.” Had Luther commenced the Reformation in this way, such a proceeding would doubtless have led to fatal results. Fanaticism would have been able to lay hold of it, and throw the Church into a course of disorder and violence. But the Reformer’s grave exposition of Scripture had formed a prelude to his work. The foundations had been wisely laid, and now the mighty stroke which he had just given would not only expose him to no hazard, but even accelerate the hour when Christendom would be delivered from her chains.

Thus solemnly did Luther declare his separation from the pope and his church. After his letter to Leo he might think this necessary. He accepted the excommunication which Rome had pronounced. It made the Christian world aware that there was now mortal war beween him and the pope. On reaching the shore, he burnt his ships, and left himself no alternative but that of advancing to the combat.

Luther had returned to Wittemberg. Next day the academic hall was fuller than usual. Men’s minds were excited. A feeling of solemnity prevailed throughout the audience, in expectation of an address from the doctor. He commented on the Psalms, a task which he had commenced in March of the previous year. Having finished his lecture, he paused a few moments, and then said firmly, “Be on your guard against the laws and statutes of the pope. I have burned the Decretals, but it is only child’s play. It is time, and more than time, to burn the pope. I mean, he instantly resumed, the see of Rome, with all its doctrines and abominations.” Then, assuming a more solemn tone, he said, “If you do not, with all your heart, combat the impious government of the pope, you cannot be saved. Whoever takes pleasure in the religion and worship of the papacy will be eternally lost in the life to come.”

“If we reject it,” added he, “we may expect all kinds of dangers and even the loss of life. But it is far better to run such risks in the world than to be silent! As long as I live I will warn my brethren of the sore and plague of Babylon, lest several who are with us fall back with the others into the abyss of hell.”

It is scarcely possible to imagine the effect produced upon the audience by language, the energy of which still makes us wonder. “None of us,” adds the candid student to whom we owe the fact, “at least, if he be not a block without intelligence, (‘as,’ adds he in a parenthesis, ‘all the papists are,’)—none of us doubts that it contains the simple truth. It is evident to all the faithful, that Dr.

Luther is an angel of the living God, called to feed the long bewildered sheep of Christ with the divine Word." This discourse, and the act which crowned it, mark an important epoch in the Reformation. The Leipsic discussion had detached Luther inwardly from the pope. But the moment when he burned the bull was that in which he declared, in the most expressive manner, his entire separation from the bishop of Rome and his church, and his attachment to the Church universal, as founded by the apostles of Jesus Christ. After three centuries the fire which he kindled at the East gate is still burning.

"The pope," said he, "has three crowns, and they are these: the first is against God, for he condemns religion,—the second against the emperor, for he condemns the secular power,—and the third against society, for he condemns marriage." When he was reproached with inveighing too violently against the papacy, he replied, "Ah! I wish every thing I testify against him were a clap of thunder, and every one of my words were a thunderbolt."3 This firmness of Luther was communicated to his friends and countrymen. A whole nation rallied round him. The university of Wittemberg in particular always became more attached to the hero to whom it owed its importance and renown. Carlstadt raised his voice against "the raging lion of Florence," who tore divine and human laws to pieces, and trampled under foot the principles of eternal truth. At this time Melancthon also addressed the States of the empire in a writing characterised by his usual elegance and wisdom. It was a reply to a treatise attributed to Emser, but published under the name of Rhadinus, a Roman theologian. Luther himself spoke not more forcibly, and yet there is a grace in Melancthon's words which gives them access to the heart.

After showing, by passages of Scripture, that the pope is not superior to other bishops; "What prevents us," says he to the States of the empire, "from depriving the pope of the privilege which we have given him? It matters little to Luther that our riches, i.e. the treasures of Europe, are sent to Rome. But what causes his grief and ours is, that the laws of the pontiffs, and the reign of the pope, not only endanger the souls of men but utterly destroy them. Every man can judge for himself, whether or not it suits him to give his money for the maintenance of Roman luxury, but to judge of the things of religion, and of sacred mysteries, is beyond the reach of the vulgar. Here, then, Luther implores your faith and zeal, and all pious men implore with him, some with loud voice and others with groans and sighs. Remember, princes of the Christian people, that you are Christians, and rescue the sad wrecks of Christianity from the tyranny of Antichrist. You are deceived by those who pretend that you have no authority over priests. The same spirit which animated Jehu against the priests of Baal urges you, in imitation of that ancient example, to abolish the Roman superstition—a superstition far more horrible than the idolatry of Baal." So spoke mild Melancthon to the princes of Germany.

Some cries of alarm were heard among the friends of the Reformation. Timid spirits inclined to excessive moderation—Staupitz in particular, expressed the keenest anguish. "Till now," said Luther to him, "the whole affair has been mere sport. You yourself have said, 'did God not do these things it is impossible they could by done.' The tumult becomes more and more tumultuous! and I do not think it will be quelled before the last day." Such was Luther's mode of encouraging the timid. The tumult has existed for three centuries and is not quelled!

"The papacy," continued he, "is not now what it was yesterday and the day before. Let it excommunicate and burn my writings; … let it kill me! it cannot arrest what is going forward.

Something wonderful is at the door. I burnt the bull in great trembling, but now I experience more joy from it than from any action of my life."4

We stop involuntarily and delight to read in the great soul of Luther all that the future is preparing. "O! my father," says he to Staupitz in concluding, "pray for the word of God and for me. I am heaved on the billows, and as it were whirled upon them."

War is thus declared on all sides. The combatants have thrown away their scabbards. The Word of God has resumed its rights, and deposes him who had gone the length of usurping God's place. Society is shaken throughout. No period is without egotistical men, who would willingly leave human society in error and corruption, but wise men, even the timid among them, think differently. "We know well," says the mild and moderate Melancthon, "that statesmen have a horror at every thing like innovation; and it must be confessed, that in the sad confusion called human life, discord, even that which arises from the best of causes, is always accompanied with evil. Still it is necessary that in the Church the Word of God take precedence of every thing human. God denounces eternal wrath against those who strive to extinguish the truth; and therefore, it was a duty incumbent on Luther—a Christian duty which he could not evade—to rebuke the pernicious errors which disorderly men were circulating with inconceivable effrontery. If discord engenders many evils, (to my great grief I see it does, adds sage Philip,) it is the fault of those who at the beginning circulated errors, and of those who, filled with diabolic hatred, are seeking at present to maintain them."

All, however, were not of the same opinion. Luther was loaded with reproaches; the storm burst upon him from all sides. "He is quite alone," said some—"He teaches novelties," said others.

"Who knows," replied Luther, in accordance with the virtue given him from on high,—"who knows if God has not chosen me, and called me, and if they ought not to fear that in despising me they may be despising God himself?… Moses was alone on coming out of Egypt—Elijah alone in the time of King Ahab—Isaiah alone in Jerusalem—Ezekiel alone at Babylon.… God never chose for a prophet either the high priest or any other great personage. He usually chose persons who were low and despised,—on one occasion he even chose a shepherd, (Amos). At all times the saints have had to rebuke the great—kings, princes, priests, the learned—at the risk of their lives. And under the New Dispensation has it not been the same? Ambrose in his day was alone; after him Jerome was alone; later still Augustine was alone.… I do not say that I am a prophet,3 but I say they ought to fear just because I am alone and they are many. One thing I am sure of—the Word of God is with me and is not with them.

"It is said also," continues he, "that I advance novelties, and that it is impossible to believe that all other doctors have for so long a period been mistaken.

"No, I do not preach novelties. But I say that all Christian doctrines have disappeared, even among those who ought to have preserved them; I mean bishops and the learned. I doubt not, however, that the truth has remained in some hearts, should it even have been in infants in the cradle. Poor peasants, mere babes, now understand Jesus Christ better than the pope, the bishops, and the doctors.

"I am accused of rejecting the holy doctors of the Church. I reject them not: but since all those doctors try to prove their writings by Holy Scripture, it must be clearer and more certain than they

are. Who thinks of proving an obscure discourse by one still more obscure? Thus, then, necessity constrains us to recur to the Bible, as all the doctors do, and to ask it to decide upon their writings; for the Bible is lord and master.

“But it is said men in power persecute him. And is it not clear from Scripture that persecutors are usually in the wrong, and the persecuted in the right; that the majority are always in favour of falsehood, and the minority in favour of truth? The truth has, at all times, caused clamour.”

Luther afterwards reviews the propositions condemned in the bull as heretical, and demonstrates their truth, by proofs drawn from Holy Scripture. With what force, in particular, does he now maintain the doctrine of grace!

“What,” says he, “will nature be able, before and without grace, to hate sin, avoid it, and repent of it; while that, even since grace is come, this nature loves sin, seeks it, desires it, and ceases not to combat grace, and to be irritated against it; a fact for which all the saints continually do groan!… It is as if it were said that a large tree, which I am unable to bend by exerting my utmost strength, bends of itself on my letting it go; or that a torrent, which walls and dykes cannot arrest, is arrested the instant I leave it to itself…. No, it is not by considering sin and its consequences that we attain to repentance, but by contemplating Jesus Christ, his wounds, and boundless love. The knowledge of sin must result from repentance, and not repentance from the knowledge of sin. Knowledge is the fruit, repentance is the tree. With us the fruit grows upon the tree, but it would seem that, in the states of the holy father, the tree grows upon the fruit.” The courageous doctor, though he protests, also retracts some of his propositions. Surprise will cease when his mode of doing it is known. After quoting the four propositions on indulgences, condemned by the bull, he simply adds,

“In honour of the holy and learned bull I retract all that I have ever taught touching indulgences. If my books have been justly burned, it must certainly be because I conceded something to the pope in the doctrine of indulgences; wherefore, I myself condemn them to the fire.”

He also retracts in regard to John Huss. “I say now, not that some articles, but all the articles of John Huss, are Christian throughout. The pope, in condemning Huss, condemned the gospel. I have done five times more than he, and yet I much fear have not done enough. Huss merely says, that a wicked pope is not a member of Christendom; but I, were St. Peter himself sitting to-day at Rome, would deny that he was pope by the appointment of God.”

CHAP. XI

Coronation of Charles V.—The Nuncio Aleander—Will Luther’s Books be burnt?—Aleander and the Emperor—The Nuncios and the Elector—The Son of Duke John pleads for Luther—Luther’s calmness—The Elector protects Luther—Reply of the Nuncios—Erasmus at Cologne—Erasmus with the Elector—Declaration of Erasmus—Advice of Erasmus—System of Charles V. The powerful words of the Reformer penetrated all minds, and contributed to their emancipation. The sparks of light which each word threw out were communicated to the whole nation. But a great question remained to be solved. Would the prince, in whose states Luther dwelt, favour the execution of the bull, or would he oppose it? The reply seemed doubtful. At that time the Elector and all the princes of the empire were at Aix-la-Chapelle where the crown of Charlemagne was placed upon the head of the youngest but most powerful monarch of Christendom. Unprecedented

pomp and magnificence were displayed in the ceremony. Charles V, Frederick, the princes, ministers, and ambassadors, immediately after repaired to Cologne. Aix-la-Chapelle, where the plague was raging, seemed to empty itself into this ancient town on the banks of the Rhine.

Among the crowd of strangers who pressed into the city were the two papal nuncios, Marino Carracioli and Jerome Aleander. Carracioli, who had previously executed a mission to Maximilian, was appointed to congratulate the new emperor, and confer with him on matters of state. But Rome had become aware that, in order to succeed in extinguishing the Reformation, it was necessary to send into Germany a nuncio specially entrusted with the task, and with a character, address, and activity fitted to accomplish it. Aleander had been selected. This man, who was afterwards decorated with the cardinals' purple, seems to have been of rather an ancient family, and not of Jewish parentage as has been said. The guilty Borgia called him to Rome to be secretary to his son, the Cesar, before whose murderous sword all Rome trembled.2 "Like master like servant," says a historian, who thus compares Aleander to Alexander VI. This judgment seems too severe. After the death of Borgia, Aleander devoted himself to study with new ardour. His skill in Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, and Arabic, gave him the reputation of being the most learned man of his age. He threw his whole soul into whatever he undertook. The zeal with which he studied languages was not a whit stronger than that which he displayed in persecuting the Reformation. Leo X took him into his service. Protestant historians speak of his epicurean habits—Roman historians of the integrity of his life. He seems to have been fond of luxury, show, and amusement. "Aleander," says his old friend Erasmus, "lived in Venice, in high office, but in low epicureanism." He is admitted to have been violent in temper, prompt in action, full of ardour, indefatigable, imperious, and devoted to the pope. Eck is the blustering, intrepid champion of the school,—Aleander the proud ambassador of the arrogant court of the pontiffs. He seemed formed to be a nuncio.

Rome had made every preparation to destroy the monk of Wittemberg. The duty of assisting at the coronation of the emperor, as representative of the pope, was to Aleander only a secondary mission, fitted to facilitate his task by the respect which it secured to him. The essential part of his commission was to dispose Charles to crush the growing Reformation. In putting the bull into the hands of the emperor, the nuncio had thus addressed him:—"The pope, who has succeeded with so many great princes, will have little difficulty in bringing three grammarians to order." By these he meant Luther, Melancthon, and Erasmus. Erasmus was present at this audience. No sooner had Aleander arrived at Cologne, than he proceeded in concert with Carracioli, to put everything in train for burning Luther's heretical writings throughout the empire, but more especially under the eyes of the princes of Germany who were then assembled. Charles V had already consented to its being done in his hereditary states. The minds of men were greatly agitated. "Such measures," it was said to the ministers of Charles, and to the nuncios themselves, "far from curing the evil, will only make it worse. Do you imagine that the doctrine of Luther exists only in the books which you throw into the flames? It is written where you cannot reach it—on the hearts of the population. If you will employ force, it must be that of innumerable swords, drawn to massacre an immense multitude.2 Some billets of wood, collected for the purpose of consuming some bits of paper, will do nothing; such weapons become not the dignity either of the emperor or the pontiff." The nuncio defended his faggot piles. "These flames," said he, "are a sentence of condemnation written in gigantic letters, and understood alike by those who are near, and those who are at a distance, by

the learned and the ignorant, by those even who cannot read."

But, in reality the nuncio's efforts were directed not against papers and books, but Luther himself. "These flames," resumed her "are not sufficient to purify the infected air of Germany. If they deter the simple, they do not correct the wicked. The thing wanted is an edict from the emperor against Luther's head."4 Aleander did not find the emperor so complying on the subject of the Reformer's person as on that of his books.

"Having just ascended the throne," said he to Aleander, "I cannot, without the advice of my counsellors, and the consent of the princes, strike such a blow at an immense faction, surrounded by such powerful defenders. Let us first know what our father, the Elector of Saxony, thinks of the affair; after that, we shall see what answer to give to the pope." On the Elector, therefore, the nuncios proceeded to try their wiles, and the power of their eloquence. On the first Sunday of November, after Frederick had attended mass in the convent of the Cordeliers, Carracioli and Aleander requested an audience. He received them in the presence of the Bishop of Trent, and several of his counsellors. Carracioli first presented the papal brief. Milder than Aleander, he thought it best to gain the Elector by flattery, and began to laud him and his ancestors. "In you," said he, "we hope for the salvation of the Roman Church and the Roman empire." But the impetuous Aleander, wishing to come to the point, came briskly forward, and interrupted his colleague, who modestly gave way to him. "It is to me," said he, "and Eck, that Martin's affair has been entrusted. See the immense perils to which this man exposes the Christian commonwealth. If a remedy is not speedily applied, the empire is destroyed. What ruined the Greeks if it was not their abandonment of the pope? You cannot remain united to Luther without separating from Jesus Christ.2 In the name of his Holiness, I ask of you two things: first, to burn the writings of Luther; secondly, to punish him according to his demerits, or at least to give him up a prisoner to the pope. The emperor, and all the princes of the empire have declared their readiness to accede to our demands; you alone still hesitate …"

Frederick replied, by the intervention of the Bishop of Trent, "This affair is too grave to be decided on the spur of the moment. We will acquaint you with our resolution."

Frederick's position was difficult. What course will he adopt? On the one side are the emperor, the princes of the empire, and the chief pontiff of Christendom, from whose authority the Elector has as yet no thought of withdrawing; on the other, a monk, a feeble monk; for his person is all that is asked. The reign of the emperor has just commenced, and will discord be thrown into the empire by Frederick, the oldest and the wisest of all the princes of Germany? Besides, can he renounce that piety which led him as far as the sepulchre of Christ?…

Other voices were then heard. John Frederick, son of Duke John, and nephew of Frederick, the pupil of Spalatin, a young prince, seventeen years of age, who afterwards wore the electoral crown, and whose reign was marked by great misfortunes, had been inspired with a heartfelt love of the truth, and was strongly attached to Luther. When he saw him struck with the anathemas of Rome, he embraced his cause with the warmth of a young Christian and a young prince. He wrote to the doctor, he wrote also to his uncle, soliciting him to protect Luther against his enemies. At the same time, Spalatin, though indeed he was often very desponding, Pontanus, and the other counsellors who were with the Elector at Cologne, represented to him that he could not abandon the Reformer.5

Amid the general agitation, only one man remained tranquil—that man was Luther. While others were trying to save him by the influence of the great, the monk, in his cloister at Wittemberg, thought that the great stood more in need of being saved by him. Writing to Spalatin, he says, “If the gospel was of a nature to be propagated or maintained by the power of the world, God would not have entrusted it to fishermen. To defend the gospel appertains not to the princes and pontiffs of this world. They have enough to do to shelter themselves from the judgments of the Lord and his Anointed. If I speak, I do it in order that they may obtain the knowledge of the divine word, and be saved by it.”

Luther’s expectation was not to be deceived. The faith which a convent of Wittemberg contained exercised its influence in the palaces of Cologne. The heart of Frederick, shaken perhaps for an instant, became gradually stronger. He was indignant that the pope, notwithstanding of urgent entreaties to investigate the matter in Germany, had condemned it at Rome, on the demand of the Reformer’s personal enemy; and that in his absence that enemy should have dared to publish in Saxony a bull which threatened the existence of the university and the peace of his people. Besides, the Elector was convinced that Luther had been wronged. He shuddered at the thought of delivering an innocent man in to the cruel hands of his enemies. Justice, rather than the pope, such was the rule he adopted. He resolved not to yield to Rome. On the 4th November, when the Roman nuncios were in his presence with the Bishop of Trent, his counsellors announced to them, on the part of the Elector, that he was much grieved to see how Doctor Eck had taken the opportunity of his absence to involve in condemnation several persons not adverted to in the bull; that it might be that, since his departure, an immense number of the learned and the ignorant, the clergy and the laity, had united in adhering to the cause and the appeal of Luther; that neither his Imperial Majesty, nor any person, had shown him that the writings of Luther had been refuted, and that the only thing now necessary was to throw them into the fire, that he moreover demanded a safe conduct for Doctor Luther, to enable him to appear before learned, pious, and important judges.3

After this declaration, Aleander, Carracioli, and their suite, retired to deliberate. It was the first time the Elector had publicly declared his intentions with regard to the Reformer. The nuncios had anticipated a very different result. “Now,” thought they, “that the Elector, by persisting in playing his part of impartiality, would expose himself to dangers, the full extent of which cannot he foreseen, he will not hesitate to sacrifice the monk.” So Rome had reasoned. But her schemes were destined to fail before a power to which she had not adverted—the love of justice and truth. When again before the Elector’s counsellors, “I would fain know,” said the imperious Aleander, “what the Elector would think were one of his subjects to choose the King of France or some other foreign prince for judge?” Seeing at length that the Saxon counsellors were not to be shaken, he said, “We will execute the bull; we will prosecute and burn the writings of Luther. As to his person,” added he, affecting a disdainful indifference, “the pope has no anxiety to dip his hand in the blood of the wretch.”

News of the reply which the Elector had given to the nuncios having reached Wittemberg, Luther’s friends were overjoyed. Melancthon and Amsdorff, in particular, cherished the most flattering hopes. “The German nobility,” said Melancthon, “will shape their course by the example of a prince whom they follow in every thing as their Nestor. If Homer called his hero ‘the wall of the Greeks,’ why should not Frederick be called ‘the wall of the Germans?’ ”

Erasmus, the oracle of courts, the torch of the schools, the light of the world, was then at Cologne, having been invited thither by several princes who wished to consult him. At the period of the Reformation, Erasmus was at the head of the true middle (juste milieu) party, at least he thought he was, but erroneously; for when truth and error are in presence of each other, the right side is not the middle. He was the chief of that philosophical and university party, which had for ages aspired to correct Rome, without being able to do so; he was the representative of human wisdom; but this wisdom was too weak to repress the arrogance of the papacy. The wisdom of God was necessary—that wisdom which the world often calls folly, but at the bidding of which mountains are crushed. Erasmus was unwilling either to throw himself into the arms of Luther, or to seat himself at the feet of the pope. He hesitated, and often vibrated between these two powers, sometimes attracted towards Luther, and then suddenly repelled towards the pope. He had declared for Luther in a letter to the Archbishop of Mentz, in which he had said. “The last spark of Christian piety seems ready to be extinguished. It is this that has moved Luther’s heart; he cares neither for money nor honour.” The publication of this letter by the imprudent Ulric von Hütten, subjected Erasmus to so much annoyance that he resolved to act with more prudence in future. Besides, he was accused of being in concert with Luther whose unguarded speeches moreover offended him. “Almost all good people,” said he, “are for Luther, but I see that we are on the high way to a revolt. I would not have my name coupled with his. It hurts me and does him no good.”2 “Be it so,” replied Luther, “since it pains you, I promise never to mention your name, nor that of any of your friends.” Such was the man to whom both the enemies and the friends of the Reformer applied. The Elector, aware that the opinion of a man so much respected as Erasmus would carry great weight, invited the illustrious Dutchman to come to him. Erasmus complied. This was on the 5th of December. The friends of Luther saw this step not without secret apprehension. The Elector was sitting before the fire, with Spalatin beside him, when Erasmus was introduced. “What think you of Luther?” immediately asked Frederick. The prudent Erasmus, surprised at the direct question, at first tried to evade it. He twisted his mouth, bit his lips, and said nothing. Then the Elector, opening his eyes (says Spalatin,) as he was wont to do when speaking to persons from whom he wished a precise answer, looked piercingly at Erasmus, who, not knowing how to disembarrass himself, at last said, half in jest, “Luther has committed two great faults; he has attacked the pope’s crown and the monks’ belly.” The Elector smiled, but gave Erasmus to understand that he was in earnest. Then Erasmus, laying aside his reserve, said, “The source of all this dispute is the hatred of the monks against letters, and the fear they have of seeing an end put to their tyranny.4 What have they put in operation against Luther? Clamour, cabal, hatred, libels. The more virtuous, and the more attached to the doctrines of the gospel a man is, the less is he opposed to Luther. The harshness of the bull has excited the indignation of all good men, and nobody has been able to discover in it the meekness of a vicar of Jesus Christ.6 Out of so many universities two only have attacked Luther, and even these have only condemned, not convicted him. Let not people deceive themselves; the danger is greater than some suppose. Things difficult and arduous are at hand. … To begin the reign of Charles with an act so hateful as the imprisonment of Luther would be of sad augury. The world is thirsting for evangelical truth. Let us beware of culpably resisting it. Let the affair be examined by grave men of sound judgment; this would be more accordant with the dignity of the pope himself.”

Thus spoke Erasmus to the Elector. The reader will perhaps be astonished at his frankness; but Erasmus knew to whom he was speaking. Spalatin was delighted, and going out with Erasmus,

accompanied him as far as the house of the Count of Nuenar, provost of Cologne, where the illustrious scholar was residing. Erasmus, in a fit of frankness, went into his room, took up the pen and wrote down the substance of what he had said to the Elector, and gave it to Spalatin. But fear of Aleander soon took possession of the timid Erasmus, the courage which he had felt in the presence of the Elector and his chaplain vanished, and he begged Spalatin to send back his too bold writing lest it should fall into the hands of the terrible nuncio. It was too late. The Elector, feeling strong in the opinion of Erasmus, spoke in more decided terms to the emperor. Erasmus himself strove in nocturnal conferences, like Nicodemus of old, to persuade the counsellors of Charles that it was necessary to remit the whole affair to impartial judges. Perhaps he had some hope of being named arbiter in this cause which threatened to divide the Christian world. His vanity would have been flattered by the office. But, at the same time, not to lose himself at Rome, he wrote the most submissive letters to Leo, who replied in kind terms, and thereby put poor Aleander to the torture.3 From love to the pope, he could have sharply rebuked the pope. Erasmus communicated the pontiff's letters because they added to his credit. The nuncio made a complaint at Rome: "Pretend," was the answer, "that you do not observe the naughtiness of that man. Prudence requires it: it is necessary to leave the door open for repentance."

Charles V himself embraced a vacillating system, which consisted in flattering both the pope and the Elector, and in seeming to incline alternately towards the one or the other according to the wants of the moment. One of his ministers, whom he had sent to Rome on certain Spanish matters, had arrived at the very time when Eck was loudly prosecuting Luther's condemnation. The wily ambassador instantly saw the advantages which his master might derive from the Saxon monk, and on the 12th May, 1520, wrote the emperor, who was still in Spain: "Your Majesty should go into Germany, and there show some favour to one Martin Luther, who is at the Court of Saxony, and, by his discourses, is giving much uneasiness to the Court of Rome." Such, at the outset, was the light in which Charles viewed the matter. His object was not to know on which side truth or error lay, or to ascertain what the great interest of Germany demanded. What does policy require, and by what means can the pope be induced to support the emperor? This was the whole question, and at Rome was well known to be so. The ministers of Charles gave Aleander a hint of the plan which their master meant to follow. "The emperor," said they, "will act towards the pope as the pope acts towards the emperor: for he cares not to increase the power of his rivals, and in particular of the king of France."2 At these words the imperious nuncio gave vent to his indignation: "What!" replied he, "even should the pope abandon the emperor must the emperor abandon religion? If Charles means thus to take his revenge … let him tremble! This unprincipled course will turn against himself." The imperial diplomatists were not moved by the menaces of the nuncio.

CHAP. XII

Luther on Confession—True absolution—Antichrist—Rally around Luther—Satires—Ulrie von Hütten—Lucas Cranach—The Carnival at Wittemberg—Staupitz intimidated—Luther's Labours—Luther's Humility—Progress of the Reformation.

If the legates of Rome failed with the mighty of the world, the inferior agents of the papacy succeeded in producing disturbance among the weak. The militia of Rome had heard the command of their chief. Fanatical priests employed the bull in alarming consciences, and honest

but ill informed ecclesiastics regarded it as a sacred duty to act conformably to the instructions of the pope. Luther had begun his struggle against Rome in the confessional, and in the confessional Rome gave battle to the adherents of the Reformer. The bull, though openly contemned by the nation, became powerful in these solitary tribunals. “Have you read the writings of Luther,” demanded the confessors, “do you possess them? do you regard them as sound or as heretical?” If the penitent hesitated to pronounce the anathema, the priest refused him absolution. Several consciences were troubled. The people were strongly agitated. This skilful manœuvre promised to restore to the papal yoke whole districts already gained to the gospel. Rome congratulated herself on having, in the thirteenth century, erected a tribunal destined to bring the free consciences of Christians under subjection to the priests. While it continues in force her reign is not ended.

Luther became aware of these circumstances. Single handed what will he do to defeat the manœuvre? The Word—the Word uttered loudly and boldly: such is his weapon. The Word will search out these alarmed consciences, these frightened souls, and strengthen them. A powerful impulse was required, and Luther’s voice was heard addressing penitents with heroic boldness, and a noble disregard of all secondary considerations. “When you are asked,” says he, “whether or not you approve my books, answer You are a confessor, and not an inquisitor or a gaoler. My duty is to confess what my conscience dictates; yours not to probe and discover the secrets of my heart. Give me absolution, and thereafter dispute with Luther, the pope, and whomsoever you please; but do not connect the sacrament of peace with strife and combat.’ If the confessor will not yield, then,” continues Luther, “I would rather dispense with his absolution. Give yourself no uneasiness; if man will not absolve you God will absolve you. Rejoice in that you are absolved by God himself, and present yourself without fear at the sacrament of the altar. The priest will have to account at the final judgment for the absolution which he shall have refused you. They may indeed refuse us the sacrament, but they cannot deprive us of the strength and grace which God has attached to it.—God has placed salvation neither in their will nor in their power but in our faith. Leave their sacrament, altar, priest, church: the Word of God condemned in the bull is more than all these things. The soul can dispense with the sacrament, but cannot live without the Word. Christ, the true Bishop, will himself undertake to nourish you spiritually.”

Thus, Luther’s voice found its way into families, and alarmed consciences, imparting to them courage and faith. But it was not enough for him merely to defend himself; he felt it his duty to attack and return blow for blow. Ambrose Catherin, a Roman theologian, had written against him. “I will stir up the bile of the Italian beast,” said Luther; and he kept his word. In his reply, he proved by the revelations of Daniel and St. John, by the epistles of St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. Jude, that the reign of Antichrist, predicted and described in the Bible, was the papacy. “I know for certain,” says he, in conclusion, “that our Lord Jesus Christ lives and reigns. Strong in this assurance, I would not fear several thousands of popes. May God at length visit you according to his infinite power, and cause the day of the glorious advent of his Son to shine, that day in which he will destroy the wicked. And let all the people say, Amen!” And all the people did say, Amen! A holy fear took possession of men’s souls. They saw Antichrist seated on the pontifical throne. This new idea, an idea which derived great force from the prophetical description, being thrown by Luther into the midst of his age, gave Rome a dreadful shock. Faith in the divine Word was substituted for that, which, till then the Church alone had obtained, and the power of the pope, which had long been adored by the people, became the object of their hatred and terror.

Germany replied to the papal bull by surrounding Luther with acclamation. The plague was in Wittemberg, and yet arrivals of new students daily took place, while from four to six hundred pupils regularly took their seats in the academic halls at the feet of Luther and Melancthon. The church of the convent and the town church were too small for the crowds eager to hear the words of the Reformer. The prior of the Augustins was in terror lest these churches should give way under the pressure of the audience. But the movement was not confined within the walls of Wittemberg: it extended over Germany. Letters full of consolation and faith, from princes, noble and learned men, reached Luther from all quarters. He showed the chaplain more than thirty of them.3

One day the Margrave of Brandenburg, with several other princes, arrived at Wittemberg to visit Luther. “They wished to see the man,” said the Margrave. In fact all wished to see the man, whose word alarmed the pope, and caused the pontiff of the West to totter on his throne. The enthusiasm of Luther’s friends increased from day to day. “Unparalleled folly of Emser!”—exclaimed Melancthon—“to presume to measure weapons with our Hercules, overlooking the finger of God in the actions of Luther, as the king of Egypt overlooked it in the hand of Moses.” The mild Melancthon found strong expressions to excite those who seemed to him to retrograde or remain stationary. “Luther has stood up for the truth,” wrote he to John Hess, “and yet you keep silence. He still breathes, he still prospers, though Leo is indignant and roars with rage. Remember, it is impossible for Roman impiety to approve of the gospel. How should this unhappy age be without its Judases, Caiaphases, Pilates, and Herods? Arm yourself then with the power of the Word of God against such adversaries.”

All the writings of Luther, his Lord’s Prayer, and especially a new edition of the German theology, were eagerly devoured. Reading societies were formed, for the purpose of procuring his works, for the use of the members. Friends made new impressions of them, and circulated them by means of hawkers. They were also recommended from pulpits. A German church was demanded, one in which no dignity should in future be conferred on anyone who was not able to preach to the people in German, and the German bishops of which should every where oppose the papal power.

Moreover, cutting satires directed against the leading Ultra-Montanists were circulated throughout the provinces of the empire. The opposition united all its forces around this new doctrine, which give it precisely what it wanted, by justifying it in regard to religion. The greater part of the lawyers, weary of the quirks of the Ecclesiastical tribunals, attached themselves to the Reformation, but its cause was keenly embraced above all by the Humanists. Ulric von Hütten was indefatigable. He wrote letters to Luther, to the legates, and the leading men of Germany. “I tell you, and tell you again, O Marinus!” said he to the legate, Carracioli, in one of his publications, “the mists with which you blinded us are cleared away—the gospel is preached—the truth proclaimed—the absurdities of Rome treated with contempt—your ordinances languish and die—liberty begins.” Not contenting himself with prose, Hütten had recourse to verse also. He published his Cry on the Burning by Luther. Appealing to Jesus Christ, he prayed him to consume, with the brightness of his countenance, those who dared to deny his power. He began, moreover, to write in German. “Hitherto,” said he, “I have written in Latin, a language which all could not comprehend, but now I address myself to my country.” His German ryhmes laid open and enabled the people to read the shameful and voluminous record of the sins of the Roman Court. But Hütten was unwilling to confine himself to mere words; he was impatient to bring his sword into the struggle, for he thought that by the swords and halberds of the many valiant warriors, of which Germany was proud, the

vengeance of God was to be accomplished. Luther opposed his infatuated projects. “I would not,” said he, “that men should fight for the gospel by violence and carnage. I have written so to Hütten. The celebrated painter, Lucas Cranach, published, under the title of the Passions of Christ and Antichrist, engravings which represented, on the one hand, the splendour and magnificence of the pope, and on the other, the humility and sufferings of the Redeemer. Luther wrote the inscriptions. These engravings, executed with great spirit, produced an astonishing effect. The people withdrew from a church which appeared so opposed to the spirit of its Founder. “This work,” said Luther, “is excellent for the laity.”

Several, in opposing the Papacy, had recourse to arms which ill accorded with the holiness of the Christian life. Emser, in replying to Luther’s tract, entitled, ‘To the Goat Emser,’ had published one entitled, ‘To the Bull of Wittemberg.’ The name was not ill chosen. But at Magdeburg, Emser’s book was hung on the gallows, with this inscription, “The book is worthy of the place;” and a rod was placed beside it, to indicate the punishment which the author deserved. At Doeblin, there was written under the Papal bull, in derision of its impotent thunders, “The nest is here, but the birds are flown.”4 At Wittemberg, the students, taking advantage of the carnival, clothed one of their number in a dress resembling that of the pope, and paraded him through the streets “pompously, but rather too ludicrously,” says Luther. On arriving at the public square they went down to the banks of the river, and some of them, feigning a sudden attack, seemed to wish to throw the pope into the water; but the pope, having no liking for such a bath, took to his heels. His cardinals, bishops, and familiars, followed his example, dispersing over all the quarters of the town, while the students continued to pursue them. There was not a corner of Wittemberg where some Roman dignitary did not flee before the shouts and laughter of the inhabitants, who were all in motion. “The enemy of Christ,” says Luther, “who sports both with kings and with Christ himself, well deserves to be thus sported with.” In this we think him in error. Truth is too beautiful, and ought never to be made to walk through the mire. She ought to fight without such auxiliaries as songs, caricatures, and carnival frolics. It may be that without these popular demonstrations, her success would be less apparent, but it would be more pure, and consequently more durable. Be this as it may, the imprudent and passionate conduct of the Court of Rome had excited universal antipathy, and the bull by which the Papacy thought to stifle every thing was itself the cause of general revolt.

Still the Reformer’s whole course was not one of exultation and triumph. Behind the car in which he was drawn by his zealous countrymen, transported with admiration, there was not wanting the slave appointed to remind him of his frailty. Some of his friends seemed disposed to call a halt. Staupitz, whom he called his father, seemed shaken. The pope had accused him, and Staupitz had declared his readiness to submit to the judgment of his Holiness. “I fear,” said Luther to him, “that in accepting the pope for judge, you will seem to throw off me and the doctrines which I have maintained. If Christ loves you, he will constrain you to retract your letter. Christ is condemned, spoiled, blasphemed; it is time not to fear, but to cry aloud. Wherefore, while you exhort me to humility, I exhort you to pride; for you have too much humility, just as I have too much of its opposite. I shall be called proud and avaricious, an adulterer, a murderer, an antipope, a man guilty of all crimes. It matters not, so long as they cannot accuse me of having kept an impious silence at the moment when the Lord was grieved, and said ‘I looked on my right hand, and beheld but there was no man that would know me.’ (Psalms 142:4) The word of Jesus Christ is not a word of peace, but a sword. If you will not follow Jesus Christ, I will walk alone, advance alone, and gain

the day."

Thus Luther, like the commander of an army, kept an eye on the whole field of battle, and while he urged fresh troops forward into the thickest of the fight, marked those who appeared faint-hearted and recalled them to their post. His exhortations were everywhere heard. His letters rapidly succeeded each other. Three presses were constantly employed in multiplying his writings. His words had free course among the people, strengthened consciences which the confessionals had alarmed, raised up those ready to faint in convents, and maintained the rights of truth in the palaces of princes.

"Amid the tempests which assail me," wrote he to the Elector, "I always hoped I would one day find peace. But I now see it was only a man's thought. Day after day the wave is rising, and I already stand in the midst of the ocean. The tempest breaks loose with fearful roar. With one hand I grasp the sword, and with the other build up the walls of Sion.3 Her ancient links are snapt asunder, broken by the hand which darted the thunders of excommunication against her." "Excommunicated by the bull," says he, "I am loosed from the authority of the pope and monastic laws. With joy I embrace the deliverance. But I lay aside neither the habit of the order nor the convent." And yet, amidst all this agitation, he never loses sight of the dangers by which his own soul is beset during the strife. He feels the necessity of keeping a watch upon himself. "You do well to pray for me," wrote he to Pellican, who was living at Bâle. "I cannot devote enough of time to holy exercises. My life is a cross. You do well to exhort me to modesty. I feel the want of it; but I am not my own master: I know not what spirit rules me. I wish ill to nobody;5 but my enemies press me with such fury that I am not sufficiently on my guard against the seductions of Satan. Pray then for me."

Thus both the Reformer and the Reformation hastened on in the direction in which God called them. The movement extended. Men who might have been expected to be most faithful to the hierarchy began to be shaken. "Even those," says Eck, ingenuously enough, "who hold of the pope the best benefices and the richest canonries remain mute as fishes. Several among them even extol Luther as a man filled with the Spirit of God, and call the defenders of the pope sophists and flatterers." The Church, apparently great in power, supported by the treasures, the powers and the armies of the world, but in reality emaciated and enfeebled, without love to God, without Christian life, without enthusiasm for the truth, found herself in presence of men, simple, but bold, men who, knowing that God is with those who combat for His Word, had no doubt of victory? Every age has experienced how powerful an idea is in penetrating the masses, in arousing nations, and, if need be, hurrying thousands to the field of battle and to death; but if such is the influence of a human idea, what must be the power of an idea sent down from heaven when God opens the door of the human heart. The world has not often seen such a power in operation. It did see it, however, in the first days of Christianity and in those of the Reformation; and it will see it in days yet to come. Men who disdained the world's wealth, and grandeur, and were contented to lead a life of pain and poverty, began to move in behalf of the holiest thing upon the earth—the doctrine of faith and of grace. In this heaving of society, all the religious elements were brought into operation, and the fire of enthusiasm hurried men boldly for-forward into a new life an epoch of renovation which had just opened so majestically, and towards which Providence was hastening the nations.

BOOK SEVENTH The Diet of Worms 1521. (January–May)

CHAP. I

Conquests by the Word of God—The Diet of Worms—Difficulties—Charles demands Luther—The Elector to Charles—State of Men's minds—Aleander's Alarm—The Elector sets out without Luther—Aleander awakens Rome—Excommunication of the Pope, and Communion with Christ—Fulmination of the Bull—Luther's motives in the Reformation. The Reformation, which commenced with the struggles of an humble soul in the cell of a convent at Erfurt, had never ceased to advance. An obscure individual, with the Word of life in his hand, had stood erect in presence of worldly grandeur, and made it tremble. This Word he had opposed, first, to Tezel and his numerous host, and these avaricious merchants, after a momentary resistance, had taken flight. Next, he had opposed it to the legate of Rome at Augsburg, and the legate, paralysed, had allowed his prey to escape. At a later period he had opposed it to the champions of learning in the halls of Leipsic, and the astonished theologians had seen their syllogistic weapons broken to pieces in their hands. At last he had opposed it to the pope, who, disturbed in his sleep, had risen up upon his throne, and thundered at the troublesome monk; but the whole power of the head of Christendom this Word had paralysed. The Word had still a last struggle to maintain. It behoved to triumph over the emperor of the West, over the kings and princes of the earth, and then, victorious over all the powers of the world, take its place in the Church to reign in it as the pure Word of God. The whole kingdom was agitated. Princes and nobles, knights and citizens, clergy and laity, town and country, all were engrossed. A mighty religious revolution, of which God himself was the prime mover, but which was also deeply rooted in the minds of the people, was threatening to overthrow the long venerated head of the Roman hierarchy. A new generation, of a grave, profound, active, and energetic spirit, filled the universities, towns, courts, and castles, the rural districts, and not unfrequently cloisters also. The feeling that a great social transformation was at hand animated all minds with holy enthusiasm. In what relation will the new emperor stand to this movement of the age, and what will be the issue of the mighty impulse, by which all feel that they are borne along? A solemn Diet was about to be opened. It was the first imperial assembly over which the youthful Charles was to preside. Nuremberg, where, in virtue of the Golden Bull, it ought to have been held, being desolated by the plague, it had been summoned to meet at Worms, on the 6th of January, 1521. Never had a Diet been attended by so many princes. All desired to be present at this first act of the government of the young emperor, and to make a display of their power. Among others, the young Landgrave, Philip of Hesse, who was afterwards to play so important a part in the Reformation, arrived at Worms in the middle of January, with six hundred cavaliers, among them men of renowned valour. But there was a still more powerful motive which induced the electors, dukes, archbishops, landgraves, margraves, bishops, barons, and lords of the empire, as well as the deputies of towns, and the ambassadors of the kings of Christendom, at this moment, to throng the roads leading to Worms with their brilliant equipages. It had been announced that the Diet would be occupied with the nomination of a council of regency to govern the empire during the absence of Charles, with the jurisdiction of the imperial chamber, and other important questions. But the public attention was particularly directed to another matter, which the emperor had also mentioned in his letter convening the Diet, viz., the Reformation. The great interests of politics trembled before the cause of the Monk of Wittemberg. This cause was the principal subject of conversation among all personages who arrived at Worms.

Every thing announced that the Diet would be difficult and stormy. Charles, scarcely twenty years of age, pale and sickly, yet as skilful as any one in the graceful management of his horse and in breaking a lance, of a character imperfectly developed, and with a grave and melancholy but still benevolent expression of countenance, gave no proof as yet of distinguished talent, and seemed not to have adopted a decided course. The able and active William of Croi, Lord of Chievres, who was his grand chamberlain, his governor, and prime minister, and possessed absolute authority at the court, died at Worms. Numerous ambitious projects were competing with each other. Many passions were in collision. The Spaniards and Belgians were eager to insinuate themselves into the counsels of the young prince. The nuncios multiplied their intrigues, while the princes of Germany spoke out boldly. A struggle might have been foreseen, yet a struggle in which the principal part would be performed by the secret movements of factions.

Charles opened the Diet on the 28th of January, 1521, being the festival of Charlemagne. He had a high idea of the importance of the imperial dignity. In his opening address he said, that no monarchy could be compared to the Roman empire, to which of old almost the whole world had been subject; that, unhappily, the empire was now only the shadow of what it had been; but that he hoped, by means of his kingdoms and powerful alliances, to re-establish it in its ancient glory. But numerous difficulties immediately presented themslves to the young emperor. How will he act, placed, as he is, between the papal nuncio and the Elector to whom he owes his crown? How can he avoid dissatisfying Aleander or Frederick? The former urged the emperor to execute the papal bull, and the latter begged him to undertake nothing against the monk without giving him a hearing. Wishing to please these two opposite parties, the young prince, during a sojourn at Oppenherm, had written to the Elector to bring Luther to the Diet, assuring him that no injustice would be done him, that he would meet with no violence, and that learned men would confer with him. This letter of Charles, accompanied by letters from Chievres and the Count of Nassau, threw the Elector into great perplexity An alliance with the pope might at any instant become necessary to the young and ambitious emperor, and in that case it was all over with Luther Frederick, by taking the Reformer to Worms, was perhaps taking him to the scaffold; and yet the orders of Charles were express. The Elector ordered Spalatin to acquaint Luther with the letters which he had received. “The enemy,” said the chaplain to him, “is putting every thing in operation to hasten on the affair.”

Luther’s friends trembled, but he trembled not. He was then in very feeble health; no matter. “If I cannot go to Worms in health,” replied he to the Elector, “I will make myself be carried; since the emperor calls me, I cannot doubt but it is a call from God himself. If they mean to employ violence against me, as is probable, (for assuredly it is not with a view to their own instruction that they make me appear,) I leave the matter in the hands of the Lord. He who preserved the three young men in the furnace, still lives and reigns. If He is not pleased to save me, my life is but a small matter; only let us not allow the gospel to be exposed to the derision of the wicked, and let us shed our blood for it sooner than permit them to triumph. Whether would my life or my death contribute most to the general safety? It is not for us to decide. Let us only pray to God that our young emperor may not commence his reign with dipping his hands in my blood; I would far rather perish by the sword of the Romans. You know what judgments befel the emperor Sigismund after the murder of John Huss. Expect every thing of me—save flight and recantation; I cannot fly, still less can I recant.”

Before receiving this letter from Luther, the Elector had taken his resolution. As he was advancing in the knowledge of the gospel, he began to be more decided in his measures. Seeing that the conference of Worms could not have a happy result, he wrote to the emperor. “It seems to me difficult to bring Luther with me to Worms; relieve me from the task. Besides, I have never wished to take his doctrine under my protection, but only to prevent him from being condemned without a hearing. The Legates without waiting for your orders, have proceeded to take a step insulting both to Luther and to me, and I much fear, that in this way they have hurried him on to an imprudent act which might expose him to great danger were he to appear at the Diet.” The Elector alluded to the pile which had consumed the Papal bull. But the rumour of Luther’s journey to Worms had already spread. Men eager for novelty rejoiced at it. The emperor’s courtiers were alarmed, but no one felt so indignant as the papal legate. Aleander on his journey had seen how deep an impression the gospel which Luther preached had made on all classes of society. Literary men, lawyers, nobles, the lower clergy, the regular orders, and the people, were gained to the Reformation. These friends of the new doctrine carried their heads erect, and were bold in their language, while fear and terror froze the partizans of Rome. The papacy still stood, but its props were shaking. A noise of devastation was already heard, somewhat resembling the creaking which takes place at the time when a mountain begins to slip.3

Aleander, during his journey to Worms, was sadly annoyed. When he had to dine or sleep, neither literary men nor nobles nor priests, even among the supposed friends of the pope, durst receive him, and the proud nuncio was obliged to seek an asylum in taverns of the lowest class. He was thus in terror, and had no doubt that his life was in great danger. In this way he arrived at Worms; and, thenceforth, to his Roman fanaticism was added resentment for the personal injuries which he had received. He immediately put every means in operation to prevent the audacious compearance of the redoubtable Luther. “Would it not be scandalous,” said he, “to see laics re-investigating a cause which the pope had already condemned?” Nothing alarms a Roman courtier so much as an investigation; and, moreover, an investigation to take place in Germany, and not at Rome. How humiliating even should Luther’s condemnation be unanimously decided! And it was not even certain that such would be the result. Will not the powerful word of Luther, which has already done such havoc, involve many princes and nobles in inevitable ruin? Aleander, when before Charles, insisted, implored, threatened, and spoke out as nuncio of the head of the Church.2 Charles yielded; and wrote to the Elector that the time granted to Luther having already elapsed, the monk was under papal excommunication; and that therefore unless he were willing to retract his writings, Frederick must leave him at Wittemberg. Frederick had already quitted Saxony without Luther. “I pray the Lord to be favourable to our Elector,” were the words of Melancthon on seeing him depart; “on him our hopes of the restoration of Christendom repose. His enemies dare every thing, και παντα λιθον κινησομενους; but God will bring to nought the counsel of Ahithophel. As for us, let us do our part in the combat by our lessons and our prayers.” Luther was deeply grieved at being prohibited to appear at Worms.4

Aleander did not consider it enough that Luther should not come to Worms—he wished him to be condemned. Returning incessantly to the charge before the princes, prelates, and different members of the Diet, he accused the Augustin monk not only of disobedience and heresy, but also of sedition, rebellion, impiety, and blasphemy. The very accent in which he spoke betrayed the passions by which he was actuated; so that men exclaimed, it is hatred and love of vengeance,

rather than zeal and piety, that excite him. However frequent, however vehement his discourses were, he made no converts.6

Some pointed out to him that the papal bull had condemned Luther only conditionally; others did not altogether conceal the joy which they felt at seeing Roman pride humbled. The ministers of the emperor, on the one hand, and the ecclesiastical electors, on the other, affected great coldness—the former to make the pope more sensible how necessary it was for him to league with their master, the latter in order to induce him to pay better for their favour. A conviction of Luther's innocence prevailed in the assembly, and Aleander could not restrain his indignation. But the coldness of the Diet did not try the patience of the legate so much as the coldness of Rome. Rome, which had so long refused to take a serious view of the quarrel of the drunk German, had no idea that a bull of the sovereign pontiff could prove insufficient to make him humble and submissive. She had accordingly resumed her wonted security, no longer sending either bull or purses of money. But how was it possible without money to succeed in such a business?2 Rome must be awakened, and Aleander gives the alarm. Writing to the Cardinal de Medicis, he says, "Germany is detaching herself from Rome, and the princes are detaching themselves from the pope. A few delays more—a few more attempts at compromise and the matter is past hope. Money! money! or Germany is lost." At this cry Rome awakes: the servants of the papacy, laying aside their torpor, hastily forge their dreaded thunder at the Vatican. The pope issues a new bull; and the excommunication with which till then the heretical doctor had been merely threatened, is in distinct terms pronounced against him and all his adherents. Rome herself, breaking the last thread which still attached him to her church, gave Luther greater freedom, and thereby greater power. Thundered at by the pope, he, with new affection, took refuge in Christ. Driven from the external temple, he felt more strongly that he was himself a temple inhabited by God.

"It is a glorious thing," said he, "that we sinners, in believing on Jesus Christ, and eating his flesh, have him within us with all his strength, power, wisdom and justice, according as it is written, 'He who believeth in me, dwelleth in me and I in him.' Admirable dwelling! marvellous tabernacle! far superior to that of Moses, and all magnificently adorned within with superb tapestry, veils of purple, and furniture of gold, while without, as on the tabernacle which God ordered to be constructed in the wilderness of Sinai, is seen only a rough covering of beavers' skins or goats' hair. Christians often stumble, and in external appearance are all feebleness and disgrace. But no matter: within this infirmity and folly dwells secretly a power which the world cannot know, but which overcomes the world; for Christ remaineth in them. I have sometimes seen Christians walking with a halt, and in great weakness; but when the hour of combat or appearance at the world's bar arrived, Christ of a sudden acted within them, and they became so strong and resolute that the devil in dismay fled before them."2 In regard to Luther, such an hour was about to peal, and Christ, in whose communion he dwelt, was not to forsake him. Meanwhile Rome naturally rejected him. The Reformer, and all his partisans, whatever their rank and power, were anathematised, and deprived personally, as well as in their descendants, of all their dignities and effects. Every faithful Christian as he loved his soul's salvation was ordered to shun the sight of the accursed crew. Wherever heresy had been introduced, the priests were, on Sundays and festivals, at the hour when the churches were best filled, solemnly to publish the excommunication. They were to carry away the vessels and ornaments of the altar, and lay the cross upon the ground; twelve priests, with torches in their hands, were to kindle them and dash them down with violence, and extinguish them by

trampling them with their feet; then the bishop was to publish the condemnation of the impious men; all the bells were to be rung; the bishops and priests were to pronounce anathemas and maledictions, and preach forcibly against Luther and his adherents.

Twenty-two days had elapsed since the excommunication had been published at Rome, and it was perhaps not yet known in Germany, when Luther, learning that there was again some talk of calling him to Worms, addressed the Elector in a letter written in such terms that Frederick might communicate it to the Diet. Luther wished to correct the erroneous impression of the princes, and frankly explain to this august tribunal the true nature of a cause which was so much misapprehended. “I rejoice with all my heart, most serene lord,” said he, “that his imperial majesty means to bring this affair under consideration. I call Jesus Christ to witness that it is the cause of Germany, of the Catholic Church, of the Christian world, and of God himself, … and not of any single man, and more especially such a man as I. I am ready to repair to Worms, provided I have a safe-conduct, and learned, pious, and impartial judges. I am ready to answer, … for it is not in a spirit of rashness, or with a view to personal advantage, that I have taught the doctrine with which I am reproached; I have done it in obedience to my conscience, and to the oath which, as doctor, I took to the Holy Scriptures; I have done it for the glory of God, the safety of the Christian Church, the good of the German nation, and the extirpation of many superstitions, abuses, and evils, disgrace, tyranny, blasphemy, and impiety.” This declaration, in the solemn circumstances in which Luther made it, is deserving of our attention. We here see the motives which influenced him, and the primary causes which led to the renovation of Christian society. These were something more than monkish jealousy or a wish to marry.

CHAP. II A Foreign Prince—Advice of Politicians—Conference between the Confessor and the Elector’s Chancellor—Uselessness of these Manœuvres—Aleander’s activity—Luther’s Sayings—Charles gives in to the Pope. But all this was of no importance in the eyes of politicians. How high soever the idea which Charles entertained of the imperial dignity, it was not in Germany that his interests and policy centred. He was always a Duke of Burgundy, who, to several sceptres, added the first crown of Christendom. Strange! at the moment of her thorough transformation, Germany selected for her head a foreign prince in whose eyes her wants and tendencies were only of secondary importance. The religious movement, it is true, was not indifferent to the young emperor; but it was important in his eyes only in so far as it menaced the pope. War between Charles and France was inevitable, and its chief seat was necessarily to be in Italy. An alliance with the pope thus became every day more necessary to the schemes of Charles. He would fain have either detached Frederick from Luther, or satisfied the pope without offending Frederick. Several of those about him manifested, in regard to the affairs of the Augustin monk, that cold disdain which politicians usually affect when religion is in question. “Let us avoid extremes,” said they. “Let us trammel Luther by negotiations, and reduce him to silence by some kind of concession. The true course is to stifle the embers, not stir them up. If the monk is caught in the net, we have gained the day. By accepting a compromise he will be interdicted and undone. For appearance some externa reforms will be devised; the Elector will be satisfied; the pope will be gained, and affairs will resume their ordinary course.”

Such was the project of the confidential counsellors of the emperor. The doctors of Wittemberg seem to have divined this new policy. “They are trying in secret to gain men’s minds,” said Melancthon, “and are working in darkness.” John Glapio, the confessor of Charles V,—a man of

rank, a skilful courtier, and an intriguing monk,—undertook the execution of the project. Glapio possessed the entire confidence of Charles, who (in accordance with Spanish manners) left to him almost entirely the management of matters relating to religion. As soon as Charles was appointed emperor, Leo X had assiduously endeavoured to gain Glapio by favours to which the confessor was strongly alive.2 There was no way in which he could make a better return to the pope's kindness than by reducing heresy to silence, and he accordingly set about the task.

One of the Elector's counsellors was Chancellor Gregory Bruck, or Pontanus, a man of great intelligence, decision, and courage, who knew more of theology than all the doctors, and whose wisdom was a match for the wiles of the monks at the emperor's court. Glapio, aware of the influence of the chancellor, asked an interview with him; and coming up to him as if he had been the friend of the Reformer, said to him, with an expression of good will, "I was delighted when, on reading the first productions of Luther, I found him a vigorous stock, which had pushed forth noble branches, and which gave promise to the Church of the most precious fruits. Several before him, it is true, made the same discoveries: still none but he has had the noble courage to publish the truth without fear. But when I read his book on the Captivity of Babylon, I felt as if beaten and bruised from head to foot." "I don't believe," added the monk, "that Luther acknowledges himself to be the author. I do not find in it either his style or his science…." After some discussion, the confessor continued, "Introduce me to the Elector, and I will, in your presence, explain to him the errors of Luther." The chancellor replied, "That the business of the Diet did not leave any leisure to his Highness, who, moreover, did not meddle with the affair." The monk was vexed when his request was denied. "By the way," said the chancellor, "as you say there is no evil without a remedy, will you explain yourself?"

Assuming a confidential air, the confessor replied: "The emperor earnestly desires to see such a man as Luther reconciled to the Church, for his books (before the publication of his treatise, 'On the Captivity of Babylon,') rather pleased his Majesty. … It must doubtless have been Luther's rage at the bull which dictated that work. Let him declare that he did not wish to disturb the peace of the Church, and the learned of all nations will rally around him.… Procure me an audience of his Highness." The chancellor waited upon Frederick. The Elector being well aware that any kind of recantation was impossible replied, "Tell the confessor that I cannot comply with his request, but do you continue the conference."

Glapio received this message with great demonstrations of respect; and changing the attack, said, "Let the Elector name some confidential persons to deliberate on this affair."

Chancellor.—"The Elector does not profess to defend the cause of Luther."

Confessor.—"Very well, do you at least discuss it with me.… Jesus Christ is my witness, that all I do is from love to the Church, and to Luther who has opened so many hearts to the truth." The chancellor having refused to undertake what was the Reformer's own task, was preparing to retire.

"Stay!" said the monk to him.

Chancellor.—"What then is to be done?"

Confessor.—"Let Luther deny that he is the author of the Captivity of Babylon."

Chancellor.—"But the papal bull condemns all his other works."

Confessor.—“It is because of his obstinacy. If he retracts his book, the pope, in the plenitude of his power, can easily restore him to favour. What hopes may we not cherish now that we have so excellent an emperor!…”

Perceiving that these words made some impression on the chancellor, the monk hastened to add—“Luther always insists on arguing from the Bible. The Bible!… it is like wax, and may be stretched and bent at pleasure. I undertake to find in the Bible opinions still more extraordinary than those of Luther. He is mistaken when he converts all the sayings of Jesus into commandments.” Then, wishing to work also on the fears of the chancellor, he added, “What would happen if to-day or to-morrow the Emperor were to try the effect of arms?… Think of it.” He then allowed Pontanus to retire. The confessor prepared new snares. “After living ten years with him,” said Erasmus, “we should not know him.”

“What an excellent book that of Luther’s on ‘Christian Liberty,’” said he to the chancellor when he saw him a few days after—“what wisdom! what talent! what intellect! it is just the style in which a true scholar ought to write. Let unexceptionable persons be chosen on either side, and let the pope and Luther refer to their judgment. No doubt Luther has the best of it on several articles. I will speak to the emperor himself on the subject. Believe me, I do not say these things to you on my own suggestion. I have told the emperor that God will chastise him, as well as all the princes, if the Church, which is the spouse of Jesus Christ, is not washed from all the stains by which she is polluted. I have added that God himself had raised up Luther, and had ordered him to rebuke men sharply, using him as a rod to punish the sins of the world.”2 The chancellor hearing these words, (they convey the impressions of the time, and show what was then thought of Luther even by his opponents,) thought it right to express his astonishment that more respect was not shown to his master. “Deliberations on this subject,” said he, “are daily carried on before the emperor, and the Elector is not invited to them. It seems strange that the emperor, who owes him some gratitude, excludes him from his counsels.”

Confessor.—“I have been present only once at these deliberations, and I have heard the emperor resist the solicitations of the nuncios. Five years hence it will be seen how much Charles shall have done for the reformation of the Church.”

“The Elector,” replied Pontanus, “is ignorant of the emperor’s intentions: He should be invited that he may hear them stated.” The confessor answered with a deep sigh, “I call God to witness how ardently I desire to see the Reformation of Christendom accomplished.” To lengthen out the affair, and meanwhile keep Luther’s mouth shut, was all that Glapio had in view. At all events, Luther must not come to Worms. A dead man returning from the other world, and appearing in the midst of the Diet, would not have alarmed the nuncios, and monks, and whole host of the pope, so much as the sight of the Wittemberg doctor.

“How many days does it take to come from Wittemberg to Worms?” asked the monk at the chancellor, affecting an air of indifference; then begging Pontanus to present his very humble respects to the Elector, he departed.

Such were the manœuvres of the courtiers. The firmness of Pontanus outwitted them. This upright man was immovable as a rock in all negotiations. Moreover, the Roman monks fell into the very snares which they were laying for their enemies. “The Christian,” says Luther, in his figurative

language, “is like a bird fastened near a trap. The wolves and foxes go round and round, and make a dart upon it to devour it, but fall into the pit and perish, while the timid bird remains alive. Thus holy angels guard us, and devouring wolves, hypocrites, and persecutors, cannot do us any harm.” Not only were the confessor’s artifices unavailing, but, moreover, his admissions confirmed Frederick in the belief that Luther was in the right, and that it was his duty to defend him. The hearts of men became every day more inclined towards the gospel. A prior of the Dominicans proposed that the emperor, the kings of France, Spain, England, Portugal, Hungary, and Poland, the pope, and the electors, should name representatives by whom the matter should be decided. “Never,” said he, “has reference been made to the pope alone.” The general feeling became such, that it seemed impossible to condemn Luther without a hearing and regular conviction.3

Aleander became uneasy, and displayed more than wonted energy. It is no longer merely against the Elector and Luther that he has to contend. He is horrified at the secret negotiations of the confessor, the proposition of the prior, the consent of Charles’ ministers, and the extreme coldness of Roman piety among the most devoted friends of the pope, “so that one would have thought,” says Pallavicinci, “that a torrent of ice had passed over them.” He had at length received gold and silver from Rome, and held in his hand energetic briefs addressed to the most powerful personages in the empire.5 Afraid that his prey might escape, he felt that now was the time to strike a decisive blow. He despatched the briefs, showered gold and silver with liberal hand, dealt out the most enticing promises, “and provided,” says the Cardinal historian, “with this triple weapon, he strove anew to turn the wavering assembly of the electors in favour of the pope.” He laboured above all to encircle the emperor with his snares. Availing himself of the differences between the Belgian and the Spanish ministers, he laid close siege to the prince. All the friends of Rome, awakened by his voice, urged young Charles with solicitations. “Every day,” wrote the Elector to his brother John, “deliberations are held against Luther: the demand is that he be put under the ban of the pope and the emperor; in all sorts of ways attempts are made to hurt him. Those who parade about with their red hats, the Romans with all their sect, labour in the task with indefatigable zeal.” In fact, Aleander urged the condemnation of the Reformer with a violence which Luther terms “marvellous fury.” The apostate nuncio,3 as Luther calls him, hurried by passion beyond the bounds of prudence, one day exclaimed, “If you mean, O Germans, to shake off the yoke of Roman obedience, we will act so, that, setting the one against the other, as an exterminating sword, you will all perish in your own blood.” “Such,” adds the Reformer, “is the pope’s method of feeding the sheep of Christ.”

Luther himself spoke a very different language. He made no demand of a personal nature. “Luther is ready,” said Melancthon, “to purchase the glory and advancement of the gospel with his life.” But he trembled at the thought of the disasters of which his death might be the signal. He saw a people led astray, and perhaps avenging his martyrdom in the blood of his enemies, especially the priests. He recoiled from the fearful responsibility. “God,” said he, “arrests the fury of his enemies; but should it break forth, … a storm will burst upon the priests similar to that which ravaged Bohemia.… I am clear of it; for I have earnestly besought the German nobility to arrest the Romans by wisdom, and not by the sword.6 To war upon priests, a body without courage and strength, is to war upon women and children.”

Charles did not withstand the solicitations of the nuncio. His Belgian and Spanish devotion had been developed by his preceptor Adrian, who afterwards occupied the pontifical throne. The pope

had addressed a brief to him imploring him to give legal effect to the bull by an imperial edict. “In vain,” said he to him, “shall God have invested you with the sword of supreme power if you do not employ it both against infidels, and also against heretics, who are far worse than infidels.” One day, accordingly, in the beginning of February, at the moment when every thing was ready at Worms for a brilliant tournament, and after the emperor’s tent had actually been erected, the princes who were preparing to attend the fête were summoned to repair to the imperial palace. There the papal bull was read to them, and they were presented with a stringent edict enjoining the execution of it. “If you have any thing better to propose,” added the emperor in the usual form, “I am ready to hear you.”

Animated debates then began in the diet. “The monk,” wrote the deputy of one of the German free towns, “gives us a great deal to do. Some would like to crucify him, and I don’t think that he will escape: the only thing to be feared is that he may rise again on the third day.” The emperor had thought he would be able to publish his edict without opposition on the part of the States, but it was not so. Men’s minds were not prepared, and it was necessary to gain the Diet. “Convince this assembly,” said the young monarch to the nuncio. This was just what Aleander desired, and he received a promise of being admitted to the Diet on the 13th February.

CHAP. III

Aleander admitted to the Diet—Aleander’s Address—Luther accused—Rome defended—Appeal to Charles against Luther—Effect of the Nuncio’s Address. The nuncio prepared for the solemn audience. The task was important, but Aleander was worthy of it. The ambassador of the sovereign pontiff was surrounded with all the splendour of his office; he was moreover one of the most eloquent men of his age. The friends of the Reformation looked forward to the sitting not without fear. The Elector, under the pretext of indisposition, kept away, but he ordered some of his counsellors to attend and give heed to the nuncio’s address. On the appointed day, Aleander proceeded to the hall of the assembled princes. Men’s minds were excited; several thought of Annas or Caiaphas repairing to Pilate’s judgment hall to demand the life of him who was “perverting the nation.” At the moment when the nuncio was about to step across the threshold, the officer of the Diet (says Pallavicini,) came briskly up to him, took him by the breast, and shoved him back.”2 “He was a Lutheran at heart,” adds the Roman historian. If the story is true, it doubtless betrays strange passion in the officer, but at the same time, gives an idea of the powerful influence which Luther’s doctrine had produced even on the doorkeepers of the Imperial Council. Proud Aleander, haughtily drawing himself up, moved on and entered the hall. Never had Rome been called to make her apology before so august an assembly. The nuncio placed before him the judicial documents which he judged necessary, the works of Luther, and the papal bulls. Silence being called, he spoke as follows:—

“Most august emperor!—most puissant princes!—most excellent deputies! I come before you to maintain a cause for which my heart burns with the most ardent affection. The subject is the preservation on my master’s head of that tiara which is reverenced by all, the maintenance of that papal throne, for which I am ready to give my body to the flames, could the monster who has engendered the growing heresy be consumed by the same pile, and mingle his ashes with mine.

“No! the disagreement between Luther and Rome turns not on the interests of the pope. Luther’s books are before me, and any man with eyes in his head may perceive that the holy doctrines of

the Church are the object of his attack. He teaches that those only communicate worthily whose consciences are filled with sadness and confusion for their sins, and that there is no justification in baptism, without faith in the promise of which baptism is the pledge. He denies the necessity of our works to obtain celestial glory. He denies that we have liberty and power to observe natural and divine law. He affirms that we sin necessarily in all our actions. Did ever the arsenal of hell send forth arrows better fitted to loose the reins of modesty?… He preaches the abolition of religious vows. Can more sacrilegious impiety be imagined?… What desolation will not be seen in the world when those who ought to be the leaven of the people shall have thrown aside their sacred vestments, abandoned the temples which re-echoed with their holy hymns, and plunged into adultery, incest, and dissoluteness!…

“Shall I enumerate all the crimes of this audacious monk? He sins against the dead, for he denies purgatory; he sins against heaven, for he says, he would not believe an angel from heaven; he sins against the Church, for he pretends that all Christians are priests; he sins against the saints, for he despises their venerable writings; he sins against the councils, for he terms that of Constance an assembly of demons; he sins against the world, for he forbids the punishment of death to be inflicted on any one who has not committed a mortal sin. Some say he is a pious man … I have no wish to attack his life, I would only remind this assembly that the devil deceives men by semblances of truth.”

Aleander having spoken of the condemnation of purgatory by the council of Florence, laid the papal bull on this council at the feet of the emperor. The archbishop of Mentz took it up and handed it to the archbishops of Cologne and Treves, who received it reverently, and passed it to the other princes. The nuncio, having thus accused Luther, now proceeded to the second point, which was to justify Rome.

“At Rome,” says Luther, “they promise one thing with the lip and do its opposite with the hand. If this fact is true, must not the inference be the very reverse of what he draws from it? If the ministers of a religion live conformably to its precepts it is a proof that it is false. Such was the religion of the ancient Romans …

Such is that of Mahomet, and that of Luther himself; but such is not the religion which the pontiffs of Rome teach us. Yes, the doctrine which they confess condemns all as faulty, several as culpable, and some even (I say it candidly) as criminal. … This doctrine delivers their actions to the censure of men during their life, and to historical infamy after their death.3 Now what pleasure, what advantage, I ask, could the pontiffs have found in inventing such a religion?

“The Church, it will be said, was not governed in primitive times by Roman pontiffs—What must the conclusion be? With such arguments they might persuade men to live on acorns, and princesses to be their own washerwomen.’ But it was against his adversary, the Reformer, that the nuncio chiefly directed his attack. Full of indignation against those who said that he ought to be heard, he exclaimed, “Luther will not allow any one to instruct him. The pope summoned him to Rome, but he did not obey. The pope summoned him to Augsburg before his legate, and he would not appear without a safe-conduct from the emperor, i.e. until the hands of the legate were tied, and nothing left free to him but his tongue. “Ah!” said Aleander, turning towards Charles V, “I supplicate your imperial majesty not to do what would issue in disgrace. Interfere not with a matter of which laics have no right to take cognisance. Do your own work. Let Luther’s doctrine be

interdicted throughout the empire: let his writings be everywhere burnt. Fear not: there is enough in the writings of Luther to burn a hundred thousand heretics. … And what have we to fear?… The populace? Before the battle they seem terrible from their insolence; in the battle they are contemptible from their cowardice. Foreign princes? The king of France has prohibited Luther's doctrine from entering his kingdom, while the king of Great Britain is preparing a blow for it with his royal hand. You know what the feelings of Hungary, Italy, and Spain are, and none of your neighbours, how great soever the enmity he may bear to yourself, wishes you any thing so bad as this heresy. If the house of our enemy is adjacent to our own we may wish him fever, but not pestilence.… Who are all these Lutherans? A huddle of insolent grammarians, corrupt priests, disorderly monks, ignorant advocates, degraded nobles, common people misled and perverted. Is not the Catholic party far more numerous, able, and powerful? A unanimous decree of this assembly will enlighten the simple, give warning to the imprudent, determine those who are hesitating, and confirm the feeble.… But if the axe is not laid to the root of this poisonous shrub, if the fatal stroke is not given to it, then.… I see it covering the heritage of Jesus Christ with its branches, changing the vineyard of the Lord into a howling forest, transforming the kingdom of God into a den of wild beasts, and throwing Germany into the frightful state of barbarism and desolation to which Asia has been reduced by the superstition of Mahomet." The nuncio ceased. He had spoken for three hours. The torrent of his eloquence had moved the assembly. "The princes shaken and alarmed," says Cochlœus, "looked at each other; and murmurs were soon heard from different quarters against Luther and his partisans. Had the mighty Luther been present, had he been permitted to answer the discourse, had he, availing himself of the concession forced from the Roman orator by the remembrance of his old master, the infamous Borgia, been permitted to show that these arguments, designed to defend Rome, constituted her condemnation, and that the doctrine which gave proof of her iniquity was not invented by him, as the orator said, but was the very religion which Christ had given to the world, and which the reformation was establishing in its primitive lustre, could he have presented an exact and animated picture of the errors and abuses of the papacy, and shown how it had perverted the religion of Jesus Christ into an instrument of aggrandisement and rapine,—the effect of the nuncio's harangue would have been neutralised at the moment of its delivery; but nobody rose to speak. The assembly remained under the impression of the address, and, excited and carried away, showed themselves ready violently to eradicate the heresy of Luther from the soil of the empire.

Still the victory was only apparent. It was the will of God that Rome should have an opportunity of displaying her reasons and her strength. The greatest of her orators had addressed the assembled princes, and said all that Rome had to say. But the last effort of the papacy was the very thing which was destined to become, in regard to several of those who witnessed it, the signal of her defeat. If, in order to secure the triumph of truth, it is necessary to proclaim it aloud, so in order to secure the destruction of error, it is sufficient to publish it without reserve. Neither the one nor the other, in order to accomplish its course, should be concealed. The light judges all things.

CHAP. IV

Sentiments of the Princes—Speech of Duke George—Character of the Reformation—A hundred and one grievances—Charles yields—Tactics of Aleander—The Grandees of Spain—Luther's peace—Death and not Retractation. A few days sufficed to wear off these first impressions, as

always happens when an orator shrouds the emptiness of his arguments in high sounding phrases. The majority of the princes were ready to sacrifice Luther, but none were disposed to sacrifice the rights of the empire and the redress of German grievances. There was no objection to give up the insolent monk who had dared to speak so loud, but it was wished to make the pope so much the more sensible of the justice of a reform which was demanded by the heads of the kingdom. Accordingly, it was the greatest personal enemy of Luther, Duke George of Saxony, who spoke most energetically against the encroachments of Rome. The grandson of Podiebrad, King of Bohemia, repulsed by the doctrines of grace which the Reformer proclaimed, had not yet abandoned the hope of seeing a moral and ecclesiastical reform, and what irritated him so much against the monk of Wittemberg, was that he had spoiled the whole affair by his despised doctrines. But now, seeing the nuncio sought to confound Luther and reform in one common condemnation, George suddenly stood up among the assembled princes, and, to the great astonishment of those who knew his hatred to the Reformer, said, “The Diet must not forget the grievances of which it complains against the Court of Rome. What abuses have crept into our states! The annats which the emperor granted freely for the good of Christendom now demanded as a debt—the Roman courtiers every day inventing new ordinances, in order to absorb, sell, and farm out ecclesiastical benefices—a multitude of transgressions winked at; rich offenders unworthily tolerated, while those who have no means of ransom are punished without pity—the popes incessantly bestowing expectancies and reversions on the inmates of their palace, to the detriment of those to whom the benefices belong—the commendams of abbeys and convents of Rome conferred on cardinals, bishops, and prelates, who appropriate their revenues, so that there is not one monk in convents which ought to have twenty or thirty—stations multiplied without end, and indulgence shops established in all the streets and squares of our cities, shops of St. Anthony, shops of the Holy Spirit, of St. Hubert, of St. Cornelius, of St. Vincent, and many others besides—societies purchasing from Rome the right of holding such markets, then purchasing from their bishop the right of exhibiting their wares, and, in order to procure all this money, draining and emptying the pockets of the poor—the indulgences which ought to be granted solely for the salvation of souls, and which ought to be merited only by prayers, fastings, and the salvation of souls, sold at a regular price—the officials of the bishop, oppressing those in humble life with penances for blasphemy, adultery, debauchery, the violation of this or that feast day, while, at the same time, not even censuring ecclesiastics who are guilty of the same crimes—penances imposed on the penitent, and artfully arranged, so that he soon falls anew into the same fault, and pays so much the more money. … Such are some of the crying abuses of Rome; all sense of shame has been cast off, and one thing only is pursued … money! money! Hence preachers who ought to teach the truth, now do nothing more than retail lies—lies, which are not only tolerated, but recompensed, because the more they lie, the more they gain. From this polluted well comes forth all this polluted water. Debauchery goes hand in hand with avarice. The officials cause women to come to their houses under divers pretexts, and strive to seduce them, sometimes by menaces, sometimes by presents; or, if they cannot succeed, injure them in their reputation. Ah! the scandals caused by the clergy precipitate multitudes of poor souls into eternal condemnation! There must be a universal reform, and this reform must be accomplished by summoning a general Council. Wherefore, most excellent princes and lords, with submission I implore you to lose no time in the consideration of this matter.” Several days after Aleander’s address, Duke George produced the list of grievances which he had enumerated. This important document is preserved

in the archives of Weimar.

Luther had not spoken more forcibly against the abuses of Rome but he had done something more. The duke pointed out the evil, Luther had, along with the evil, pointed out both the cause and the cure. He had shown that the sinner receives the true indulgence, that which comes from God, solely by faith in the grace and merits of Jesus Christ, and this simple but powerful doctrine had overturned all the markets established by the priests. “How can one become pious?” asked he one day. “A Cordelier will reply Put on a grey hood, and tie a cord round your waist. A Roman will reply, Hear mass, and fast. But a Christian will say, Faith in Christ alone justifies and saves. Before works we must have eternal life. After we are born anew, and made children of God by the word of grace, then it is we do good works.” The duke spoke the language of a secular prince—Luther, the language of a reformer. The great sore of the Church was that she had devoted herself entirely to externals; had made all her works and her graces to consist of outward and material things. Indulgences had carried this to its extreme point, and pardon, the most spiritual thing in Christianity, had been purchased in shops like meat and drink. The great work of Luther consisted in his availing himself of this extreme point in the degeneracy of Christendom; in order to bring back the individual and the Church to the primitive source of life, and to re-establish the reign of the Holy Spirit within the sanctuary of the heart. Here, as often happens, the cure sprung out of the disease, and the two extremes met. Henceforward the Church, which during so many ages had been developed externally by ceremonies, observances, and human practices, began again to be developed within by faith, hope, and charity. The duke’s address produced the greater effect from his opposition to Luther being well known. Other members of the Diet stated different grievances. The ecclesiastical princes themselves supported these complaints. “We have a pontiff,” said they, “who spends his life in hunting and pleasure. The benefices of Germany are given at Rome to huntsmen, domestics, grooms, stable boys, body servants, and other people of that class, ignorant unpolished people, without capacity, and entire strangers to Germany.”2 The Diet appointed a commission to collect all these grievances. Their number was found to be a hundred and one. A deputation, consisting of secular and ecclesiastical princes, presented the list to the emperor, imploring him to give redress, as he had engaged to do at his election. “How many Christian souls are lost?” said they to Charles V. “How many depredations, how much extortion, are caused by the scandals with which the spiritual chief of Christendom is environed? The ruin and dishonour of our people must be prevented. Therefore, we all, in a body, supplicate you most humbly, but also most urgently, to ordain a general reformation, to undertake it, and to accomplish it.” There was, at this time, in Christian society, an unseen power influencing princes and their subjects, a wisdom from above dragging forward even the adversaries of the Reformation, and preparing that emancipation whose appointed hour had at length arrived.

Charles could not be insensible to these remonstrances of the empire. Neither himself nor the nuncio had expected them. His confessor had even denounced the vengeance of Heaven against him if he did not reform the Church. The emperor immediately withdrew the edict which ordered Luther’s writings to be committed to the flames in every part of the empire, and in its place substituted a provisional order remitting these books to the magistrates. This did not satisfy the assembly, who were desirous that the Reformer should appear. It is unjust, said his friends, to condemn Luther without having heard him, and without knowing from himself whether he is the author of the books which are proposed to be burnt. His doctrine, said his opponents, has so taken

possession of men's hearts, that it is impossible to arrest their progress without hearing him. There need be no discussion with him. If he avows his writings, and refuses to retract them, then all of us, electors, princes, states of the whole empire, true to the faith of our ancestors, will, in a body, aid your majesty, by all the means in our power, in the execution of your decrees.

Aleander, alarmed, dreading both the intrepidity of Luther and the ignorance of the princes, immediately set himself to the task of preventing the Reformer's compearance. He went from the ministers of Charles to the princes who were most disposed to favour the pope, and from these princes to the emperor himself. "It is unlawful," said he, "to bring into question what the sovereign pontiff has decided. There will be no discussion with Luther, you say; but continued he, will not the power of this audacious man, will not the fire of his eye, and the eloquence of his tongue, and the mysterious spirit which animates him, be sufficient to excite some sedition?2 Several already venerate him as a saint, and you everywhere meet with his portrait surrounded with a halo of glory, as round the head of the Blessed. If it is determined to cite him, at least let it be without giving him the protection of public faith." These last words were meant to frighten Luther, or prepare his ruin. The nuncio found easy access to the grandees of Spain. In Spain, as in Germany, the opposition to the Dominican inquisitors was national. The yoke of the inquisition, which had been discontinued for a time, had just been re-established by Charles. A numerous party in the Peninsula sympathised with Luther; but it was not so with the great, who, on the banks of the Rhine, again met with what they had hated beyond the Pyrenees. Inflamed with the most violent fanaticism, they were bent on annihilating the new heresy. In particular, Frederick, Duke of Alba, was transported with rage whenever the subject of Reformation was mooted. His wish would have been to wade in the blood of all its adherents. Luther had not yet been called to appear, and yet his mere name was already agitating all the grandees of Christendom then assembled at Worms. The man who was thus agitating the mighty of the earth was the only one who seemed to be at peace. The news from Worms were alarming. Even Luther's friends were frightened. "Nothing now is left us but our wishes and our prayers," wrote Melancthon to Spalatin. "Oh! if God would deign to ransom the safety of the Christian people by my blood." But Luther was a stranger to fear. Shutting himself up in his peaceful cell, he sat down to meditate, applying to himself the words of Mary, the mother of our Lord, when she exclaimed, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he that is mighty has done for me great things, and holy is His name. He has shown strength with his arm; he hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree." The following are some of the thoughts which filled Luther's heart … "'He that is mighty,' says Mary. Oh! how great boldness on the part of a young girl! With a single word she strikes all the strong with languor, all the mighty with feebleness, all the wise with folly, and all those whose name is glorious on the earth with ignominy, and lays at the feet of God all strength, all power, all wisdom, all glory.2 'His arm,' continues she, and she thus appeals to that power by which he acts of himself, and without the agency of his creatures—a mysterious power operating in secrecy and in silence, until his purpose is accomplished. Hence destruction comes before any one is aware of its approach; hence elevation, when no one is thinking of it. He leaves his children in oppression and feebleness, so that each of them says to himself, 'We are all lost!' Then, however, they are most strong. For it is where the power of man ends that the power of God begins. Only let faith wait upon Him … And, on the other hand, God permits his adversaries to increase their power and grandeur. He withdraws from them the aid of his strength, and leaves them to be inflated with their own. He leaves them void of his eternal wisdom, and lets them fill

themselves with their wisdom of a day. And while they rise up in the greatness of their might, the arm of the Lord keeps back, and their work … vanishes like a soap bubble when it bursts in the air."

It was on the 10th of March, at the moment when his name was filling the imperial city with alarm, that Luther finished this exposition of the Magnificat.

He was not allowed to remain tranquil in his retreat. Spalatin, in conformity to the orders of the Elector, sent him a note of the articles of which it was proposed to demand a retractation from him. A retractation after the refusal at Augsburg! … "Fear not," he wrote to Spalatin, "that I will retract a single syllable, since their only argument is to insist that my writings are opposed to the rites of what they call the Church. If the Emperor Charles summon me merely for the purpose of retracting, I will answer him that I will remain here; and it will be just the same thing as if I had been to Worms and come back again. But if, on the contrary, the emperor chooses to summon me in order that I may be put to death, I am ready to repair at his call; for, with the help of Christ, I will not desert his word on the battle-field. I know it: these bloody men will never rest till they have deprived me of life Oh, that none but papists would become guilty of my blood!"

CHAP. V Will a Safe-conduct be given?—Safe-conduct—Will Luther go?—Holy Thursday at Rome—The Pope and Luther. At length the emperor decided. The appearance of Luther before the Diet seemed the only thing fitted to bring this affair which occupied the whole empire, to some kind of termination. Charles V resolved to cite him, but without giving him a safe-conduct. Here Frederick again began to act as his protector. Every body saw the danger which threatened the Reformer. Luther's friends, says Cochlœus, were afraid that he would be delivered up to the pope, or that the emperor himself would put him to death as unworthy, on account of his obstinate heresy, that any faith should be kept with him. On this subject there was a long and keen debate among the princes.2 Struck, at last, with the general agitation then prevailing almost throughout the whole population of Germany, and afraid that, as Luther passed along, some sudden tumult or dangerous sedition might break forth, (doubtless in favour of the Reformer,) the princes deemed it wise to calm men's minds on his account, and not only the emperor, but also the Elector of Saxony, Duke George, and the Landgrave of Hesse, through whose states he had to pass, each gave him a safe-conduct. On the 6th March, 1521, Charles V signed the following summons addressed to Luther:—

"Charles, by the grace of God, elected Roman Emperor, always Augustus, etc., etc.

"Honourable, dear, and pious! We, and the States of the Holy Empire, having resolved to make an inquest touching the doctrine and the books which you have published for some time past have given you, to come here and return to a place of safety our safe-conduct and that of the empire here subjoined. Our sincere desire is that you immediately prepare for this journey, in order that, in the space of twenty-one days mentioned in our safe-conduct you may be here certainly, and without fail. Have no apprehension of either injustice or violence. We will firmly enforce our safe-conduct under-written, and we expect that you will answer to our call. In so doing you will follow our serious advice.

"Given at our imperial city of Worms, the sixth day of March, in the year of our Lord, 1521, and in the second of our reign.

“Charles.

“By order of my Lord the Emperor, with his own hand, Albert, Cardinal of Mentz, Arch-chancellor.

Nicolas Zwyl.” The safe-conduct enclosed in this letter bore the following address:—“To the honourable, our dear and pious doctor Martin Luther, of the order of the Augustins.”

It began thus:—

“We, Charles, fifth of the name, by the grace of God, elected Roman Emperor, always Augustus, King of Spain, of the Two Sicilies, of Jerusalem, Hungary, Dalmatia, Croatia, etc., Arch-Duke of Austria, Duke of Burgundy, Count of Hapsburg, Flanders, the Tyrol, etc., etc.”

Then the king of so many nations giving to wit that he had summoned before him an Augustin monk named Luther, ordered all princes, lords, magistrates, and others, to respect the safe-conduct which he gave him, under pain of punishment by the emperor and the empire.

Thus the emperor gave the title of “dear, honourable, and pious,” to a man at whose head the Church had launched her excommunication. It had been wished, in the drawing up of the document, to remove all distrust from the mind of Luther and his friends. Gaspard Sturm was appointed to carry this message to the Reformer, and accompany him to Worms. The Elector, dreading the public indignation, wrote, on the 12th March, to the magistrates of Wittemberg to see to the safety of the emperor’s officer, and, if deemed necessary, to provide him with a guard. The herald set out.

Thus the designs of God were accomplished. God was pleased to set upon a hill that light which he had kindled in the world, and emperors, kings, and princes, without knowing it, were forthwith in motion to execute his design. It is easy for him to exalt the lowest to the highest. An act of his power suffices to raise the humble child of Mansfeld from an obscure hut to the palace where kings are assembled. In regard to Him, there is nothing small, nothing great. When he wills it, Charles V and Luther meet face to face. But will Luther obey this citation? His best friends were in doubt. The Elector on the 25th of March wrote his brother—“Doctor Martin is summoned hither, but I know not if he will come. I cannot augur any good of it.” Three weeks later (16th April), this excellent prince seeing the danger increase wrote anew to Duke John. “There is a proclamation against Luther. The cardinals and bishops attack him with much severity. May God turn all to good. Would to God I could procure him an equitable reception!”

While these things were passing at Worms and Wittemberg, the Papacy was reiterating its blows. On the 28th March, the Thursday before Easter, Rome resounded with a solemn excommunication. At this season it is usual to publish the dreadful bull in Cœna Domini, which is only a long series of imprecations. On that day, the avenues to the church in which the sovereign pontiff was to officiate were occupied at an early hour by the papal guards, and by a crowd of people who had flocked from all parts of Italy to receive the benediction of the holy father. The square in front of the Basilisk was decorated with branches of laurel and myrtle; wax tapers were burning on the balcony of the church, and the ostensorium was raised upon it. All at once bells make the air re-echo with solemn sounds; the pope, clothed in his pontifical robes, and carried in a chair, appears on the balcony; the people kneel, all heads are uncovered, the colours are lowered, the muskets grounded, and a solemn silence reigns. Some moments after, the pope slowly

stretches out his hands, raises them towards heaven, then bends them slowly towards the ground, making the sign of the cross. This movement is repeated thrice, and the air echoes anew with the ringing of bells, which intimate the pope's benediction to the surrounding country; then priests advance with impetuosity, holding lighted torches, which they reverse, brandish, and throw about with violence, to represent the flames of hell; the people are moved and agitated, and the words of malediction are heard from the height of the temple. When Luther was informed of this excommunication, he published the tenor of it, with some remarks, written in that caustic style in which he so much excelled. Although this publication did not appear till afterwards, we will here give some idea of it. Let us hear the high priest of Christendom on the balcony of his Basilisk, and the monk of Wittemberg answering him from the bosom of Germany.

There is something characteristic in the contrast of the two voices. The Pope.—"Leo Bishop."

Luther.—"Bishop … as a wolf is a shepherd; for the bishop ought to exhort according to the doctrine of salvation, not belch out imprecations and maledictions." The Pope.—"… Servant of all the servants of God.…"

Luther.—"In the evening when we are drunk; but in the morning we call ourselves Leo lord of all the lords." The Pope.—"The Roman bishops, our predecessors, have been wont, on this festival, to employ the weapons of righteousness." …

Luther.—"Which, according to you, are excommunication and anathema, but according to St. Paul, patience, meekness, and charity." (2 Corinthians 6:7) The Pope.—"According to the duty of the apostolic office, and to maintain the purity of Christian faith."

Luther—"In other words, the temporal possessions of the pope." The Pope.—"And its unity, which consists in the union of the members with Christ their head … and with his vicar.…"

Luther.—"For Christ is not sufficient; one more than he is necessary." The Pope.—"To guard the holy communion of the faithful, we follow the ancient custom, and excommunicate and anathematise on the part of God Almighty the Father.

Luther.—"Of whom it is said, 'God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world.'" (John 3:17) The Pope.—"… And the Son and the Holy Spirit, and according to the power of the Apostles Peter and Paul … and our own.…"

Luther.—"And myself! says the ravenous wolf, as if the power of God were too feeble without him." The Pope.—"We curse all heretics,—the Garasi, the Patarini, the Pauperes of Lyon, the Arnoldists, the Speronists, the Passagians, the Wickliffites, the Hussites, the Fraticelli."

Luther.—"For they wished to possess the Holy Scriptures, and insisted that the pope should be sober and preach the Word God." The Pope.—"And Martin Luther recently condemned by us for a similar heresy, as well as all his adherents, and all, whosoever they be, that show him any favour."

Luther.—"I thank thee, most gracious Pontiff, for condemning me in common with all these Christians. I count it an honour to have my name proclaimed at Rome during the feast in so glorious a manner, and carried over the world with the names of all those humble confessors of Jesus Christ." The Pope.—"Likewise we excommunicate and curse all pirates and corsairs.…"

Luther.—“Who then is the greatest of pirates and corsairs if it be not he who robs souls, chains them, and puts them to death?” The Pope.—“Particularly those who sail upon our sea.”

Luther.—“Our sea!… Saint Peter, our predecessor, said, ‘Silver and gold have I none,’ (Acts 3:6) Jesus Christ said, ‘The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; but it shall not be so with you.” (Luke 22:25) But if a waggon loaded with hay must, on meeting with a drunken man, give way to him, à fortiori must St. Peter and Jesus Christ himself give way to the pope.” The Pope.—“Likewise we excommunicate and curse all who falsify our bulls, and our apostolic letters.…”

Luther.—“But the letters of God, the Scriptures of God, all the world may condemn and burn.” The Pope.—“Likewise we excommunicate and curse all who detain provisions which are on the way to Rome.…”

Luther.—“He barks and bites like a dog threatened to be deprived of his bone.” The Pope.—“Likewise we condemn and curse all who keep back judicial rights, fruits, tithes, revenues, appertaining to the clergy.”

Luther.—“For Jesus Christ has said, ‘Whosoever will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.’ (Matthew 5:40) and this is our commentary upon the passage.” The Pope.—“Whatever be their station, dignity, order, power, or rank; be they even bishops or kings.…”

Luther.—“For ‘There will arise false teachers among you who will despise dominion and speak evil of dignities,’ saith the Scripture. (Jude 1:8)” The Pope.—“Likewise we condemn and curse all those who in any kind of way attack the city Rome, the kingdom of Sicily, the islands of Sardinia and Corsica, the patrimony of St. Peter in Tuscany, the duchy of Spoleto, the margravate of Ancona, the Campagna, the cities of Ferrara and Benevento, or any other city or country appertaining to the Church of Rome.”

Luther.—“O, Peter, poor fisherman! where did you get Rome and all those kingdoms? I salute you, Peter, king of Sicily!… and fisherman at Bethsaida!” The Pope.—“We excommunicate and curse all chancellors, counsellors, parliaments, procurators, governors officials, bishops, and others who oppose our letters of exhortation, invitation, prohibition, mediation, execution, etc.”

Luther,—“For the holy see seeks only to live in idleness, magnificence, and debauchery, to command, storm, deceive, lie, insult, and commit all sorts of wickedness in peace and safety.…”

“O Lord, arise! it is not as the papists pretend. Thou hast not forsaken us, nor is thy favour turned away from us.” So spake Leo X at Rome, and Luther at Wittemberg. The pontiff having finished his anathemas, the parchment on which they were written was torn in pieces, and the fragments thrown to the people. Immediately there was a great rush among the crowd, all pressing forward, and striving to get hold of a morsel of the terrible bull.

Such were the holy relics which the papacy offered to her faithful on the eve of the great day of grace of expiation. The multitude soon dispersed, and the vicinity of the Basilisk resumed its wonted stillness. Let us return to Wittemberg.

CHAP. VI

Luther's courage—Bugenhagen at Wittemberg—Persecutions in Pomerania—Melancthon wishes to set out with Luther—Amsdorff—Schurff—Suaven—Hütten to Charles V.

It was the 24th of March. The imperial herald, Gaspard Sturm, having at length passed the gates of the town where Luther was, presented himself before the doctor, and put the summons of Charles V into his hands. A grave and solemn moment for the Reformer! All his friends were in consternation. No prince, not even excepting Frederick the Wise, had as yet declared in his favour. Knights, it is true, uttered menaces, but the mighty Charles despised them. Still Luther was not troubled. "The papists," said he, on seeing the anguish of his friends, "have no wish for my arrival at Worms, they only wish my condemnation and death. No matter, pray not for me, but for the Word of God. Before my blood is cold, thousands throughout the world will be called to answer for having shed it. The most holy adversary of Christ, the father, master, and generalissimo of homicides, insists on having my life. Amen! Let the will of the Lord be done. Christ will give me his Spirit to vanquish these ministers of error. I despise them during my life, and will triumph over them by my death. They are doing all they can at Worms, to compel me to retract. Here then will be my retractation: I once said, that the pope was the vicar of Christ; now, I say that he is the enemy of the Lord, and the apostle of the devil." And when he learned that all the pulpits of the Franciscans were resounding with imprecations and maledictions against him, he exclaimed, "O what wondrous joy it gives me!" He knew that he had done the will of God, and that God was with him; why then should he not set out boldly? This purity of intention, this liberty of conscience is a hidden power of incalculable might which never fails the servant of God, and which makes him more invincible than helmets and armied hosts could make him. At this time arrived at Wittemberg a man who, like Melancthon, was destined to be Luther's friend through life, and to console him at the moment of his departure. It was a priest of thirty-six years of age, named Bugenhagen, who had fled from the severities with which the Bishop of Camin, and Prince Bogislas of Pomerania, persecuted the friends of the gospel of all classes—clergy, citizens, and literati.3 Of a senatorial family at Wollin in Pomerania, from which he is commonly called 'Pomeranus, Bugenhagen, at twenty years of age, began to teach at Treptow. Youth flocked to hear him, while nobles and learned men vied with each other for his society. He was a diligent student of the Holy Scriptures, and prayed to God to instruct him. One day towards the end of December, 1520, when he was supping with several friends, Luther's treatise on the Captivity of Babylon was put into his hands. After turning it over, he exclaimed, "Many heretics have infested the Church since our Saviour died, but never was there one more pestilential than the author of this work." Having taken the book home with him, and read it over and over, his views entirely changed; new truths presented themselves to his mind, and returning some days afterwards to his companions, he said to them, "The whole world is fallen into Cimmerian darkness. This man and none but he sees the truth." Some priests, a deacon, even the abbot himself, received the pure doctrine of salvation, and preaching it with power, soon," (says a historian,) "turned away their hearers from human superstitions to the sole efficacious merit of Jesus Christ.6 "Then persecution burst forth. Several were already immured in dungeons, when Bugenhagen escaped from his enemies, and arrived at Wittemberg. "He suffers for the love of the gospel," immediately wrote Melancthon to the Elector's chaplain, "where could he fly if not to our ασυλον (asylum,) to the protection of our prince?" But none received Bugenhagen with so much delight as Luther. It was arranged between them that, immediately after the Reformer's departure, Bugenhagen should begin to expound the Psalms. Thus divine Providence brought this powerful mind to aid in supplying the place of him whom

Wittemberg was going to lose. Placed a year after at the head of the church of this town, Bugenhagen presided over it for thirty-six years. Luther distinguished him by the name of The Pastor.

Luther behoved to depart. His alarmed friends thought that unless God miraculously interposed, he was going to death. Melancthon, who had left his native country, had become attached to Luther with all the affection of his soul. “Luther,” said he, “is to me in place of all my friends: I feel him to be greater and more admirable than I can express. You know how Alcibiades admired his Socrates; but I admire Luther in a higher sense, for he is a Christian.” Then he added the simple but beautiful expression, “Every time I contemplate him, I find him even greater than himself.”2 Melancthon wished to follow Luther in his dangers. But their common friends, and doubtless the doctor himself, were against it. Must not Philip supply the place of his friend? and, should that friend never return, who would direct the cause of the Reformation? “Ah! would to God,” said Melancthon, resigned, but grieved, “would to God I had been allowed to go with him.” The ardent Amsdorff immediately declared that he would accompany the doctor. His strong soul felt a pleasure in exposing itself to danger. His high bearing enabled him to appear fearless before an assembly of kings. The Elector had invited to Wittemberg, as professor of law, Jerome Schurff, the son of a physician of St. Gall, a celebrated man, of great meekness of temper, and a very intimate friend of Luther. “He has not yet summoned up courage,” said Luther, “to pronounce sentence of death on a single malefactor. Yet this timid individual volunteered to act as the doctor’s counsel on this dangerous journey. A young Danish student named Peter Suaven, who boarded with Melancthon, and afterwards distinguished himself by his labours in Pomerania and Denmark, also declared that he would accompany his master. The youth in schools were entitled to have their representative beside the champion of truth.

Germany was moved at the thought of the dangers which threatened the representative of her people, and found a voice well fitted to express her fears. Ulric von Hütten shuddered at the thought of the blow about to be struck at his country, and, on the 1st of April wrote directly to Charles V as follows:—“Most excellent emperor, you are on the point of destroying us, and yourself with us. What is intended in this affair of Luther but just to destroy our liberty and abridge your power? There is not throughout the whole breadth of the empire a good man who does not feel the liveliest interest in this business. The priests alone are in arms against Luther because he is opposed to their excessive power, their shameful luxury, their depraved lives, and has pleaded for the doctrine of Christ, his country’s freedom, and purity of manners.

“O emperor! dismiss from your presence those orators of Rome, those bishops and cardinals who would prevent every thing like reform. Did you not observe the sadness of the people on seeing you on your arrival approach the people surrounded by those wearers of red hats, by a herd of priests and not a band of valiant warriors?

“Do not give up your sovereign majesty to those who would trample it under their feet! Have pity on us! Do not in your ruin drag the whole nation along with you! Place us amid the greatest perils, under the swords of the enemy and the canon’s mouth; let all nations conspire against us; let all armies assail us, so that we may be able openly to manifest our valour, and not be thus vanquished and enslaved in the dark, like women, without arms and without a struggle…. Ah! our hope was that you would deliver us from the yoke of the Romans and overthrow the pontifical

tyranny. God grant that the future may turn out better than the commencement.3

“All Germany kneels before you; she supplicates you with tears, implores your aid, your pity, your faith, and, by the holy memory of those Germans, who, when the whole world was subjugated to Rome, refused to bend their head before that proud city, conjures you to save her, restore her to herself, deliver her from slavery, and avenge her of her tyrants!…” So spoke Germany to Charles V through the instrumentality of the knight. The emperor paid no attention to the letter; perhaps threw it disdainfully from him to one of his secretaries. He was a Fleming, and not a German. Personal aggrandisement, not the liberty and glory of the empire, was the object of all his desires.

CHAP. VII

Departure for the Diet of Worms—Luther’s Adieu—His Condemnation Published—Cavalcade near Erfurt—Meeting of Jonas and Luther—Luther in his old Convent Luther Preaches at Erfurt—Incident—Faith and Works—Concourse of People—Luther’s Courage—Luther to Spalatin—Halt at Frankfort—Fears at Worms—Plan of the Imperialists—Luther’s Firmness. The 2nd of April had arrived, and Luther behoved to take leave of his friends. After writing a note to Lange to intimate that he would spend the following Thursday or Friday at Erfurt, he bade adieu to his colleagues. Turning to Melancthon he said to him, in a tone which betrayed emotion, “If I do not return, and my enemies put me to death, O, my brother, cease not to teach, and remain firm in the truth. Labour in my stead, since I shall not be able to labour any longer for myself. If you live, it matters little though I perish.” Then, committing himself to the hand of Him who is faithful and true, Luther took his seat and quitted Wittemberg. The town council had provided him with a modest carriage with a cloth covering which might be put on or off at pleasure. The imperial herald, clad in his insignia, and wearing the imperial eagle, was on horseback in front, followed by his servant. Next followed Luther, Schurff, Amsdorff, and Suaven in their carriage. The friends of the gospel, the citizens of Wittemberg, in deep emotion, were invoking God, and shedding tears. Such was Luther’s departure.2

He soon observed that the hearts of those whom he met were filled with gloomy forebodings. At Leipsic no honour was paid to him. He only received the usual present of wine. At Naumburg he met a priest, probably J. Langer, a man of stern zeal, who carefully preserved in his study the portrait of the famous Jerome Savonarola of Ferrara, who was burnt at Florence in 1498, by order of pope Alexander VI, as a martyr to liberty and morality, as well as a confessor of evangelical truth. Having taken the portrait of the Italian martyr, the priest came up to Luther, and held out the portrait to him without speaking. Luther understood what the dumb figure intimated, but his intrepid soul remained firm. “It is Satan,” said he, “who, by these terrors, would fain prevent a confession of the truth from being made in the assembly of the princes, because he foresees the blow which this will give to his kingdom.” “Adhere firmly to the truth which thou hast perceived,” said then the priest to him gravely, “and thy God will also adhere firmly to thee.”

Having spent the night at Naumburg, where the burgomaster had hospitably entertained him, Luther arrived next evening at Weimar. He was scarcely a moment there when he heard loud cries in all directions. They were publishing his condemnation. “Look,” said the herald to him. He looked, and his astonished eyes beheld imperial messengers traversing the town, and posting up the imperial edict, which ordered his writings to be laid before the magistrates. Luther had no doubt that these harsh measures were exhibited before-hand, to deter him from coming, that he might

afterwards be condemned for having refused to appear. “Well, doctor, will you go on?” said the imperial herald to him in alarm. “Yes,” replied Luther, “though put under interdict in every town, I will go on: I confide in the emperor’s safe-conduct.” At Weimar, Luther had an audience of the Elector’s brother, Duke John, who was then residing there. The prince invited him to preach. He consented, and from his heart, now under deep emotion, came forth the words of life. John Voit, the friend of Frederick Myconius, a Franciscan monk, heard him, and being converted to evangelical doctrine, quitted the convent two years after. At a later period, he became professor of theology at Wittemberg. The duke gave Luther the money necessary for his journey. From Weimar the Reformer proceeded to Erfurt. It was the town of his youth, and he hoped to see his friend Lange, provided, as he had written him, he could enter the town without danger. He was still three or four leagues off, near the village of Nora, when he saw a troop of horsemen appear in the distance. Were they friends, or were they enemies? Shortly Crotus, the rector of the university, Eobanus Hesse, Melancthon’s friend, whom Luther called the king of poets, Euricius Cordus, John Draco, and others, to the number of forty, members of the senate, the university, and the municipality, all on horseback, saluted him with acclamation. A multitude of the inhabitants of Erfurt covered the road, and gave loud expression to their joy. All were eager to see the mighty man who had ventured to declare war against the pope. A young man of twenty-eight, named Justus Jonas, had got the start of the party. Jonas, after studying law at Erfurt, had been appointed rector of the university in 1519. Illumined by the evangelical light which then radiated in all directions, he felt desirous to become a theologian. “I believe,” wrote Erasmus to him, “that God has elected you as an instrument to spread the glory of his Son Jesus.” All Jonas’ thoughts were turned to Wittemberg and Luther. Some years before, when only a student of law, being of an active enterprising spirit, he had set out on foot, accompanied by some friends, and in order to reach Erasmus, then at Brussels, had traversed forests infested by robbers, and towns ravaged by the plague. Will he not now confront other dangers in order to accompany the Reformer to Worms? He earnestly begged the favour, and Luther consented. Thus met these two doctors, who were to labour through life in the renovation of the Church. Divine Providence gathered around Luther men destined to be the light of Germany: the Melancthons, the Amsdorffs, the Bugenhagens, the Jonases. On his return from Worms, Jonas was appointed provost of the Church of Wittemberg, and doctor in theology. “Jonas,” said Luther, “is a man whose life would deserve to be purchased at a large price, in order to detain him on the earth.”2 No preacher ever surpassed him in the gift of captivating his hearers. “Pomeranus is an expositor,” said Melancthon, “and I am a dialectitian,—Jonas is an orator. The words flow from his lips with surpassing grace, and his eloquence is overpowering. But Luther is beyond us all.” It seems that nearly about the same time a companion of Luther’s childhood, one of his brothers, joined the escort. The deputation turned their steeds, and horsemen and footmen, surrounding Luther’s carriage, entered the town of Erfurt. At the gate, in the squares and streets, where the poor monk had so often begged his bread, the crowd of spectators was immense. Luther dismounted at the Augustin convent, where the gospel had consoled his heart. Lange received him with joy; Usingen, and some of the more aged fathers, showed great coolness. There was a general desire to hear him preach, and though he was interdicted from doing it, the herald himself could not resist the desire, and consented.

Sunday after Easter, the Augustin church at Erfurt was crowded. That friar who formerly opened the doors and swept the church, mounted the pulpit, and having opened the Bible, read these

words: “Peace be with you; and when he had so said, he showed them his hands and his side.” (John, 20:19, 20.) “All the philosophers, doctors, and writers,” said he, “have exerted themselves to show how man may obtain eternal life, and have not succeeded. I will now tell you.” This has, in all ages, been the great question; accordingly Luther’s hearers redoubled their attention.

“There are two kinds of works,” continued the Reformer; “works foreign to ourselves—these are good works; and our own works—these are of little value. One builds a church; another goes on a pilgrimage to St. James or St. Peter; a third fasts, prays, takes the cowl, walks barefoot; a fourth does something else. All these works are nothing, and will perish: for our own works have no efficacy in them. But I am now going to tell you what is the genuine work. God raised a man again from the dead, even the Lord Jesus Christ, that he might crush death, destroy sin, and shut the gates of hell. Such is the work of salvation. The devil thought that he had the Lord in his power when he saw him between the two thieves, suffering the most ignominious martyrdom, accursed of God and men … But the Divinity displayed its power, and annihilated sin, death, and hell …

“Christ has vanquished; this is the grand news; and we are saved by his work, not by our own. The pope gives a very different account. But I maintain that the holy Mother of God herself was saved neither by her virginity nor maternity, neither by her purity nor her works, but solely by means of faith and by the works of God …”

While Luther was speaking, a sudden noise was heard; one of the galleries gave a crack, and seemed as if it were going to give way under the pressure of the crowd. Some rushed out, and others sat still, terror-struck. The orator stopped for a moment, and then, stretching out his hand, exclaimed, with a loud voice, “Fear nothing; there is no danger; the devil is seeking, in this way, to prevent me from proclaiming the gospel, but he shall not succeed.” At these words, those who were running out, stopped astonished and rivetted to the spot; the assembly calmed, and Luther, without troubling himself with the attempts of the devil, continued. “You will perhaps say to me, You tell us a great deal about faith. Tell us, also, how we can obtain it. Yes; well, I will tell you. Our Lord Jesus Christ says, ‘Peace be with you; behold my hands:’ in other words, ‘Behold, O man, it is I, I alone who have taken away thy sin, and ransomed thee, and now thou hast peace, saith the Lord.’

“I did not cat the fruit of the tree,” resumed Luther; “neither did you eat it; but we received the sin which Adam has transmitted to us, and are guilty of it. In like manner. I did not suffer on the cross, nor did you suffer on it; but Christ suffered for us; we are justified by the work of God, and not by our own.… ‘I am,’ saith the Lord, ‘thy righteousness and thy redemption.’ …

“Let us believe the gospel, let us believe St. Paul, and not the letters and decretals of the popes.”

Luther, after having preached faith as the mean of the sinner’s justification, preaches works as the consequence and evidence of salvation.

“Since God has saved us,” continues he, “let us so order our works that he may take pleasure in them. Art thou rich,—let thy wealth be useful to the poor. Art thou poor.—let thy service be useful to the rich. If thy toil is useful only to thyself, the service which thou pretendest to render to God is mere falsehood.”

There is not a word in the sermon on Luther himself; no allusion to the circumstances in which he is placed; nothing on Worms, on Charles, or the nuncios; he preaches Christ, and Christ only; at this moment, when the world has its eyes upon him, he is not in the least occupied with himself; and herein is the mark of a genuine servant of God.

Luther set out from Erfurt, and passed through Gotha, where he again preached. Myconius adds, that at the moment when the people were coming out from the sermon the devil detached from the pediment of the church some stones which had not budged for two centuries. The doctor slept in the convent of the Benedictines, at Rheinhardsbrunn, and thence proceeded to Eisenach, where he felt indisposed. Amsdorff, Jonas, Schurff, and all his friends, were alarmed. He was bled, and the greatest possible attention was paid him. Even the Schulthess of the town, John Oswald, hastened to him with a cordial. Luther, after drinking it, fell asleep, and was thereby so far recovered that he was able to proceed on the following day.

Wherever he passed the people flocked to see him. His journey was a kind of triumphal procession. Deep interest was felt in beholding the intrepid man who was on the way to offer his head to the emperor and the empire. An immense concourse surrounded him. “Ah!” said some of them to him, “there are so many cardinals and so many bishops at Worms, they will burn you; they will reduce your body to ashes, as was done with that of John Huss.” But nothing terrified the monk. “Were they to make a fire,” said he, “that would extend from Worms to Wittemberg, and reach even to the sky, I would walk across it in the name of the Lord; I would appear before them; I would walk into the jaws of this Behemoth, and break his teeth, and confess the Lord Jesus Christ.”

One day, when just going into an inn, and while the crowd were as usual pressing around him, an officer came up to him and said, “Are you the man who undertakes to reform the papacy? How will you succeed?” “Yes,” replied Luther, “I am the man. I confide in Almighty God, whose word and command I have before me.” The officer, affected, gave him a milder look, and said, “Dear friend, there is something in what you say; I am the servant of Charles, but your Master is greater than mine. He will aid you and guard you.” Such was the impression which Luther produced. Even his enemies were struck at the sight of the multitudes that thronged around him, though they have painted the journey in different colours.3 At length the doctor arrived at Frankfort, on Sunday, 14th April.

News of Luther’s advance had reached Worms. The friends of the pope had thought he would not obey the summons of the emperor. Albert, cardinal-archbishop of Mentz, would have given anything to stop him by the way, and new schemes were set on foot for this purpose.

Luther, on his arrival at Frankfort, took some repose, and then announced his approach to Spalatin, who was at Worms with the Elector. It is the only letter which he wrote during his journey. “I am getting on,” says he, “though Satan has striven to stop me on the way by sickness. From Eisenach to this I have never been without a feeling of languor, and am still completely worn out. I learn that Charles has published an edict to frighten me. But Christ lives, and we shall enter Worms in spite of all the barriers of hell and all the powers of the air. Therefore, make ready my lodging.” The next day Luther visited the learned school of William Nesse, a celebrated geographer of that time. “Be diligent,” said he to the scholars, “in the reading of the Scriptures, and the investigation of truth.” Then placing his right hand on the head of one of the children, and his

left on another, he pronounced a blesing on the whole school.

While Luther blessed the young, he was also the hope of the old. Catharine of Holzhausen, a widow advanced in years, and serving God, went to him, and said, “My father and mother told me that God would raise up a man who should oppose the papal vanities, and save the Word of God. I hope you are that man, and I wish you, for your work, the grace and the Holy Spirit of God.”

These were by no means the sentiments universally entertained at Frankfort. John Cochlœus, dean of the church of Notre Dame, was one of those most devoted to the Roman Church. On seeing Luther pass through Frankfort on his way to Worms, he could not suppress his fears. He thought the Church was in want of devoted defenders, and scarcely had Luther quitted the town than Cochlœus set out in his track, ready, as he says, to give his life in defence of the honour of the Church.

There was great alarm in the camp of the pope’s friends. The heresiarch was at hand—every day, every hour brought him nearer Worms. If he entered, all was perhaps lost. The Archbishop Albert, the confessor Glapio, and all the politicians about the emperor, felt uneasy. How can the arrival of this monk be prevented? It is impossible to carry him off, for he has the emperor’s safe-conduct. Stratagem alone can arrest him. These intriguers immediately arranged the following plan. The emperor’s confessor, and his high chamberlain, Paul of Armsdorff, quit Worms in great haste, and proceed about ten leagues distant, to the castle of Ebernburg, the residence of Francis de Seckingen, the knight who had offered Luther an asylum. Bucer, a young dominican, chaplain to the Elector-Palatine, and who had been gained to the evangelical doctrne at the Heidelberg discussion, had then taken refuge in “this hôtel of the just.” The knight, who had no great knowledge of the affairs of religion, was easily imposed upon, while the disposition of the Palatine chaplain favoured the designs of the confessor. In fact, Bucer was inclined to pacific measures. Distinguishing between fundamental and secondary points, he thought he might sacrifice the latter to unity and peace. The chamberlain and confessor begin their attack. They give Seckingen and Bucer to understand that it is all over with Luther if he goes to Worms. They assure him that the emperor is ready to send certain learned men to Ebernburg there to confer with the doctor. “Under your charge,” say they to the knight, “the two parties will be placed.” “We are at one with Luther on all essential points,” say they to Bucer: “only some secondary points remain; and as to these you will be mediator.” The knight and the chaplain are shaken. The confessor and chamberlain continue. “The invitation addressed to Luther must come from you,” say they to Seckingen, “and let Bucer be the bearer of it.” Every thing was arranged according to their wish. Let Luther only be credulous enough to come to Ebernburg; his safe-conduct will soon expire, and then who will be able to defend him?

Luther had arrived at Oppenheim. His safe-conduct was available only for three days longer. He sees a troop of horsemen approaching, and soon recognises at their head the Bucer with whom he had such intimate conference at Heidelberg. “These horsemen belong to Francis of Seckingen,” said Bucer to him after the first expressions of friendship. “He sends me to you to conduct you to his strong castle.4 The emperor’s confessor is desirous of a conference with you. His influence over Charles is unbounded: every thing may be arranged. But beware of Aleander!” Jonas Amsdorff and Schurff knew not what to think; Bucer insisted; but Luther hesitated not. “I continue my journey,” was his answer to Bucer; “and if the emperor’s confessor has any thing to

say to me, he will find me at Worms. I go where I am called."

Meanwhile Spalatin himself began to be troubled and afraid. Surrounded at Worms by the enemies of the Reformation, he heard them saying that no respect should be paid to the safe-conduct of a heretic. He became alarmed for his friend; and at the moment when the latter was approaching the town a messenger presented himself and said to him on the part of the chaplain, "Don't enter Worms!" This from his best friend, the Elector's confidant, Spalatin himself! Luther unmoved, turns his eye on the messenger, and replies, "Go and tell your master, that were there as many devils in Worms as there are tiles upon the roofs, I would enter." Never, perhaps, was Luther so grand. The envoy returned to Worms with his extraordinary message. "I was then intrepid," said Luther a few days before his death, "I feared nothing; God can give man such boldness; I know not if at present I would have as much liberty and joy."—"When the cause is good," adds his disciple Mathesius, "the heart expands, giving courage and energy to evangelists and soldiers."2

CHAP. VIII

Entry into Worms—Chant for the Dead—Council held by Charles V—Capito and the Temporisers—Coneourse around Luther—Citation—Hütten to Luther—Proceeds to the Diet—Saying of Freundsberg—Imposing Assembly—The Chancellor's Address—Luther's Reply—His Wisdom—Saying of Charles V—Alarm—Triumph—Luther's Firmness—Insults from the Spaniards—Council—Luther's Trouble and Prayer—Might of the Reformation—Luther's Oath to Scripture—The Court of the Diet—Luther's Address—Three kinds of Writings—He demands Proof of his Error—Solemn Warnings—He repeats his Address in Latin—Here I am: I can't do otherwise—The "weakness" of God—New Attempt. At length, on the morning of the 16th April, Luther perceived the walls of the ancient city. All were looking for him, and there was only one thought in Worms. The young noblemen, Bernard of Hirschfeld and Albert of Lindenau, with six cavaliers, and other gentlemen in the suite of the princes, to the number of a hundred, if we may believe Pallavicini, unable to restrain their impatience, galloped to meet him, and surrounded him in order to escort him at the moment of his entry. He approached. Before him pranced the imperial herald decked in all the insignia of his office. Next came Luther in his humble carriage. Jonas followed on horseback surrounded by the cavaliers. A large crowd was waiting in front of the gates. It was near mid-day when he passed those walls which so many persons had foretold him he should never leave. It was the dinner hour, but the moment when the sentinel stationed in the cathedral steeple tolled the signal, every body ran into the street to see the monk. Thus was Luther in Worms.

Two thousand persons accompanied him through the streets: there was a rush to meet him. The crowd was increasing every moment, and was much larger than when the emperor made his entry. Suddenly, relates a historian, a man clad in a singular dress, and carrying a large cross before him, as is usual at funerals, breaks off from the crowd, advances towards Luther, and then, in a loud voice, and with the plaintive cadence which is used in saying mass for the repose of the souls of the dead, chants the following stanzas as if he had been determined that the very dead should hear them:—

Advenisti, O desiderabilis!

Quem expectabamus in tenebris!

Luther's arrival is celebrated by a Requiem. If the story is true, it was the court fool of one of the dukes of Bavaria who gave Luther one of those warnings remarkable at once for wisdom and irony, of which so many instances are furnished by these individuals. But the clamour of the multitude soon drowned the De Profundis of the cross-bearer. The train could scarcely proceed through the moving mass. At length the imperial herald stopped before the hotel of the Knights of Rhodes. Here lodged two of the Elector's counsellors, Frederic of Thun and Philip of Feilitsch, as well as the marshal of the empire, Ulric of Pappenheim. Luther got out of his carriage, and, on alighting, said, "The Lord will be my defence." … "I entered Worms," said he afterwards, "in a covered car in my frock. Everybody ran into the street to see friar Martin." The news of his arrival filled the Elector of Saxony and Aleander with alarm. The young and elegant Archbishop Albert, who held a mean between those two parties, was amazed at Luther's boldness. "Had I not had more courage than he," said Luther, "it is true I never should have been seen in Worms."

Charles V immediately assembled his council. The counsellors in the emperor's confidence repaired in haste to the palace for they too were in dismay. "Luther is arrived," said Charles, "what must be done?"

Modo, bishop of Palermo and chancellor of Flanders, if we are to receive Luther's own statement, replied, "We have long consulted on this subject. Let your imperial Majesty speedily get rid of this man. Did not Sigismond cause John Huss to be burnt? There is no obligation either to give or observe a safe-conduct to a heretic." "No," said Charles: "what has been promised must be performed." There was nothing for it, therefore, but to make the Reformer appear.

While the councils of the great were thus agitated on the subject of Luther, there were many men in Worms who rejoiced that they were able at length to behold this illustrious servant of God. In the first rank among them was Capito, chaplain and counsellor to the Archbishop of Mentz. This remarkable man, who a short time before had preached the gospel in Switzerland with great freedom, thought it due to the place which he then occupied to pursue a course which exposed him to a charge of cowardice from the Evangelists, and of dissimulation from the Romans.2 He had, however, preached the doctrine of faith clearly at Mentz, and on his departure had succeeded in supplying his place by a young preacher full of zeal, named Hedio. In this town, the ancient see of the primate of the German Church, the word of God was not bound. The gospel was eagerly listened to: in vain did the monks strive to preach the gospel after their own way, and employ all the means in their power in order to arrest the general impulse; they had no success. But Capito, even while he preached the new doctrine, laboured to continue in friendship with those who persecuted it. He flattered himself, with others of the same sentiments, that he would thus be of great utility to the Church. To hear them talk it might have been supposed that, if Luther was not burnt, if all the Lutherans were not excommunicated, it was owing entirely to Capito's influence over the Archbishop Albert.4 Cochlœus, dean of Frankfort, arriving at Worms almost at the same time witli Luther, immediately waited upon Capito, who being, apparently at least, on very good terms with Aleander, introduced Cochlœus to him, thus serving as a connecting link between the two greatest enemies of the Reformer. Capito doubtless thought that he would do great service to the cause of Christ by all this management; but it cannot be said that any good resulted from it. The event almost always belies these calculations of human wisdom, and proves that a decided

course, while it is the most frank, is also the most wise.

Meanwhile the crowd continued around the hotel of Rhodes at which Luther had alighted. Some looked upon him as a prodigy of wisdom, and others as a monster of iniquity. The whole town wished to see him. The first hours were left him to recover from his fatigue, and converse with his most intimate friends; but as soon as evening came, counts, barons, knights, gentlemen, ecclesiastics, and citizens flocked in upon him. All, even his greatest enemies, were struck with the bold step he had taken, the joy which appeared to animate him, the power of his eloquence, and the lofty elevation and enthusiasm which made the influence of this simple monk almost irresistible. Many attributed this grandeur to something within him partaking of the divine, while the friends of the pope loudly declared that he was possessed with a devil. Call followed call, and the crowd of curious visitors kept Luther standing to a late period of the night. The next morning, (Friday, 17th April,) Ulric of Pappenheim, hereditary marshal of the empire, summoned him to appear at four o■clock, p. m., in presence of his imperial Majesty and the States of the empire. Luther received the summons with profound respect.

Thus every thing is fixed, and Luther is going to appear for Jesus Christ before the most august assembly in the world. He was not without encouragement. The ardent knight, Ulric von Hütten, was then in the castle of Ebemburg. Not being able to appear at Worms, (for Leo X had asked Charles to send him to Rome bound hand and foot,) he desired to stretch out a friendly hand to Luther, and on the same day (17th April) wrote to him, borrowing the words of a king of Israel: “The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble: the name of the God of Jacob defend thee: send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion: remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice.” O dearly beloved Luther! my respected father, fear not and be strong. The counsel of the wicked has beset you, they have opened their mouths upon you like roaring lions. But the Lord will rise up against the wicked and scatter them. Fight then valiantly for Christ. As for me I also will fight boldly. Would to God I were permitted to see the wrinkling of their brows. But the Lord will cleanse his vine which the wild boar of the forest has laid waste … May Christ preserve you!”3

Bucer did what Hütten was unable to do: he came from Ebernburg to Worms, and remained the whole time beside his friend.

Four o■clock having struck, the marshal of the empire presented himself. It was necessary to set out, and Luther made ready. He was moved at the thought of the august congress before which he was going to appear. The herald walked first, after him the marshal, and last the Reformer. The multitude thronging the streets was still more numerous than on the previous evening. It was impossible to get on; it was in vain to cry, Give place: the crowd increased. At length, the herald seeing the impossibility of reaching the town hall caused some private houses to be opened, and conducted Luther through gardens and secret passages to the place of meeting. The people perceiving this rushed into the houses on the steps of the monk of Wittemberg, or placed themselves at the windows which looked into the gardens, while great numbers of persons got up on the roofs. The tops of the houses, the pavement, every place above and below was covered with spectators.2

Arrived at length at the town, Luther and those who all accompanied him were again unable, because of the crowd, to reach the door. Give way! give way! Not one stirred. At last the imperial

soldiers forced a passage for Luther. The people rushed forward to get in after him, but the soldiers kept them back with their halberds. Luther got into the interior of the building, which was completely filled with people. As well in the antechambers as at the windows there were more than five thousand spectators—German, Italian, Spanish, etc. Luther advanced with difficulty. As he was at length approaching the door, which was to bring him in presence of his judges, he met a valiant knight, the celebrated general, George of Freundsberg, who, four years afterwards, at the head of the German lansquenets couched his lance on the field of Pavia, and bearing down upon the left wing of the French army, drove it into the Tessino, and in a great measure decided the captivity of the king of France. The old general, seeing Luther pass, clapped him on the shoulder, and shaking his head, whitened in battle, kindly said to him, “Poor monk, poor monk, you have before you a march, and an affair, the like to which neither I nor a great many captains have ever seen in the bloodiest of our battles. But if your cause is just, and you have full confidence in it, advance in the name of God and fear nothing. God will not forsake you.” A beautiful homage borne by warlike courage to courage of intellect. It is the saying of a king,4 “He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city.” At length the doors of the hall being opened, Luther entered, and many persons not belonging to the Diet made their way in along with him. Never had man appeared before an assembly so august. The emperor Charles V, whose dominions embraced the old and the new world; his brother, the Archduke Ferdinand; six electors of the empire, whose descendants are now almost all wearing the crown of kings; twenty-four dukes, the greater part of them reigning over territories of greater or less extent, and among whom are some bearing a name which will afterwards become formidable to the Reformation (the Duke of Alva, and his two sons); eight margraves; thirty archbishops, bishops, or prelates; seven ambassadors, among them those of the kings of France and England; the deputies of ten free towns; a great number of princes, counts, and sovereign barons; the nuncios of the pope; in all, two hundred and four personages. Such was the court before which Martin Luther appeared. This appearance was in itself a signal victory gained over the papacy. The pope had condemned the man; yet here he stood before a tribunal which thus far placed itself above the pope. The pope had put him under his ban, debarring him from all human society, and yet here he was convened in honourable terms, and admitted before the most august assembly in the world. The pope had ordered that his mouth should be for ever mute, and he was going to open it before an audience of thousands, assembled from the remotest quarters of Christendom. An immense revolution had thus been accomplished by the instrumentality of Luther. Rome was descending from her throne, descending at the bidding of a monk.

Some of the princes seeing the humble son of the miner of Mansfeld disconcerted in presence of the assembly of kings, kindly approached him; and one of them said, “Fear not them who can kill the body, but cannot kill the soul.” Another added, “When you will be brought before kings it is not you that speak but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.” Thus, the Reformer was consoled in the very words of his Master, by the instrumentality of the rulers of the world.

During this time, the guards were making way for Luther, who advanced till he came in front of the throne of Charles V. The sight of the august assembly seemed for a moment to dazzle and overawe him. All eyes were fixed upon him. The agitation gradually calmed down into perfect silence. “Don’t speak before you are asked,” said the marshal of the empire to him and withdrew.

After a moment of solemn stillness, John of Eck, the chancellor of the Archbishop of Treves, a friend of Aleander, and who must not be confounded with the theologian of the same name, rose up and said, in a distinct and audible voice, first in Latin and then in German, “Martin Luther, his sacred and invincible imperial Majesty has cited you before his throne, by the advice and counsel of the States of the holy Roman empire, in order to call upon you to answer these two questions: First, Do you admit that these books were composed by you?”—At the same time the imperial orator pointed to about twenty books lying on the table in the middle of the hall in front of Luther—“I did not exactly know how they had procured them,” says Luther, in relating the circumstance. It was Aleander who had taken the trouble. “Secondly,” continued the chancellor, “do you mean to retract these books and their contents, or do you persist in the things which you have advanced in them?”

Luther, without hesitation, was going to reply in the affirmative to the former question, when his counsel, Jerôme Schurff, hastily interfering, called out, “Read the titles of the books.” The chancellor going up to the table read the titles. The list contained several devotional works not relating to controversy.

After the enumeration, Luther said, first in Latin, and then in, German.

“Most gracious Emperor! Gracious Princes and Lords!

“His imperial Majesty asks me two questions.

“As to the first, I acknowledge that the books which have been named are mine: I cannot deny them.

‘As to the second, considering that is a question which concerns faith and the salvation of souls, a question in which the Word of God is interested, in other words, the greatest and most precious treasure either in heaven or on the earth, I should act imprudently were I to answer without reflection. I might say less than the occasion requires, or more than the truth demands, and thus incur the guilt which our Saviour denounced when he said, ‘Whoso shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father who is in Heaven.’ Wherefore, I pray your imperial Majesty, with all submission, to give me time that I may answer without offence to the Word of God.” This reply, far from countenancing the idea that there was any hesitation in Luther, was worthy of the Reformer and the assembly. It became him to show calmness and circumspection in so grave a matter, and to refrain on this solemn moment from every thing that might seem to indicate passion or levity. Moreover, by taking a suitable time, he would thereby the better prove the immovable firmness of his resolution. History shows us many men who, by a word uttered too hastily, brought great calamities on themselves, and on the world. Luther curbs his naturally impetuous character; restrains a tongue always ready to give utterance; is silent when all the feelings of his heart are longing to embody themselves in words. This self restraint, this calmness, so extraordinary in such a man, increased his power a hundred-fold, and put him into a position to answer afterwards with a wisdom, power, and dignity which will disappoint the expectation of his enemies, and confound their pride and malice.

Nevertheless, as he had spoken in a respectful and somewhat subdued tone, several thought he was hesitating and even afraid. A ray of hope gleamed into the souls of the partizans of Rome. Charles, impatient to know the man whose words shook the empire, had never taken his eye off

him. Now turning towards one of his courtiers, he said with disdain, “Assuredly that is not the man who would ever make me turn heretic.” Then rising up, the young emperor withdrew with his ministers to the council chamber: the electors with the princes were closeted in another, and the deputies of the free towns in a third. The Diet when it again met, agreed to grant Luther’s request. It was a great mistake in men under the influence of passion. “Martin Luther,” said the chancellor of Trèves, “his imperial Majesty, in accordance with the goodness which is natural to him, is pleased to grant you another day, but on condition that you give your reply verbally and not in writing.”

Then the imperial herald advanced and reconducted Luther to his hôtel. Menaces and cheers succeeded each other as he passed along. The most unfavourable reports were circulated among Luther’s friends. “The Diet is dissatisfied,” said they, “the envoys of the pope triumph, the Reformer will be sacrificed.” Men’s passions grew hot. Several gentlemen hastened to Luther’s lodgings. “Doctor,” asked they in deep emotion, “how does the matter stand? It is confidently said that they mean to burn you.” “That won’t be,” continued they, or they shall pay for it with their lives.”—“And that would have been the result,” said Luther, twenty years later at Eisleben, when quoting these expressions. On the other hand, Luther’s enemies were quite elated. “He has asked time,” said they, “he will retract. When at a distance he spoke arrogantly, but now his courage fails him … He is vanquished.”

Luther, perhaps, was the only tranquil person in Worms. A few moments after his return from the Diet, he wrote to the imperial counsellor Cuspianus. “I write you from the midst of tumult, (meaning, probably, the noise of the crowd outside his hotel;) I have, within this hour, appeared before the emperor and his brother. I have acknowledged the authorship, and declared that to-morrow I will give my answer concerning retractation. By the help of Jesus Christ, not one iota of all my works will I retract.”2 The excitement of the people and of the foreign troops increased every hour. While parties were proceeding calmly to the business of the Diet, others were coming to blows in the streets. The Spanish soldiers, proud and merciless, gave offence by their insolence to the burghers of the town. One of these satellites of Charles, finding in a bookseller’s shop the papal bull, with a commentary on it by Hütten, took and tore it to pieces, and then trampled the fragments under his feet. Others, having discovered several copies of Luther’s ‘Captivity of Babylon,’ carried them off and tore them. The people, indignant, rushed upon the soldiers, and obliged them to take flight. On another occasion, a Spanish horseman, with drawn sword, was seen in one of the principal streets of Worms in pursuit of a German who was fleeing before him, while the people durst not interfere.

Some politicians thought they had discovered a method of saving Luther. “Recant your errors in doctrine,” said they to him; “but persist in all you have said against the pope and his court, and you are safe.” Aleander shuddered at this advice. But Luther, immovable in his purpose, declared that he set little value on a political reform, if not founded on faith. The 18th of April having arrived, Glapio, the Chancellor Eck, and Aleander, met at an early hour, by order of Charles V, to fix the course of procedure in regard to Luther.

Luther had been for a moment overawed on the evening before when he had to appear before so august an assembly. His heart had been agitated at the sight of so many princes before whom great kingdoms humbly bent the knee. The thought that he was going to refuse obedience to men

whom God had invested with sovereign power gave him deep concern; and he felt the necessity of seeking strength from a higher source. “He who, attacked by the enemy, holds the shield of faith,” said he one day, “is like Perseus holding the head of the Gorgon, on which whoever looked, that moment died. So ought we to hold up the Son of God against the snares of the devil. On this morning of the 18th April, he had moments of trouble, when the face of God was hid from him. His faith becomes faint; his enemies seem to multiply before him; his imagination is overpowered … His soul is like a ship tossed by a violent tempest, now plunged to the depths of the sea, and again mounting up towards heaven. At this hour of bitter sorrow, when he drinks the cup of Christ, and feels as it were in a garden of Gethsemane, he turns his face to the ground, and sends forth broken cries, cries which we cannot comprehend, unless we figure to ourselves the depth of the agony from which they ascended up to God. “God Almighty! God Eternal! how terrible is the world! how it opens its mouth to swallow me up! and how defective my confidence in thee! How weak the flesh, how powerful Satan! If I must put my hope in that which the world calls powerful, I am undone!… The knell is struck,2 and judgment is pronounced!… O God! O God! O thou, my God! assist me against all the wisdom of the world! Do it: Thou must do it … Thou alone … for it is not my work, but Thine. I have nothing to do here; I have nothing to do contending thus with the mighty of the world! I, too, would like to spend tranquil and happy days. But the cause is Thine: and it is just and everlasting! O Lord! be my help! Faithful God, immutable God! I trust not in any man. That were vain. All that is of man vacillates! All that comes of man gives way. O God, O God, dost thou not hear?… My God! art thou dead?… No, thou canst not die! Thou only hidest Thyself. Thou hast chosen me for this work. I know it! Act, then, O God!… Stand by my side, for the sake of thy well beloved Son Jesus Christ, who is my defence, my buckler, and my fortress.”

After a moment of silence and wrestling, he continues thus: “Lord, where standest thou?… O, my God, where art thou?… Come! come! I am ready!… I am ready to give up my life for thy truth … patient as a lamb. For the cause is just, and it is thine!… I will not break off from thee either now or through eternity!… And though the world should be filled with devils, though my body, which however is the work of thy hands, should bite the dust, be racked on the wheel, cut in pieces … ground to powder … my soul is thine. Yes, thy Word is my pledge. My soul belongs to thee, and will be eternally near thee … Amen … O God, help me … Amen.” This prayer explains Luther and the Reformation. History here lifts the veil of the sanctuary, and shows us the secret place whence strength and courage were imparted to this humble man, who was the instrument of God in emancipating the soul and the thoughts of men, and beginning a new era. Luther and the Reformation are here seen in actual operation. We perceive their most secret springs. We discover where their power lay. This meditation by one who is sacrificing himself to the cause of truth, is found among the collection of pieces relating to Luther’s appearance at Worms, under number XVI, among safe-conducts, and other documents of a similar description. Some of his friends doubtless extended it, and so have preserved it to us. In my opinion, it is one of the finest documents on record.

Luther, after he had thus prayed, found that peace of mind without which no man can do anything great. He read the Word of God; he glanced over his writings, and endeavoured to put his reply into proper shape. The thought that he was going to bear testimony to Jesus Christ and his Word, in presence of the emperor and the empire, filled his heart with joy. The moment of appearance was drawing near; he went up with emotion to the sacred volume, which was lying open on his

table, put his left hand upon it, and lifting his right toward heaven, swore to remain faithful to the gospel, and to confess his faith freely, should he even seal his confession with his blood. After doing so, he felt still more at peace. At four o■clock the herald presented himself and conducted him to the place where the Diet sat. The general curiosity had increased, for the reply behoved to be decisive. The Diet being engaged, Luther was obliged to wait in the court in the middle of an immense crowd, who moved to and fro like a troubled sea, and pressed the Reformer with its waves. The doctor spent two long hours amid this gazing multitude. “I was not used,” says he, “to all these doings and all this noise.” It would have been a sad preparation for an ordinary man. But Luther was with God. His eye was serene, his features unruffled; the Eternal had placed him upon a rock. Night began to fall, and the lamps were lighted in the hall of the Diet. Their glare passed through the ancient windows and shone into the court. Every thing assumed a solemn aspect. At last the doctor was introduced. Many persons entered with him, for there was an eager desire to hear his answer. All minds were on the stretch waiting impatiently for the decisive moment which now approached. This time Luther was free, calm, self-possessed, and showed not the least appearance of being under constraint. Prayer had produced its fruits. The princes having taken their scats, not without difficulty, for their places were almost invaded, and the monk of Wittemberg again standing in front of Charles V, the chancellor of the Elector of Trêves rose up, and said:—

“Martin Luther! you yesterday asked a delay, which is now expired. Assuredly it might have been denied you, since every one ought to be sufficiently instructed in matters of faith to be able always to render an account of it to whosoever asks,—you above all, so great and able a doctor of Holy Scripture…. Now, then, reply to the question of his Majesty, who has treated you with so much mildness, Do you mean to defend your books out and out, or do you mean to retract some part of them?”

These words, which the chancellor had spoken in Latin, he repeated in German.

“Then doctor Martin Luther,” say the Acts of Worms, “replied in the most humble and submissive manner. He did not raise his voice; he spoke not with violence, but with candour, meekness, suitableness, and modesty, and yet with great joy and Christian firmness.”

“Most serene Emperor! illustrious princes, gracious lords,” said Luther, turning his eyes on Charles and the assembly, “I this day appear humbly before you, according to the order which was given me yesterday, and by the mercies of God I implore your Majesty and august Highnesses to listen kindly to the defence of a cause which I am assured is righteous and true. If from ignorance I am wanting in the usages and forms of courts, pardon me; for I was not brought up in the palaces of kings, but in the obscurity of a cloister.

“Yesterday two questions were asked me on the part of his imperial Majesty: the first, if I was the author of the books whose titles were read; the second, if I was willing to recal or to defend the doctrine which I have taught in them. I answered the first question, and I adhere to my answer.

“As to the second, I have composed books on very different subjects. In some I treat of faith and good works in a manner so pure, simple, and christian, that my enemies even, far from finding any thing to censure, confess that these writings are useful, and worthy of being read by the godly. The papal bull, how severe soever it may be, acknowledges this. Were I then to retract these what should I do?… Wretch! I should be alone among men abandoning truths which the unanimous

voice of my friends and enemies approves, and opposing what the whole world glories in confessing.

“In the second place, I have composed books against the papacy, books in which I have attacked those who, by their false doctrine, their bad life, and scandalous example, desolate the Christian world, and destroy both body and soul. Is not the fact proved by the complaints of all who fear God? Is it not evident that the human laws and doctrines of the popes entangle, torture, martyr the consciences of the faithful, while the clamant and never-ending extortions of Rome engulph the wealth and riches of Christendom, and particularly of this illustrious kingdom?

“Were I to retract what I have written on this subject what should I do?… What but fortify that tyranny, and open a still wider door for these many and great iniquities? Then, breaking forth with more fury than ever, these arrogant men would be seen increasing, usurping, raging more and more. And the yoke which weighs upon the Christian people would by my retractation not ony be rendered more severe, but would become, so to speak, more legitimate; for by this very retractation it would have received the confirmation of your most serene Majesty and of all the States of the holy empire. Good God! I should thus be as it were an infamous cloak destined to hide and cover all sorts of malice and tyranny.

“Thirdly and lastly, I have written books against private individuals who wished to defend Roman tyranny and to destroy the faith. I confess frankly that I have perhaps attacked them with more violence than became my ecclesiastical profession. I do not regard myself as a saint; but no more can I retract these books: because, by so doing, I should sanction the impiety of my opponents, and give them occasion to oppress the people of God with still greater cruelty.

“Still I am a mere man and not God; and I will defend myself as Jesus Christ did. He said, ‘If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil.’ (John, 18:23.) How much more should I, who am but dust and ashes and so apt to err, desire every one to state what he can against my doctrine?

“Wherefore, I implore you, by the mercies of God, you, most serene Emperor, and you, most illustrious princes, and all others of high or low degree, to prove to me by the writings of the prophets and the apostles that I am mistaken. As soon as this shall have been proved, I will forthwith retract all my errors, and be the first to seize my writings and cast them into the flames.

“What I have just said shows clearly, I think, that I have well considered and weighed the dangers to which I expose myself; but, far from being alarmed, it gives me great joy to see that the gospel is now, as in former times, a cause of trouble and discord. This is the characteristic and the destiny of the Word of God. ‘I came not to send peace, but a sword,’ said Jesus Christ. (Matthew 10:34) God is wonderful and terrible in working: let us beware, while pretending to put a stop to discord, that we do not persecute the holy Word of God, and bring in upon ourselves a frightful deluge of insurmountable dangers, present disasters, and eternal destruction.… Let us beware that the reign of this young and noble prince, the Emperor Charles, on whom, under God, we build such high hopes, do not only begin, but also continue and end under the most fatal auspices. I might cite examples taken from the oracles of God,” continues Luther, speaking in presence of the greatest monarch in the world with the noblest courage, “I might remind you of the Pharaohs, the kings of Babylon, and of Israel, who never laboured more effectually for their ruin than when by counsels, apparently very wise, they thought they were establishing their empire. ‘God removeth the

mountains, and they know not.' (Job 9:5)

"If I speak thus, it is not because I think such great princes have need of my counsels, but because I wish to restore to Germany what she has a right to expect from her children. Thus, commending myself to your august Majesty and your serene Highnesses, I humbly supplicate you not to allow the hatred of my enemies to bring down upon me an indignation which I have not deserved."

Luther had spoken these words in German, modestly, but also with much warmth and firmness. He was ordered to repeat them in Latin. The emperor had no liking for German. The imposing assembly which surrounded the Reformer, the noise and excitement, had fatigued him. "I was covered with perspiration," says he, "heated by the crowd, standing in the midst of the princes." Frederick de Thun, confidential counsellor of the Elector of Saxony, stationed by his master's order behind the Reformer, to take care that he was not taken by surprise or overborne, seeing the condition of the poor monk, said to him, "If you cannot repeat your address, that will do, doctor." But Luther, having paused a moment to take breath, resumed, and pronounced his address in Latin, with the same vigour as at first.3 "This pleased the Elector Frederick exceedingly," relates the Reformer. As soon as he had ceased, the Chancellor of Trêves, the orator of the Diet, said to him, indignantly, "You have not answered the question which was put to you. You are not here to throw doubt on what has been decided by Councils. You are asked to give a clear and definite reply. Will you, or will you not retract?" Luther then replied, without hesitation, "Since your most serene Majesty, and your high Mightinesses, call upon me for a simple, clear, and definite answer, I will give it; and it is this: I cannot subject my faith either to the pope or to councils, because it is clear as day that they have often fallen into error, and even into great self-contradiction. If, then, I am not disproved by passages of Scripture, or by clear arguments; if I am not convinced by the very passages which I have quoted, and so bound in conscience to submit to the word of God, I neither can nor will retract any thing, for it is not safe for a Christian to speak against his conscience." Then, looking around on the assembly before which he was standing, and which held his life in its hands, "Here I am," says he, "I cannot do otherwise: God help me. Amen."

Thus Luther, constrained to obey his faith, led by his conscience to death, impelled by the noblest necessity, the slave of what he believes, but in this slavery supremely free, like to the ship tossed by a fearful tempest, which, in order to save something more precious than itself, is voluntarily allowed to dash itself to pieces against a rock, pronounces these sublime words, which have not lost then thrilling effect after the lapse of three centuries; thus speaks a monk before the emperor and the magnates of the empire, and this poor and feeble individual standing alone, but leaning on the grace of the Most High, seems greater and stronger than them all. His word has a power against which all these mighty men can do nothing. The empire and the Church, on the one side, the obscure individual, on the other, have been confronted. God had assembled these kings and prelates that he might publicly bring their wisdom to nought. They have lost the battle, and the consequences of their defeat will be felt in all nations, and during all future ages. The assembly were amazed. Several princes could scarcely conceal their admiration. The emperor, changing his first impression, exclaimed, "The monk speaks with an intrepid heart and immovable courage." The Spaniards and Italians alone felt disconcerted, and soon began to deride a magnanimity which they could not appreciate.

After the Diet had recovered from the impression produced by the address, the chancellor resumed: “If you do not retract, the emperor and the states of the empire will consider what course they must adopt towards an obstinate heretic.” At these words, Luther’s friends trembled, but the monk again said, “God help me; for I can retract nothing.”

Luther then withdraws, and the princes deliberate. Every one felt that the moment formed a crisis in Christendom. The yea or nay of this monk was destined, perhaps for ages, to determine the condition of the Church and the world. It was wished to frighten him, but the effect had been to place him on a pedestal in presence of the nation. It was meant to give more publicity to his defeat, and all that had been done was to extend his victory. The partisans of Rome could not submit to bear their humiliation. Luther was recalled, and the orator thus addressed him: “Martin, you have not spoken with the modesty which became your office. The distinction you have made between your books was useless, for if you retract those which contain errors, the empire will not allow the others to be burnt. It is extravagant to insist on being refuted from Scripture, when you revive heresies which were condemned by the universal Council of Constance. The emperor, therefore, orders you to say simply, Do you mean to maintain what you have advanced, or do you mean to retract any part of it—yes, or no?” I have no other answer than that which I have already given,” replied Luther calmly. He was now understood. Firm as a rock, all the billows of human power had dashed against him in vain. The vigour of his eloquence, his intrepid countenance, the flashing of his eye, the immovable firmness imprinted in bold lineaments on his German features, had produced the deepest impression on this illustrious assembly. There was no longer any hope. Spaniards, Belgians, and even Romans, were mute. The monk was victorious over earthly grandeur. He had negatived the Church and the empire. Charles rose up, and all the assembly with him. “The Diet will meet to-morrow morning to hear the emperor’s decision,” said the chancellor, with a loud voice.

CHAP. IX

Victory—Tumult and calm—Duke Erick’s Glass of Beer—The Elector and Spalatin—Message from the Emperor—Wish to violate the Safe-conduct—Strong opposition—Enthusiasm for Luther—Voice for Conciliation—The Elector’s Fear—Assemblage at Luther’s Lodging—Philip of Hesse.

It was night, and each regained his dwelling in the dark. Two imperial officers were ordered to accompany Luther. Some persons imagining that his fate was decided, and that they were conducting him to prison, which he should leave only for the scaffold, an immense tumult arose. Several gentlemen exclaimed, “Are they taking him to prison?” “No,” replied Luther, “they are accompanying me to my hotel.” At these words the tumult calmed. Then some Spaniards of the emperor’s household, following this bold champion, hissed and jeered at him as he passed along the streets, while others howled like wild beasts deprived of their prey. Luther remained firm and peaceful.

Such was the scene at Worms. The intrepid monk, who had hitherto hurled defiance at his enemies, spake, when in the presence of those who had thirsted for his blood, with calmness, dignity, and humility. There was no exaggeration, no human enthusiasm, no anger; he was peaceful amid the strongest excitement; modest, while resisting the powers of the earth; great, in presence of all the princes of the world. In this we have an irrefragable proof that Luther was then

obeying God—not following the suggestions of his own pride. In the hall of Worms there was One greater than Luther and Charles. Jesus Christ has said, “When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what you shall speak. For it is not ye that speak.” Never, perhaps, was this promise so manifestly fulfilled. A deep impression had been produced on the heads of the empire. Luther had observed this, and it had increased his courage. The servants of the pope were angry at John Eck for not having oftener interrupted the guilty monk. Several princes and nobles were gained to a cause which was maintained with such conviction. In some, it is true, the impression was evanescent, but, on the other hand, several who till then had concealed their sentiments, henceforth displayed great courage.

Luther had returned to his hotel, and was reposing from the fatigue of the severe service in which he had been engaged. Spalatin and other friends were around him, and all were giving thanks to God. While they were conversing, a valet entered, bearing a silver vase full of Eimbeck beer. “My master,” said he, presenting it to Luther, “begs you to refresh yourself with this draught of beer.” “What prince is it,” asked Luther, “who so graciously remembers me?” It was old Duke Erick of Brunswick. The Reformer was touched by the offering thus made him by so powerful a prince; one, too, belonging to the papal party. “His highness,” continued the valet, “was pleased to taste the draught before sending it to you.” Luther, being thirsty, poured out the duke’s beer, and after drinking it, said, “As Duke Erick has this day remembered me, so may the Lord Jesus Christ remember him in the day of his final combat.” The present was in itself of little value, but Luther, wishing to show his gratitude to a prince who had thought of him at such a moment, gave him what he had—a prayer. The valet returned with the message to his master. The old duke, in his last moments, remembered the words, and addressing a young page, Francis de Kramm, who was standing at his bedside, said to him, “Take the gospel and read it to me.” The child read the words of Christ, and the soul of the dying man was refreshed. “Whosoever,” says the Saviour, “shall give to one of you a cup of cold water in my name, because you are my disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.” The valet of the Duke of Brunswick was no sooner gone than a message from the Elector of Saxony ordered Spalatin to come to him instantly. Frederick had come to the Diet full of disquietude. He thought that, in presence of the emperor, Luther’s courage might give way, and he had accordingly been deeply moved by the Reformer’s firmness. He was proud of having taken such a man under his protection. When the chaplain arrived, the table was covered, and the Elector was going to sit down to supper with his Court—the valets having already brought in the vase for washing the hands. The Elector seeing Spalatin enter, immediately beckoned him to follow, and when alone with him in his bedchamber, said to him, with deep emotion, “Oh! how well father Luther spoke before the emperor and all the states of the empire! My only fear was, that he would be too bold.” Frederick then formed a resolution to protect the doctor in future with greater courage.

Aleander saw the impression which Luther had produced. There was no time, therefore, to be lost. The young emperor must be induced to act vigorously. The moment was favourable, for there was immediate prospect of war with France. Leo X, wishing to enlarge his states, and caring little for the peace of Christendom, caused two treaties to be secretly negotiated, at the same time, the one with Charles against Francis, and the other with Francis against Charles. By the former he stipulated with the emperor for Parma, Placenza, and Ferrara; by the latter, he stipulated with the king for a part of the kingdom of Naples, of which Charles was thus to be deprived. Charles felt the

importance of gaining over Leo, in order that he might have him as an ally against his rival of France. Luther was an easy price to pay for the friendship of the mighty pontiff. The day after Luther's appearance, he caused a message to be read to the Diet, which he had written in French, with his own hand. "Sprung," said he, "from the Christian emperors of Germany, from the Catholic kings of Spain, the archdukes of Austria, and the dukes of Burgundy, who are all illustrious as defenders of the Roman faith, it is my firm purpose to follow the example of my ancestors. A single monk, led astray by his own folly, sets himself up in opposition to the faith of Christendom. I will sacrifice my dominions, my power, my friends, my treasure, my body, my blood, my mind, and my life, to stay this impiety.3 I mean to send back the Augustin, Luther, forbidding him to cause the least tumult among the people; thereafter I will proceed against him and his adherents as against declared heretics, by excommunication and interdict, and all means proper for their destruction. I call upon the members of the states to conduct themselves like faithful Christians." This address did not please every body. Charles, young and impassioned, had not observed the ordinary forms; he ought previously to have asked the opinion of the Diet. Two extreme views were immediately declared. The creatures of the pope, the Elector of Brandenburg, and several ecclesiastical princes, demanded that no regard should be paid to the safe-conduct which had been given to Luther. "The Rhine," said they, "must receive his ashes, as a century ago it received the ashes of John Huss." Charles, if we may believe a historian, afterwards bitterly repented that he had not followed this dastardly counsel. "I confess," said he, towards the close of his life, "that I committed a great fault in allowing Luther to live. That heretic having offended a greater master than I, even God himself, I was not obliged to keep my promise to him. I might, nay, I ought to have forgotten my word, and avenged the insult which he offered to God; because I did not put him to death, the heresy has not ceased to gain strength. His death would have strangled it in the cradle." This horrible proposition filled the Elector and all Luther's friends with terror. "The execution of John Huss," said the Elector Palatine, "brought too many calamities on Germany to allow such a scaffold to be erected a second time." "The princes of Germany," exclaimed George of Saxony, himself the irreconcilable enemy of Luther, "will not allow a safe-conduct to be violated. This first Diet, held by our new emperor, will not incur the guilt of an act so disgraceful. Such perfidy accords not with old German integrity." The princes of Bavaria, also devoted to the Church of Rome, joined in this protestation. The death scene which Luther's friends had already before their eyes appeared to be withdrawn. The rumour of these debates, which lasted for two days, spread over the town. Parties grew warm. Some gentlemen, partisans of reform, began to speak strongly against the treachery demanded by Aleander. "The emperor," said they, "is a young man whom the papists and bishops lead at pleasure by their flattery." Pallavicini makes mention of four hundred nobles who were ready to maintain Luther's safe-conduct with the sword. On Saturday morning placards were found posted up on the houses and public places, some against Luther and others in his favour. One of them merely contained the energetic words of Ecclesiastes, "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child!" Seckingen, it was said, had assembled at some leagues from Worms, behind the impregnable ramparts of his fortress, a large body of knights and soldiers, and only waited the issue of the affair that he might know how to act. The popular enthusiasm, not only in Worms, but also in the most distant towns of the empire, the intrepidity of the knights, the attachment of several princes to the Reformer, all must have made Charles and the Diet comprehend that the step demanded by the Romans might compromise the supreme authority, excite revolts, and even shake the empire. It was only a simple monk that they proposed to burn;

but the princes and partisans of Rome, taken all together, had neither power nor courage enough to do it. Doubtless, also, Charles V, their young emperor, had still a fear of perjury. This would seem indicated by an expression, which, if some historians speak true, he uttered on this occasion: “Were fidelity and good faith banished from the whole world, they ought to find an asylum in the hearts of princes.” It is said he forgot this when on the brink of the grave. But there were other motives which might have had their influence on the emperor. The Florentine Vettori, a friend of Leo X and of Machiaveli, affirms, that Charles spared Luther only that he might keep the pope in check.2 On the Saturday’s sitting, the violent counsels of Aleander were negatived. There was a feeling in favour of Luther, and a wish to save the simple-hearted man whose confidence in God was so affecting; but there was a wish also to save the Church. The Diet shuddered equally at the consequences which would result from the triumph and from the destruction of the Reformer. Proposals of conciliation were heard, and it was suggested that a new attempt should be made with the doctor of Wittemberg. The archbishop-elector of Mentz himself, the young and extravagant Albert, more devout than courageous, says Pallavicini, had taken alarm on seeing the interest which the people and the nobility showed in the Saxon monk. His chaplain, Capito, who, during his residence at Bâle, had been intimate with the evangelical priest of Zurich, named Zuinglius, the intrepid defender of the truth, of whom we have already had occasion to speak, had also, doubtless, represented to Albert the righteousness of the Reformer’s cause. The worldly archbishop had one of those returns to Christian sentiment which his life occasionally exhibits, and agreed to go to the emperor and ask him to allow one last attempt. But Charles flatly refused. On Monday (22nd April) the princes met in a body to renew the solicitations of Albert. “I will not depart from what I have decreed,” replied the emperor. I will not commission any person to go officially to Luther. “But,” added he, to the great scandal of Aleander, “I give this man three days to reflect; during this time any one may, as an individual, give him suitable advice.” This was all that was asked. The Reformer, thought they, elevated by the solemnity of his public appearance, will yield in a more friendly conference, and perhaps be saved from the abyss into which he is ready to fall. The Elector of Saxony knew the contrary; accordingly he was in great fear. “If it were in my power,” wrote he next day to his brother, Duke John, “I would be ready to support Luther. You could not believe to what a degree I am attacked by the partisans of Rome. If I could tell you all, you would hear very strange things. They are bent on his ruin, and however slight interest any one shows for his person, he is immediately decried as a heretic. May God, who forsakes not the righteous cause, bring all to a good end!” Frederick, without showing the strong affection which he felt for the Reformer, contented himself with not losing sight of any of his movements.

It was not so with men of all ranks then in Worms. Many fearlessly gave full vent to their sympathy. From the Friday, a crowd of princes, counts, barons, knights, gentlemen, ecclesiastics, laics, and common people surrounded the hotel where the Reformer lodged; they came in and went out, and could not see enough of him. He was become the man in Germany. Even those who doubted not that he was in error were touched by the nobleness of soul which had led him to sacrifice his life at the bidding of his conscience. With several of the personages present at Worms, and forming the flower of the nation, Luther had occasionally conversations full of that salt with which his sayings were always seasoned. None left him without feeling animated with a generous enthusiasm for the truth. George Vogler, the private secretary of the margrave Casimir of Brandenburg, writing to a friend, says, “What things I should have to tell you! What conversations full of piety and kindness Luther has had with myself and others! How winning that man is!

One day a young prince of seventeen came prancing into the court of the hotel: it was Philip, who had been reigning for two years in Hesse. The young landgrave was of an active and enterprising character, of a wisdom beyond his years, a martial spirit, and an impetuous temper, seldom allowing himself to be guided by any ideas but his own. Struck with Luther's addresses he wished to have a nearer view of him. "As yet, however," says Luther, in relating his visit, "he was not for me."5 He dismounted, and without any other formality, came up into the Reformer's room, and addressing him, said, "Well, dear doctor, how goes it?" "Gracious lord," replied Luther, "I hope it will go well." "From what I learn," resumed the landgrave laughing, "you teach, doctor, that a wife may quit her husband, and take another, when the former is found to be too old!" The people of the imperial court had told this story to the landgrave. The enemies of the truth never fail to circulate fabulous accounts of the lessons of Christian teachers—"No, my lord," replied Luther gravely, "let your highness not speak so, if you please." Thereupon the prince briskly held out his hand to the doctor, shook his cordially, and said, "Dear doctor, if you are in the right, may God assist you." On this he left the room, again mounted his horse and rode off. This was the first interview between these two men, who were afterwards to stand at the head of the Reformation, and to defend it, the one with the sword of the word, and the other with the sword of kings.

It was the Archbishop of Trêves, Richard de Greifenklan, who, with permission of Charles V, had undertaken the office of mediator. Richard, who was on an intimate footing with the Elector of Saxony, and a good Roman Catholic, was desirous to arrange this difficult affair, and thereby at once do a service to his friend and to the Church. On Monday evening, (22nd April,) just as Luther was going to sit down to table, a messenger of the archbishop came to say, that the prelate wished to see him the day after to-morrow (Wednesday), at six o■clock in the morning.

CHAP. X

Conference with the Archbishop of Trêves—Wehe's advice to Luther—Luther's Replies—Private Conversation—Visit of Cochlœus—Supper at the Archbishop's—Attempt on the Hôtel of Rhodes—A Council proposed—Last interview between Luther and the Archbishop—Visit to a sick friend—Luther ordered to quit Worms. That day the chaplain and the imperial herald, Sturm, were both at Luther's before six o■clock in the morning. Aleander had caused Cochlœus to be called at four. The nuncio had not been slow in discovering in the man who had been presented to him by Capito, a devoted servant of Rome, on whom he could calculate as on himself. Not being able to be present at this interview, Aleander wished to have a substitute at it. "Be present at the Archbishop's of Trêves," said he to the Dean of Frankfort. "Do not enter into discussion with Luther, but content yourself with paying the closest attention to every thing that is said, so as to be able to bring me back a faithful report." The Reformer on arriving with some friends at the house of the archbishop, found him surrounded by the margrave, Joachim of Brandenburg and Augsburg, several nobles, deputies from free towns, lawyers, and theologians, among, whom were Cochlœus and Jerome Wehe, chancellor of Baden The latter, an able lawyer, wished a reformation in manners and discipline. He went even further. "The Word of God," said he, "which has so long been hid under the bushel, must reappear in all its lustre."2 This conciliatory individual was entrusted with the conference. Turning kindly towards Luther, he said to him, "We did not make you come in order to dispute with you, but in order to give you brotherly advice. You know how carefully the Scripture requireth us to guard against the flying, arrow, and the devil that walketh at noon-day. This enemy of the human race has instigated you to publish things contrary

to religion. Think of your own safety, and that of the empire. Take care that those whom Jesus Christ has ransomed by his own death, from death eternal, be not seduced by you and perish for ever…. Do not set yourself up against holy councils. If we do not maintain the decrees of our fathers, there will be nothing but confusion in the Church. The distinguished princes now listening to me take a particular interest in your safety. But if you persist, the emperor will banish you from the empire, and no place in the world will be able to offer you an asylum … Reflect on the fate which awaits you."

"Most Serene Princes!" replied Luther, "I give you thanks for your solicitude, for I am only a poor man, and am too humble to be exhorted by such high lords." Then he continued, "I have not blamed all the councils, but only that of Constance; because, in condemning this doctrine of John Huss, viz.—that the Christian Church is the assembly of those who are predestinated to salvation5—it condemned this article of our creed, I believe in the holy Catholic Church; and the Word of God itself. My lessons, it is said, give offence," added he. "I answer that the gospel of Christ cannot be preached without offence. How then should this fear or apprehension of danger detach me from the Lord, and from this divine Word, which is the only truth? No, rather give my body, my blood, and my life!!… The princes and doctors having deliberated, Luther was recalled, and Wehe mildly resumed, "It is necessary to honour princes, even when they are mistaken, and to make great sacrifices to charity." Then he said, in a more urgent tone, "Cast yourself upon the judgment of the emperor, and have no fear."

Luther.—"I consent, with all my heart, that the emperor, the princes, and even the humblest Christian, shall examine and judge my books; but on one condition, and it is, that they take the Word of God for their standard. Men have nothing else to do but to obey. My conscience is dependent upon it, and I am captive under its authority. The Elector of Brandenburg.—"I understand you perfectly, doctor. You will not acknowledge any judge but the Holy Scripture?"

Luther.—"Yes, my lord, exactly. That is my last word."

Then the princes and doctors withdrew, but the worthy Archbishop of Trêves could not resolve to abandon his undertaking. "Come," said he to Luther, as he passed into his private room, and, at the same time, ordered John Eck and Cochlœus, on the one side, and Schurff and Amsdorff, on the other, to follow them. "Why appeal incessantly to the Holy Scriptures?" said Eck keenly; "out of it all heresies have sprung." But Luther, says his friend Mathesins, remained immovable, like a rock resting on the true rock, the Word of the Lord. "The pope," replied he, "is no judge in things pertaining to the Word of God. Every Christian must see and understand for himself how he ought to live and die." The parties separated. The partisans of the papacy felt Luther's superiority, and attributed it to there being nobody present who could answer him. "If the emperor," says Cochlœus, "had acted wisely in calling Luther to Worms, he would also have called theologians who might have refuted his errors." The Archbishop of Trêves repaired to the Diet, and announced the ill success of his mediation. The surprise of the young emperor equalled his indignation. "It is time," said he, "to put an end to this affair." The archbishop asked two days more, and the whole Diet seconded him, Charles V yielded. Aleander, transported with rage, uttered the bitterest invectives.

While these things were passing at the Diet, Coehlœus was burning with eagerness to gain a victory denied to prelates and kings. Though he had, from time to time, thrown in a few words at

the archbishop's, the order which he had received from Aleander had laid him under restraint. He resolved to compensate himself, and had no sooner given an account of his mission to the papal nuncio, than he presented himself at Luther's lodging. He accosted him as a friend, and expressed the grief which he felt at the emperor's resolution. After dinner, the conversation grew animated. Cochlœus pressed Luther to retract. He declined by a nod. Several nobles, who were at table, had difficulty in restraining themselves. They were indignant that the partisans of Rome should wish not to convince the Reformer by Scripture, but constrain him by force. Cochlœus, impatient under these reproaches, says to Luther, "Very well, I offer to dispute publicly with you, if you renounce the safe-conduct."2 All that Luther demanded was a public debate. What ought he to do? To renounce the safe-conduct was to be his own destroyer; to refuse the challenge of Cochlœus was to appear doubtful of his cause. The guests regarded the offer as a perfidious scheme of Aleander, whom the Dean of Frankfort had just left. Vollrat of Watzdorff, one of the number, freed Luther from the embarrassment of this puzzling alternative. This baron, who was of a boiling temperament, indignant at a snare which aimed at nothing less than to give up Luther into the hands of the executioner, started up, seized the terrified priest, and pushed him to the door. There would even have been bloodshed had not the other guests risen up from the table, and interposed their mediation between the furious baron and the trembling Cochlœus,4 who withdrew in confusion from the hotel of the Knights of Rhodes. The expression had no doubt escaped the dean in the heat of discussion, and was not a premeditated scheme between him and Aleander to make Luther fall into a perfidious snare. Cochlœus denies that it was, and we have pleasure in giving credit to his testimony, though it is true he had come to Luther's from a conference with the nuncio. In the evening, the Archbishop of Trêves entertained those who had been present at the morning conference. He thought it might be a means of calming down their minds, and bringing them nearer each other. Luther, who was so intrepid and immovable before arbiters or judges, had, in private society, a good humour and gayety which seemed to promise anything that might be asked of him. The archbishop's chancellor, who had shown so much sternness in his official capacity, joined in the attempt, and, towards the end of the repast, drank Luther's health. He was preparing to return the honour, the wine was poured out, and he was, according to his custom, making the sign of the cross on his glass, when suddenly the glass burst in his hands, and the wine was spilt upon the table. The guests were in consternation. "There must be poison in it," said some of Luther's friends, quite loud. But the doctor, without being moved, replied, with a smile, "Dear friends, either this wine was not destined for me, or it would have been hurtful to me." Then he calmly added, "The glass burst, no doubt, because in washing it had been too soon plunged in cold water." These simple words, in the circumstances in which they were uttered, have some degree of grandeur, and bespeak unalterable peace. We cannot suppose that the Roman Catholics could have wished to poison Luther, especially at the house of the Archbishop of Trêves. This repast neither estranged nor approximated the parties. The Reformer's resolution came from a higher source, and could not be influenced either by the hatred or the favour of men. On Thursday morning (25th April) Chancellor Wehe and doctor Peutinger of Augsburg, imperial counsellor, who had shown great affection for Luther ever since his interview with de Vio, repaired to the hotel of the Knights of Rhodes. The Elector of Saxony sent Frederick De Thun, and another of his counsellors, to be present at the conference. "Put yourself in our hands," earnestly said Wehe and Peutinger, who would willingly have sacrificed every thing to prevent the division which was about to rend the Church. "This affair will be terminated in a Christian manner; we give you

our word for it." "In two words," said Luther to them, "here is my answer: I renounce the safe-conduct. I place in the hands of the emperor my person and my life; but the Word of God … never!" Frederick de Thun affected rose and said to the deputies, "Is it not enough? Is not the sacrifice great enough?" Then declaring that he would hear nothing more, he took his leave. Wehe and Peutinger, hoping to have better success with the doctor, came and sat down on each side of him. "Throw yourself upon the Diet," said they to him. "No," replied Luther, for cursed be the man that trusteth in man." (Jeremiah 17:5) Wehe and Peutinger redoubled their counsels and attacks, pressing more closely on the Reformer. Luther worn out, rose up and put an end to the interview, saying, "I will not allow any man to set himself above the word of God." "Reflect once more," said they to him on retiring, "we will return after mid-day."

They, in fact, did return; but convinced that Luther would not yield, they brought a new proposal. Luther had refused to be judged first by the pope, then by the emperor, then by the Diet. There remained one judge to whom he himself had once appealed—a general council. No doubt such a proposal would have been scouted by Rome; but it was the last plank for escape. The delegates offered Luther a Council; and he had it in his power to accept it unfettered by any precise definition. Years might have elapsed before the difficulties which the calling of a Council would have encountered on the part of the pope could have been obviated. To the Reformation and the Reformer a gain of years would have gained every thing. God and time would then have done the rest. But Luther preferred the straight course to every other: he would not save himself at the expense of truth though all that might have been necessary was to disguise it by keeping silence. "I consent," replied he, "but (this was equivalent to a refusal of the Council) on condition that the Council will judge only according to the Holy Scriptures."

Peutinger and Wehe, thinking that a Council could not judge otherwise, hastened overjoyed to the archbishop. "Dr. Martin," said they, "submits his books to a Council." The archbishop was going to carry the good news to the emperor, when some doubt occurring to him, he sent for Luther

Richard of Grieffenklau was alone when the doctor arrived. "Dear doctor," said the archbishop, with much cordiality and kindness, "my doctors assure me that you consent without reservation to submit your cause to a Council." "My Lord," replied Luther, "I can bear every thing, but cannot abandon the Holy Scriptures." The archbishop then perceived that Wehe and Peutinger had not explained themselves properly. Never could Rome consent to a Council bound to decide according to Scripture. "It was just," says Pallavicini, "to insist that a weak eye should read very small writing, and at the same time deny the use of spectacles."3 The good archbishop sighed. "It was well," said he, "I made you come. What would have become of me had I immediately gone to the emperor with the news?" The immovable firmness, the stern rectitude of Luther, are, no doubt, astonishing, but they will be comprehended and respected by all who know the claims of God. Seldom has a nobler homage been paid to the immutable word of Heaven, and that at the risk of life and liberty by the man who paid it.

"Well," said the venerable prelate to Luther, "do you yourself then point out a remedy."

Luther, (after a moment's silence).—"My Lord, I know no other than that of Gamaliel: 'If this counsel or this work be of men it will come to nought, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.' Let the emperor, the electors, the princes, and the states of the empire, deliver this answer to the pope."

Archbishop.—“At least retract some articles.”

Luther.—“Provided it be not those which the Council of Constance condemned.”

Archbishop.—“Ah, I fear they are the very ones which will be asked.”

Luther.—“Then sooner sacrifice my body and my life—better allow my legs and arms to be cut off than abandon the clear and genuine word of God.” The archbishop at length understood Luther. “You may withdraw,” said he to him, always with the same gentleness. “Your Lordship,” resumed Luther, “will be so good as to see that his Majesty cause the safe-conduct necessary for my return to be expedited.” “I will see to it,” replied the good archbishop, and they parted. So ended these negotiations. The whole empire had assailed this man with the most urgent entreaties and the most fearful menaces, and this man had never flinched. His refusal to bend under the iron arm of the pope emancipated the Church, and commenced a new era. The intervention of Providence was evident, and the whole presents one of those grand historical scenes in which the majestic form of the Divinity appears conspicuously displayed.

Luther withdrew in company with Spalatin who had arrived at the archbishop’s during the course of the visit. John von Minkwitz, one of the Elector of Saxony’s counsellors, had fallen sick at Worms. The two friends repaired to his lodging, and Luther administered the tenderest consolation to the sick man. “Adieu,” said he to him on leaving, “to-morrow I shall quit Worms.”

Luther was not mistaken. He had not been three hours returned to the hotel of the Knights of Rhodes when chancellor Eck and the chancellor of the emperor, with a notary, made their appearance. The chancellor said to him, “Martin Luther, his imperial Majesty, the Electors, Princes, and States of the empire, having exhorted you to submission again and again, and in various manners, but always in vain, the emperor, in his quality of advocate and defender of the Catholic faith, sees himself obliged to take other steps. He therefore orders you to return to your home in the space of twenty-one days, and prohibits you from disturbing the public peace by the way, either by preaching or writing.

Luther was well aware that this message was the first step in his condemnation. “It has happened as Jehovah pleased,” said he meekly. “Blessed be the name of Jehovah!” Then he added. “Before all things, very humbly and from the bottom of my heart, I thank his Majesty, the Electors, Princes, and other States of the empire, for having listened to me with so much kindness. I have desired, and do desire one thing only—a reformation of the Church agreeably to Holy Scripture. I am ready to do every thing and suffer every thing in humble submission to the will of the emperor. Life and death, honour and disgrace, are all alike to me: I make only one reservation—the preaching of the gospel; for, says St. Paul, ‘The word of God cannot be bound.’” The deputies withdrew. On the morning of Friday (26th April) the Reformer’s friends and several nobles met at his lodgings. They were gratified at seeing the Christian constancy which he had opposed to Charles and the empire, and to recognise in him the features of the ancient portrait:

“Justum ac tenacem propositi virum, Non civium ardor prava jubentium, Non vultus instantis tyranni, Mente quatit solida….”

They wished once more, perhaps for ever, to bid adieu to this intrepid monk. Luther took a frugal meal. Now he must take leave of his friends, and flee far from them under a sky surcharged with

storms. He wished to pass this solemn moment in the presence of God. He lifted up his soul and blessed those who were around him. Ten in the morning having struck, Luther quitted the hotel with the friends who had accompanied him to Worms. Twenty gentlemen on horseback surrounded his carriage. A great crowd accompanied him beyond the walls. The imperial herald, Sturm, rejoined him some time after at Oppenheim, and the following day they reached Frankfort.

CHAP. XI

Luther's Departure—Journey from Worms—Luther to Cranach—Luther to Charles V—Luther with the Abbot of Hirschfeld—The Curate of Eisenach—Several Princes leave the Diet—Charles signs Luther's Condemnation—The Edict of Worms—Luther with his parents—Luther attacked and carried off—The ways of God—Wartburg—Luther a Prisoner.

Luther having thus escaped from these walls of Worms, which threatened to become his tomb, his whole heart gave glory to God. "The devil himself," said he, "guarded the citadel of the pope. But Christ has made a large breach in it; and Satan has been forced to confess that the Lord is mightier than he."

"The day of the Diet of "Worms," says the pious Mathesius, the disciple and friend of Luther, "is one of the greatest and most glorious days given to the world before its final close." The battle fought at Worms re-echoed far and wide, and while the sound travelled over Christendom, from the regions of the North to the mountains of Switzerland, and the cities of England, France, and Italy, many ardently took up the mighty weapon of the Word of God.

Luther, having arrived at Frankfort, on the evening of Saturday, (27th April,) took advantage next day of a moment of leisure, the first he had had for a long time, to write a note, in a style at once playful and energetic, to his friend, Lucas Cranach, the celebrated painter, at Wittemberg. "Your servant, dear compeer Lucas," said he to him, "I thought his majesty would assemble at Worms some fifty doctors to confute the monk off hand. But not at all. Are these books yours? Yes. Will you retract them? No. Ah well! get you gone! Such was the whole story. O blind Germans, how like children we act in allowing ourselves to be played upon and duped by Rome!… The Jews must for once have their chant, Yo! Yo! Yo! But our passover also will come, and then we will sing Hallelujah! … There must be silence and suffering for a short time. Jesus Christ says, 'A little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me.' (John 16:16) I hope it will be so with me. I commend you altogether to the Eternal. May He through Christ protect us against the attacks of the wolves and dragons of Rome. Amen."

After writing this somewhat enigmatical letter, Luther, as time was pressing, set out immediately for Friedberg, which is six leagues from Frankfort. The next day Luther again communed with himself. He was desirous to write once more to Charles V, being unwilling to confound him with guilty rebels. In his letter to the emperor he clearly expounded the nature of the obedience which is due to man, and that which is due to God, and the limit where the former must stop and give place to the latter. In reading Luther, we involuntarily call to mind the saying of the greatest autocrat of modern times: "My rule ends where that of conscience begins." "God, who is the searcher of hearts, is my witness," says Luther, "that I am ready with all diligence to obey your majesty, whether in honour or disgrace, whether by life or by death, and with absolutely no exception but the word of God, from which man derives life. In all the affairs of the present life my fidelity will be

immutable, for as to these loss or gain cannot at all affect salvation. But in regard to eternal blessings, it is not the will of God that man should submit to man. Subjection in the spiritual world constitutes worship, and should be paid only to the Creator.2

Luther also addressed a letter, but in German, to the States of the empire. It was nearly the same in substance as that to the emperor. It contained an account of all that had taken place at Worms. This letter was repeatedly printed and circulated all over Germany; “Every where,” says Cochlœus, “it excited the popular indignation against the emperor and the dignified clergy.”

Early next day, Luther wrote a note to Spalatin, enclosing in it the two letters which he had written the evening before, and sent pack the herald Sturm, who had been won to the gospel. Having embraced him he set out in all haste for Grunberg. On Tuesday, when about two leagues from Hirschfeld, he met the chancellor of the abbot-prince of this town, who had come out to receive him. Shortly after a troop of horsemen appeared with the abbot at their head. The latter leapt from his horse, and Luther having alighted from his carriage, the prince and the Reformer embraced, and then entered Hirschfeld. The senate received them at the gates. The princes of the Church ran to meet a monk anathematised by the pope, and the most distinguished among the laity, bowed the head before an individual whom the emperor had put under the ban.

“At five in the morning we will be at the church,” said the prince, on rising in the evening from table, at which the Reformer was a guest. He even wished Luther to occupy his own bed. Next day, Luther preached, the abbot-prince accompanying him with his suite. In the evening, Luther arrived at Eisenach, the abode of his Infancy. All his friends in the town gathered round him, and begged him to preach. The next day they conducted him to the church. The curate made his appearance, attended by a notary and witnesses. He came forward in great tremor, divided between the fear of losing his place, and that of opposing the powerful man before him. At last he said, in a tone of embarrassment, “I protest against the liberty which you are going to take.” Luther mounted the pulpit, and that voice which, twenty-three years before, sung in the streets of this town for bread, caused the arches of the ancient church to ring with accents which had begun to shake the world. After the sermon, the curate, in confusion, stept softly forward to Luther. The notary had drawn up his instrument, the witnesses had signed it, and everything was in regular order to put the curate’s place in safety. “Pardon me,” said he humbly to the doctor; “I have done it from fear of the tyrants who oppress the Church.”

There was, in fact, some ground to fear them. At Worms, the aspect of affairs had changed. Aleander seemed to reign supreme. “Luther has nothing before him but exile,” wrote Frederick to his brother, Duke John. Nothing can save him. If God permits me to return, I will have things almost incredible to tell you. Not only Annas and Caiaphas, but also Pilate and Herod, have leagued against him.” Frederick, having little wish to remain longer, left Worms. The Elector-Palatine did the same, as did also the Archbishop-Elector of Cologne. Princes of less elevated rank imitated them. Deeming it impossible to avert the blow which was about to be struck, they preferred, perhaps erroneously, to abandon the place. The Spaniards, Italians, and the most Ultra-Montane of the German princes, alone remained. The field was free, and Aleander triumphed. He laid before Charles the draft of an edict, which he intended should serve as the model of that which the Diet was to issue against the monk. The nuncio’s labour pleased the irritated emperor. He assembled the remains of the Diet in his chamber, and caused Aleander’s

edict to be read to them. All who were present, (so says Pallavicini,) approved it. The next day—the day of a great festival—the emperor was in the church, surrounded by the nobility of his court. The religious solemnity was finished, and a multitude of people filled the church, Then Aleander, clad in all the insignia of his rank, approached Charles V. He held in his hand two copies of the edict against Luther, the one in Latin, and the other in German, and, kneeling down before his majesty, implored him to append his signature and the seal of the empire. It was at the moment when the host had just been offered, when incense filled the temple, when music was still ringing under its arches, and, as it were, in the presence of the Divinity, that the destruction of the enemy of Rome was to be completed. The emperor, assuming the most gracious manner,2 took the pen and signed. Aleander went off in triumph, put the decree immediately to press, and sent it over all Christendom. This fruit of the labour of Rome had cost the papacy some pains. Pallavicini himself informs us that this edict, though dated the 8th May, was signed later, but was antedated, to make it be supposed that it was executed during the time when all the members of the Diet were actually assembled.

“We Charles Fifth,” said the emperor, (then followed all his titles,) “to all the electors, princes, prelates, and others, whom it may concern,

“The Almighty having entrusted to us, for the defence of his holy faith, more kingdoms and power than he gave to any of our predecessors, we mean to exert ourselves to the utmost to proven any heresy from arising to pollute our holy empire.

“The Augustin monk, Martin Luther, though exhorted by us, has rushed like a madman against the holy Church, and sought to destroy it by means of books filled with blasphemy. He has, in a shameful manner, insulted the imperishable law of holy wedlock. He has striven to excite the laity to wash their hands in the blood of priests; and, overturning all obedience, has never ceased to stir up revolt, division, war, murder, theft, and fire, and to labour completely to ruin the faith of Christians.… In a word, to pass over all his other iniquities in silence, this creature, who is not a man, but Satan himself under the form of a man, covered with the cowl of a monk,5 has collected into one stinking pool all the worst heresies of past times, and has added several new ones of his own …

“We have, therefore, sent this Luther from before our face, that all pious and sensible men may regard him as a fool, or a man possessed of the devil; and we expect that, after the expiry of his safe-conduct, effectual means will be taken to arrest his furious rage.

“Wherefore, under pain of incurring the punishment due to the crime of treason, we forbid you to lodge the said Luther so soon as the fatal term shall be expired, to conceal him, give him meat or drink, and lend him, by word or deed, publicly or secretly, any kind of assistance. We enjoin you, moreover, to seize him, or cause him to be seized, wherever you find him, and bring him to us without any delay, or to keep him in all safety until you hear from us how you are to act with regard to him, and till you receive the recompence due to your exertions in so holy a work.

“As to his adherents you will seize them, suppress them, and confiscate their goods.

“As to his writings, if the best food becomes the terror of all mankind as soon as a drop of poison is mixed with it, how much more ought these books which contain a deadly poison to the soul to be not only rejected but also annihilated.

“You will therefore burn them, or in some other way destroy them entirely.

“As to authors, poets, printers, painters, sellers or buyers of placards, writings, or paintings, against the pope, or the Church, you will lay hold of their persons and their goods, and treat them according to your good pleasure.

“And if any one, whatever be his dignity, shall dare to act in contradiction to the decree of our imperial Majesty, we ordain that he shall be placed under the ban of the empire.

“Let every one conform hereto.”

Such was the edict signed in the Cathedral of Worms. It was more than a Roman bull which, though published in Italy, might not be executed in Germany. The emperor himself had spoken, and the Diet had ratified his decree. All the partisans of Rome sent forth a shout of triumph. “It is the end of the tragedy,” exclaimed they. “For my part,” said Alphonso Valdez, a Spaniard at the emperor’s court, “I am persuaded it is not the end but the beginning.” Valdez perceived that the movement was in the Church, in the people, in the age, and that though Luther should fall, his cause would not fall with him. But no one disguised to himself the imminent, the inevitable danger to which the Reformer was exposed, while the whole tribe of the superstitious were seized with horror at the thought of the incarnate Satan whom the emperor pointed out to the nation as disguised under a monk’s frock. The man against whom the mighty of the earth were thus forging their thunders had left the Church of Eisenach, and was preparing to separate from some of his dearest friends. He did not wish to follow the road of Gotha or Erfurt, but to repair to the village of Mora, his father’s birth place, that he might there see his grandmother, who died four months after, his uncle, Henry Luther, and other relations. Schurff, Jonas, and Suaven, set off for Wittemberg; Luther mounted his vehicle with Amsdorff who remained with him, and entered the forest of Thuringia. The same evening he reached the village of his fathers. The poor old peasant clasped in her arms this grandson who had just been showing front to the emperor Charles and pope Leo. Luther spent the next day with his family, happy in substituting this tranquil scene for the tumult at Worms. On the following day he resumed his journey, accompanied by Amsdorff and his brother James. In these lonely spots the Reformer’s lot was to be decided. They were passing along the forest of Thuringia, on the road to Wallershausen. As the carriage was in a hollow part of the road, near the old church of Glisbach, at some distance from the castle of Altenstein, a sudden noise was heard, and at that moment five horsemen, masked and in complete armour, rushed upon the travellers. Luther’s brother, as soon as he perceived the assailants, lept from the vehicle, and ran off at full speed without uttering a word. The driver was for defending himself. “Stop!” cried one of the assailants in a stern voice, and rushing upon him threw him to the ground. A second man in a mask seized Amsdorff, and prevented him from coming near. Meanwhile the three other horsemen laid hold of Luther, keeping the most profound silence. They pulled him violently from the carriage, threw a horseman’s cloak upon his shoulders, and placed him on a led horse. Then the other two quitted Amsdorff and the driver, and the whole lept into their saddles. The hat of one of them fell off, but they did not even stop to lift it, and in a twinkling disappeared in the dark forest with their prisoner. They at first took the road to Broderode, but they soon retraced their steps by a different road, and without quitting the forest, made turnings and windings in all directions, in order to deceive those who might attempt to follow their track.3

Luther, little accustomed to horseback, was soon overcome with fatigue. Being permitted to dismount for a few moments, he rested near a beech tree, and took a draught of fresh water from a spring, which is still called, Luther's Spring. His brother James always continuing his flight arrived in the evening at Wallershausen. The driver in great alarm had got up on his vehicle, into which Amsdorff also mounted, and urging on his horses, which proceeded at a rapid pace, brought Luther's friend as far as Wittemberg. At Wallershausen, and Wittemberg, and the interjacent country, villages, and towns, all along the road, news of Luther's having been carried off were spread, news which, while it delighted some, filled the greater number with astonishment and indignation. A cry of grief soon resounded throughout Germany—"Luther has fallen into the hands of his enemies!"

After the violent combat which Luther had been obliged to maintain, God was pleased to conduct him to a peaceful resting place. After placing him on the brilliant theatre of Worms, where all the powers of the Reformer's soul had been so vigorously exerted, He gave him the obscure and humiliating retreat of a prison. From the deepest obscurity He brings forth the feeble instruments by which he proposes to accomplish great things, and then, after allowing them to shine for a short time with great lustre on an elevated stage, sends them back again to deep obscurity. Violent struggles and pompous displays were not the means by which the Reformation was to be accomplished. That is not the way in which the leaven penetrates the mass of the population. The Spirit of God requires more tranquil paths. The man of whom the champions of Rome were always in pitiless pursuit, behoved for a time to disappear from the world. It was necessary that personal achievements should be eclipsed in order that the revolution about to be accomplished might not bear the impress of an individual. It was necessary that man should retire and God alone remain, moving, by his Spirit, over the abyss in which the darkness of the middle age was engulphed, and saying,—"Let there be light."

Nightfall having made it impossible to follow their track, the party carrying off Luther took a new direction, and about an hour before midnight arrived at the foot of a mountain. The horses climbed slowly to its summit on which stood an old fortress surrounded on all sides, except that of the entrance, by the black forests which cover the mountains of Thuringia. To this elevated and isolated castle, named the Wartburg, where the Landgraves of old used to conceal themselves, was Luther conducted. The bolts are drawn, the iron bars fall, the gates open, and the Reformer clearing the threshold, the bars again close behind him. He dismounts in the court. Burkard de Hund, Lord of Allenstein, one of the horsemen, withdraws; another, John of Berlepsch, Provost of Wartburg, conducts Luther to the chamber which was to be his prison, and where a knight's dress and a sword were lying. The three other horsemen, dependants of the provost, carry off his ecclesiastical dress, and put on the other which had been prepared for him, enjoining him to allow his hair and beard to grow, in order that none even in the castle might know who he was. The inmates of the Wartburg were only to know the prisoner under the name of Chevalier Georges. Luther scarcely knew himself in the dress which was put upon him.2 At length he is left alone, and can turn in his thoughts the strange events which had just taken place at Worms, the uncertain prospect which awaits him, and his new and strange abode. From the narrow windows of his keep he discovers the dark, solitary, and boundless forests around. "There," says Mathesius, the biographer and friend of Luther, "the doctor remained like St. Paul in his prison at Rome."

Frederick de Thun, Philip Feilitsch, and Spalatin, had not concealed from Luther, in a confidential interview which they had with him at Worms by order of the Elector, that his liberty behoved to be sacrificed to the wrath of Charles and the pope. Still there was so much mystery in the mode of his being carried off that Frederick was long ignorant of the place of his confinement. The grief of the friends of the Reformation was prolonged. Spring passed away, succeeded by summer, autumn, and winter; the sun finished his annual course, and the walls of the Wartburg still confined their prisoner. The truth is laid under interdict by the Diet; its defender, shut up within the walls of a strong castle, has disappeared from the stage of the world, none knowing what has become of him. Aleander triumphs, and the Reformation seems lost; … but God reigns, and the blow which apparently threatened to annihilate the cause of the gospel will serve only to save its intrepid minister and extend the light of faith.

Let us leave Luther a captive in Germany on the heights of the Wartburg, and let us see what God was then doing in the other countries of Christendom.

BOOK EIGHTH The Swiss

1484–1522

CHAP. I

Movements in Switzerland—Source of the Reformation—Democratic Character—Foreign Service—Morality—The Tockenburg—An Alpine Hut—A Pastoral Family. At the moment when the decree of the Diet of Worms appeared, a continually increasing movement was beginning to shake the quiet valleys of Switzerland. The voice which was heard in the plains of Upper and Lower Saxony was answered from the bosom of the Helvetic mountains by the energetic voices of its priests, its shepherds, and the citizens of its warlike cities. The partisans of Rome, seized with terror, exclaimed that a vast and dreadful conspiracy was every where formed against the Church. The friends of the gospel filled with joy, said, that as in spring a living breath is felt from the streams which run into the sea up to the mountain tops, so, throughout all Christendom, the Spirit of God was now melting the ices of a long winter, and covering with verdure and flowers the lowest plains as well as the steepest and most barren rocks.

Germany did not communicate the truth to Switzerland, nor Switzerland to France, nor France to England. All these countries received it from God, just as one part of the world does not transmit the light to another part, but the same shining globe communicates it directly to all the earth. Christ, the day-spring from on high, infinitely exalted above all mankind, was, at the period of the Reformation as at that of the establishment of Christianity, the divine fire which gave life to the world. In the sixteenth century one and the same doctrine was at once established in the homes and churches of the most distant and diversified nations. The reason is, that the same Spirit was every where at work producing the same faith. The reformation of Germany and that of Switzerland demonstrate this truth. Zuinglius had no intercourse with Luther. There was, no doubt, a link between these two men; but we must search for it above the earth. He who from heaven gave the truth to Luther, gave it to Zuinglius. God was the medium of communication between them. “I began to preach the gospel,” says Zuinglius, “in the year of grace, 1516, in other words, at a time when the name of Luther had never been heard of in our country. I did not learn the doctrine of Christ from Luther, but from the word of God. If Luther preaches Christ, he does what I do; that

is all.” But if the different reformations, which all proceeded from the same Spirit, thereby acquired great unity, they also received certain peculiar features, corresponding to the different characters of the people among whom they took place.

We have already given a sketch of the state of Switzerland at the period of the Reformation, and will only add a few words to what we have already said. In Germany, the ruling principle was monarchical, in Switzerland it was democratic. In Germany the Reformation had to struggle with the will of princes; in Switzerland, with the will of the people. A multitude are more easily led away than an individual, and are also more prompt in their decisions. The victory over the papacy on the other side of the Rhine was the work of years, but on this side of it required only mouths or days. In Germany, Luther’s person stands forth imposingly from the midst of his Saxon countrymen. He seems to struggle alone in his attack on the Roman Colossus, and wherever the battle is fought, we see his lofty stature on the field of battle. Luther is, as it were, the monarch of the revolution which is being accomplished. In Switzerland, several cantons are at once engaged in the contest. We see a confederacy of Reformers, and are astonished at their numbers. No doubt there is one head which stands elevated above the rest, but no one has the command. It is a republican magistracy, where each presents his peculiar physiognomy, and exercises his separate influence. We have Wittemberg, Zuinglius, Capito, Haller, Œcolampadius. Again, we have Oswald Myconius, Leo Juda, Farel, and Calvin, and the Reformation takes place at Glaris, Bâle, Zurich, Berne, Neufchatel, Geneva, Lucerne, Schafausen, Appenzel, St. Gall, and in the Grisons. In the Reformation of Germany, one scene only is seen, and that one level like the country around; but in Switzerland, the Reformation is divided, as Switzerland itself is divided by its thousand mountains. So to speak, each valley has its awakening, and each Alpine height its gleams of light A lamentable period had commenced in the history of the Swiss after their exploits against the dukes of Burgundy. Europe, which had learned to know the strength of then arm, had brought them forth from their mountains, and robbed them of their independence, by employing them to decide the destiny of states on battle-fields. Swiss brandished the sword against Swiss on the plains of Italy and France; and the intrigues of strangers filled these high valleys of the Alps, so long the abode of simplicity and peace, with envy and discord. Led away by the attraction of gold, sons, labourers, and servants, stole away from the chalets of alpine pastures towards the banks of the Rhine or the Po. Helvetic unity was crushed under the slow step of mules loaded with gold. The object of the Reformation in Switzerland—for there too it had a political aspect—was to re-establish the unity and ancient virtues of the cantons. Its first cry was that the Swiss should tear asunder the perfidious nets of strangers, and embrace each other in strict union at the foot of the cross. But the generous call was not listened to. Rome, accustomed to purchase in these valleys the blood which she shed in order to increase her power, rose up in wrath. She set Swiss against Swiss, and new passions arose which rent the body of the nation in pieces.

Switzerland stood in need of a reformation. It is true there was among the Helvetians a simplicity and good-nature, which the polished Italians thought ridiculous, but, at the same time, it was admitted that by no people were the laws of chastity more habitually transgressed. Astrologers ascribed this to the constellations; philosophers, to the ardent temperament of this indomitable population; and moralists, to the principles of the Swiss, who regarded trick, dishonesty, and slander as much greater sins than uncleanness.2 The priests were prohibited from marrying, but it would have been difficult to find one of them who lived in true celibacy. The thing required of them

was, to conduct themselves not chastely, but prudently. This was one of the first disorders against which the Reformation was directed. It is time to trace the beginnings of this new day in the valleys of the Alps.

Towards the middle of the eleventh century, two hermits set out from Saint Gall, and proceeding towards the mountains at the south of this ancient monastery, arrived in a deserted valley about ten leagues long. Towards the north, the high mountains of Sentis, the Sommerigkopf, and the Old-Man, separate this valley from the canton of Appenzel. On the south, the Kuhfirsten, with its seven heads, rises between it and the Wallenses, Sargans, and the Grisons, while the eastern side of the valley opens to the rays of the rising sun, and discovers the magnificent prospect of the Tyrolese Alps. The two solitaries having arrived near the source of a small river, (the Thur,) built two cells. The valley gradually became inhabited. On the highest portion of it, 2010 feet above the Lake of Zurich, there was formed, around a church, a village named Wildhaus, or the Wild House, with which two hamlets are now connected, viz., Lisighaus, or the House of Elizabeth, and Schœnenboden. The fruits of the earth are unable to grow upon these heights. A green carpet of Alpine freshness covers the whole valley, and rises upon the sides of the mountains, above which masses of enormous rocks lift their wild grandeur towards heaven. At a quarter of a league from the church near Lisighaus, on the side of a path which leads into the pastures beyond the river, a solitary house is still standing. The tradition is, that the wood used in building it was cut upon the very spot. Everything indicates that it must have been erected at a very remote period. The walls are thin. The windows have little round panes, and the roof is formed of slabs, on which stones are laid to prevent the wind from carrying them away. In front of the house there is a limpid gushing spring. In this house, towards the end of the fifteenth century, lived a man named Zuinglius, amman or bailiff of the district. The family of the Zwingles, or Zwingli, was ancient, and in high esteem among the inhabitants of these mountains. Bartholomew, brother of the bailiff, at first curate of the parish, and, after 1487, dean of Wesen, was a person of some celebrity in the district. Margaret Meili, the wife of the amman of Wildhaus, and whose brother John was afterwards abbot of the convent of Fischingen in Thurgovia, had already given birth to two sons, Heini and Klaus, when, on the first day of the year 1484, seven weeks after the birth of Luther, a third son, Ulric, was born in this solitary hut. Five other sons, John, Wolfgang, Bartholomew, James, Andrew, and a daughter, Anna, were afterwards added to this Alpine family. No person in the country was more venerated than amman Zuinglius. His character, his office, his numerous children, made him the patriarch of these mountains. He and all his sons were shepherds. No sooner did the first days of May open upon these mountains than the father and the children departed with their flocks for the pastures, rising gradually form station to station, and so, towards the end of July, reaching the highest summits of the Alps. Then they began gradually to redescend towards the valley, and in autumn the whole population of Wildhaus returned to their humble huts. Sometimes, during the summer, the young people who had been obliged to remain at home, eager for the mountain breezes, set out in bands for the chalets, uniting their voices to the melody of their rustic instruments. On their arrival on the Alps, the shepherds from a distance saluted them with their horns and their songs, and regaled them with a feast of milk. Afterwards the joyous band, by turnings and windings, descended again into the valley, moving to the sound of their pipes. Ulric in his youth doubtless joined occasionally in this amusement. He grew up at the foot of those rocks which seem eternal, and whose tops reach the heavens. “I have often thought,” says one of his friends, “that, being brought near to heaven on these sublime heights, he there contracted

something celestial and divine."

There were long winter evenings in the cottages of Wildhaus, and then young Ulric, seated at the paternal hearth, listened to the conversation of the bailiff and the old men of the district. He heard them tell how the inhabitants of the valley had formerly groaned under a heavy yoke. With the old men his heart beat high at the thought of the independence which the Tockenburg had acquired, and which the alliance with the Swiss had secured. A patriotic feeling was kindled in his breast. Switzerland became dear to him; and if any one uttered an unfavourable expression against the confederates, the child instantly stood up and warmly defended their cause. During these long evenings he was often seen quietly seated at the feet of his pious grandmother, with his eyes rivetted upon her, listening to her Bible stories, and devout lessons, as he eagerly received them into his heart.

CHAP. II

Young Ulric at Wesen—At Bâle—At Berne—The Dominican Convent—Jetzer—The Apparitions—The Passion of the Lay Brother—The Imposture—Discovery and Punishment—Zuinglius at Vienna—At Bâle—Music at Bâle—Wittembach teaches the Gospel—Leon Juda—The Curate of Glaris. The good amman was delighted with the happy presages in his son. He perceived that Ulric would be able to do something else than herd his cows on Mount Sentis, singing the shepherd's song. One day he took him by the hand and proceeded with him towards Wesen. He traversed the verdant ridges of the Ammon, avoiding the wild and precipitous rocks which border the lake of Wallenstadt. On arriving at the town, he called upon his brother the dean, to whom he intrusted the young mountaineer, in order that he might ascertain what his talents were. The leading feature in his character was an innate horror at falsehood and a great love of truth. He himself relates that one day, when he was beginning to reflect, the thought struck him that falsehood should be punished more severely than even theft; "for," adds he, "veracity is the parent of all the virtues." The dean soon loved his nephew as if he had been his son; delighted with his sprightliness, he entrusted his education to a schoolmaster who in a short time taught him all that he knew himself. Young Ulric, when ten years of age, having given indications of a high order of intellect,2 his father and his uncle resolved on sending him to Bâle. When the child of the Tockenburg arrived in this celebrated city, with an integrity and purity of heart which he seemed to have inhaled from the pure air of his mountains, but which came from a higher source, a new world opened before him. The celebrity of the famous council of Bâle; the university which Pius II had founded in 1460; the printing presses, which revived the masterpieces of antiquity, and circulated over the world the first fruits of the revival of letters; the residence of distinguished men; the Wessels, the Wittembachs, and, in particular, that prince of scholars and luminary of the schools, Erasmus, rendered Bâle, at the period of the Reformation, one of the great foci of light in the west.

Ulric entered the school of St. Theodore, which was taught by Gregory Binzli, a man of an affectionate and gentle temper, at this period rare among teachers. Young Zuinglius made rapid progress. The learned disputes which were then fashionable among the doctors of universities had even descended to the youth in schools. Ulric took part in them. He exercised his growing strength against the children of other schools, and was always victorious in those struggles which formed a kind of prelude to those by which the papacy was to be overthrown in Switzerland. His success

excited the jealousy of rivals older than himself. The school of Bâle was soon outstripped by him as that of Wesen had been.

Lupulus, a distinguished scholar, had just opened at Berne the first learned school that was founded in Switzerland. The bailiff of Wildhaus and the curate of Wesen resolved to send their child thither, and Zuinglius, in 1497, quitting the smiling plains of Bâle, again drew near to the high Alps, where he had spent his childhood, and whose snowy tops, gilded with the rays of the sun, he could see from Berne. Lupulus, a distinguished poet, introduced his pupil to the sanctuary of classic literature, a sanctuary then unknown, only a few of the initiated having passed the threshold. The young neophyte ardently breathed an atmosphere rich in the perfumes of antiquity. His intellect was developed and his style formed. He became a poet.

Among the convents of Berne, that of the Dominicans held a distinguished place. These monks were engaged in a serious quarrel with the Franciscans. The latter maintained the immaculate conception of the virgin, while the former denied it. In every step the Dominicans took—before the rich altars which decorated their church, and between the twelve pillars on which its arches were supported—they thought only of humbling their rivals. They had observed the fine voice of Zuinglius, and heard of his precocious intellect, and thinking that he might throw lustre on their order, strove to gain him. With this view they invited him to remain in their convent till he should make his noviciate. The whole prospects of Zuinglius were threatened. The amman of Wildhaus having been informed of the bait to which the Dominicans had had recourse, trembled for the innocence of his son, and ordered him forthwith to quit Berne. Zuinglius thus escaped those monastic enclosures into which Luther rushed voluntarily. What happened afterwards may enable us to comprehend the imminent danger to which Zuinglius had been exposed. In 1507 great excitement prevailed in the town of Berne. A young man of Zurzach, named John Jetzer, having one day presented himself at this same Dominican convent, had been repulsed. The poor youth in despair had returned to the charge, holding in his hand fifty-three florins and some pieces of silk. “It is all I possess,” said he, “take it, and receive me into your order.” He was admitted on the 6th January among the lay brothers. But the very first night a strange noise in his cell filled him with terror. He fled to the Carthusian convent, but was again sent back to that of the Dominicans. On the following night, being the eve of the feast of St. Matthew, he was awoke by deep sighs, and perceived at his bedside a tall phantom in white. “I am,” said a sepulchral voice, “a soul escaped from the fire of purgatory.” The lay brother trembling, replied, “God save you; for me, I can do nothing.” Then the spirit advanced towards the poor friar and, seizing him by the throat, indignantly upbraided him with his refusal. Jetzer in terror exclaimed, “What then can I do to save you?” “Flagellate yourself for eight days till the blood comes, and lie prostrate on the pavement of the chapel of St. John.” So answered the spirit, and disappeared. The lay brother gave information of the apparition to his confessor, a preacher of the convent, and by his advice submitted to the discipline required. The rumour soon spread throughout the town that a soul had applied to the Dominicans to be delivered from purgatory. The Franciscans were deserted, and every one ran to the church to see the holy man lying prostrate on the ground. The soul from purgatory had intimated that he would reappear in eight days. On the night appointed it in fact did appear, accompanied by two other spirits that were tormenting it and howling horribly. “Scotus,” said the spirit, “Scotus, the inventor of the Franciscan doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin, is among those who like me are suffering these fierce pains.” At this news, which soon spread

over Berne, the partisans of the Franciscans were still more alarmed. The spirit on disappearing had announced a visit from the Virgin herself. In fact, on the day appointed, the astonished friar saw Mary herself appear in his cell. He could not believe his eyes. She approached him kindly, gave him three of our Saviour's tears, three drops of his blood, a crucifix, and a letter addressed to Pope Julius II, "who," said she, "was the individual chosen by God to abolish the festival of her pretended immaculate conception." Then coming still closer to the bed on which the friar lay, she announced, in a solemn tone, that a great grace was to be conferred on him, and drove a nail into his hand. The lay brother uttered a loud shrick, but Mary wrapt up his hand in a piece of linen which her Son, she said, had worn after his flight into Egypt. This wound was not sufficient to make the glory of the Dominicans equal to that of the Franciscans. Jetzer must have the five wounds of Christ and of St. Francis in his hands, feet, and side. The four others were inflicted, and then, after giving him a draught, he was placed in a hall hung with pictures representing our Saviour's passion. Here having spent whole days fasting, his imagination soon became heated. The doors of the hall were then thrown open from time to time to the public who came in crowds to contemplate with devout astonishment the friar with his five wounds, stretching out his arms, bending his head, and by his positions and gestures imitating the crucifixion of our Lord. Sometimes, out of his wits, he foamed, and seemed about to breathe his last. The whisper went round, "He is enduring the cross of Christ." The multitude, eager for miracles, continually thronged the convent. Men worthy of high esteem, among others Lupulus himself, the master of Zuinglius, were overawed, and the Dominicans, from the height of the pulpit extolled the glory which God was bestowing on their order. This order had for some years felt the necessity of humbling the Franciscans, and of augmenting the respect and liberality of the people by means of miracles. Berne, "a simple, rustic, and ignorant town," as the sub-prior of Berne described it to the Chapter held at Wimpfen on the Necker, had been selected as the theatre of their operations. The prior, sub-prior, preacher, and purveyor of the convent, had undertaken to perform the leading characters, but they wanted the talent necessary to perform them to the end. A new apparition of Mary having taken place, Jetzer thought he recognised the voice of his confessor, and having said so aloud, Mary disappeared. She soon made her appearance again, to censure the incredulous friar. "This time it is the prior," exclaimed Jetzer, rushing forward with a knife in his hand. The saintess threw a pewter plate at the poor friar's head, and likewise disappeared. In consternation at the discovery which Jetzer had thus made, the Dominicans tried to disencumber themselves of him by means of poison. He perceived it; and, having taken flight, disclosed the imposition. They put on a good countenance, and sent deputies to Rome. The pope committed the decision to his legate in Switzerland, and the bishops of Lausanne and Sion. The four Dominicans being convicted, were condemned to be burnt alive; and on the 1st May, 1509, were consumed by the flames, in presence of more than thirty thousand spectators. The affair made a noise throughout Europe, and by unveiling one of the worst sores of the Church, prepared the Reformation.

Such were the men into whose hands Ulric Zuinglius had nearly fallen. He had studied literature at Berne; he behoved now to devote himself to philosophy, and with this view repaired to Vienna. A youth from St. Gall, named Joachim Vadian, whose genius gave promise to Switzerland of a distinguished scholar and a statesman; Henri Loreti, of the canton of Glaris, commonly called Glarean, and apparently destined to shine among poets; John Heigerlin, son of a forgemaster, and hence surnamed Faber, of a versatile temper, fond of honour and glory, possessing all the qualities indicative of a courtier—such were Ulric's fellow-students and companions in the capital

of Austria.

Zuinglius returned to Wildhaus in 1502; but on revisiting his mountains he felt that he had drunk of the cup of science, and could no longer live amid the songs of his brothers and the bleating of their flocks. He was eighteen years of age, and repaired to Bâle, to engage again in literary pursuits, and thus at once master and pupil he taught at the school of St. Martin, and studied at the university; from this time he was able to dispense with assistance from his father. Shortly after, he took the degree of master of arts. An Alsatian, named Capito, nine years older than he, was one of his best friends.

Zuinglius devoted himself to the study of scholastic theology; for, being called one day to combat its sophisms, he behoved to explore its obscure labyrinth. But the light hearted student of the mountains of Sentis was often seen suddenly to shake off the dust of the school, and, substituting amusement for his philosophic toils, seize the lute, or the harp, or the violin, or the flute, or the tympanon, or the cornet, or the hunting horn, extract joyous sounds from these instruments as in the prairies of Lisighaus, and make his lodgings, or the dwellings of his friends, re-echo with the airs of his country, accompanying them with his voice. In regard to music, he was a true child of the Tockenburg, superior to all. In addition to the instruments we have already named, he played several others. An enthusiast in the art he diffused a taste for it in the university, not from any desire of dissipation, but because he loved thus to relax his mind when fatigued by serious study, and fit himself for returning with greater zeal to difficult labours.4 None had a gayer humour, a more amiable disposition, or more engaging conversation. He was a vigorous Alpine tree which developed itself in all its gracefulness and strength, and which, never having been pruned, threw out strong branches in all directions. The time was coming when these branches would turn vigorously in the direction of heaven.

After he had forced an entrance into scholastic theology he left its arid tracts fatigued and disgusted, having found nothing in it but confused ideas, vain babbling, vain glory, barbarism, and not one sound idea of doctrine. “It is only a loss of time,” said he, and waited for something better. At this time, (November, 1505,) arrived at Bâle Thomas Wittembach, son of a burgomaster of Bienne. Wittembach had till then taught at Tubingen, side by side with Reuchlin. He was in the vigour of life, sincere, pious, skilled in the liberal arts, and mathematics, and well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures. Zuinglius and all the academic youth immediately flocked around him. A spirit hitherto unknown animated his lectures, and prophetic words escaped from his lips: “The time is not distant,” said he, “when scholastic theology will be abolished and the ancient doctrine of the Church restored.” “The death of Christ,” added he, “is the only ransom of our souls.”3 The heart of Zuinglius eagerly received these seeds of life. At this period classical studies began every where to supplant the scholastics of the middle age. Zuinglius, like his preceptors and friends, threw himself into this new course.

Among the students who followed the lessons of the new teacher with the greatest enthusiasm was a young man of twenty-three, of small stature, and a feeble sickly appearance, but whose eye bespoke at once gentleness and intrepidity. This was Leo Juda, son of an Alsatian curate, and whose uncle had fallen at Rhodes, fighting in defence of Christendom, under the standard of the Teutonic knights. Leo and Ulric were on intimate terms. Leo played the tympanon, and had a very fine voice. The joyous melodies of the young friends of the arts were often heard in his lodgings.

Leo Juda, at a later period, became the colleague of Zuinglius, and even death could not destroy their sacred friendship. At this time the office of pastor of Glaris having become vacant, Henry Goldli, a young courtier of the pope, and groom of the stable to his holiness, obtained the appointment from his master, and hastened with it to Glaris. But the Glarian shepherds, proud of the antiquity of their race, and of their battles for freedom, were not disposed to bow implicitly to a piece of parchment from Rome. Wildhaus is not far from Glaris; and Wesen, where Zuinglius uncle was curate, is the place where the market of the district is held. The reputation of the young master of arts of Bâle had penetrated even into these mountains; and the Glarians, wishing to have him for their priest, gave him a call in 1506. Zuinglius having been ordained at Constance by the bishop, preached his first sermon at Rapperswil, read his first mass at Wildhaus on St. Michael's day, in presence of all his relations and the friends of his family, and towards the close of the year arrived at Glaris.

CHAP. III

Love of War—Schinner—Pension from the Pope—The Labyrinth—Zuinglius in Italy—Principle of Reform—Zuinglius and Luther—Zuinglius and Erasmus—Zuinglius and the Elders—Paris and Glaris.

Zuinglius immediately engaged in the zealous discharge of the work which his vast parish imposed upon him. Still he was only twenty-two years of age, and often allowed himself to be carried away by the dissipation and lax ideas of his age. A priest of Rome he was like the other priests around him. But even at this period, though the evangelical doctrine had not changed his heart, Zuinglius did not give way to those scandals which frequently afflicted the Church. He always felt the need of subjecting his passions to the holy rule of the gospel. A love of war at this time inflamed the quiet valleys of Glaris where there were families of heroes—the Tschudis, the Walas, the Æblis, whose blood had flowed on the field of battle. The youth listened with eagerness to the old warriors when they told them of the wars of Burgundy and Suabia, of the battles of St. James and Ragaz. But alas! it was no longer against the enemies of their liberties that these warlike shepherds took up arms. They were seen, at the bidding of the kings of France, of the emperor, the dukes of Man, or the holy father himself, descending from the Alps like an avalanche, and rushing with the noise of thunder against the troops drawn up in the plain. A poor boy named Matthew Schinner, who was at the school of Sion in the Valais, (it was toward the middle of the latter half of the fifteenth century,) singing before the houses, as young Martin Luther shortly after did, heard himself called by an old man, who, being struck with the frankness with which the child answered his questions, said to him with that prophetic spirit with which man is said to be sometimes endowed when on the brink of the grave, "Thou art to be a bishop and a prince." The expression sunk deep into the young mendicant, and from that moment boundless ambition took possession of his heart. At Zurich and Como the progress he made astonished his masters. Having become curate of a small parish in Valais, he rose rapidly, and being sent at a later period to ask from the pope the confirmation of a bishop of Sion, who had just been elected, he obtained the bishopric for himself, and girt his brow with the episcopal mitre. This man, ambitious and crafty, but often noble and generous, always considered any dignity bestowed upon him as only a step destined to raise him to some still higher dignity. Having offered his services to Louis XII, and named his price, "It is too much for one man," said the king. "I will show him," replied the bishop of Sion, offended, "that I am a man worth several men." In fact he turned towards pope Julius II, who

gladly received him, and Schinner succeeded in 1510 in linking the whole Swiss confederation to the policy of this ambitious pontiff. The bishop having been rewarded with a cardinal's hat smiled when he saw that there was now only one step between him and the papal throne.

Schinner's eye was continually turned to the cantons of Switzerland, and as soon as he there discerned any man of influence he hastened to attach him to himself. The pastor of Glaris drew his attention, and Zuinglius soon received intimation that the pope had granted him an annual pension of fifty florins, to encourage him in the cultivation of letters. His poverty did not allow him to purchase books; and the money during the short time that Ulric received it was devoted to the purchase of classical or theological works, which he procured from Bâle. Zuinglius was now connected with the cardinal, and accordingly joined the Roman party. Schinner and Julius II at last disclosed the end which they had in view in these intrigues. Eight thousand Swiss mustered by the eloquence of the cardinal-archbishop, passed the Alps; but famine, war, and French gold obliged them to return to their mountains without glory. They brought back the usual results of these foreign wars,—distrust, licentiousness, party spirit, all sorts of violence and disorder. Citizens refused to obey their magistrates, and children their parents; agriculture and the care of their flocks were neglected; luxury and mendicity kept pace with each other; the most sacred ties were broken, and the confederation seemed on the point of being dissolved. The eyes of the young curate of Glaris were now opened, and his indignation aroused. He raised his voice aloud to warn them of the abyss into which they were about to fall. In 1510 he published his poem entitled "The Labyrinth." Behind the windings of this mysterious garden, Minos has hidden the Minotaur, that monster, half man half bull, whom he feeds on the flesh of young Athenians. "The Minotaur, … in other words," says Zuinglius, "sin, vice, irreligion, and the foreign service of the Swiss," devour the sons of his countrymen.

Theseus, a man of courage, wishes to deliver his country, but numerous obstacles arrest him;—first, a lion with one eye; this is Spain and Arragon;—then a crowned eagle, whose throat is opened to devour it; this is the empire;—then a cock, with his comb up, and calling for battle; this is France. The hero surmounts all these obstacles, gets up to the monster, stabs it, and saves his country.

"So now," exclaims the poet, "men wander in a labyrinth, but having no thread to guide them they cannot regain the light. No where is there any imitation of Jesus Christ. A little glory makes us hazard our life, torment our neighbour, rush into strife, war, and combat … One would say that the furies have escaped from the depths of hell." A Theseus, a Reformer was required. Zuinglius perceived this, and thenceforth had a presentiment of his mission. Not long after he composed an allegory with a still clearer application. In April, 1512, the confederates rose anew at the bidding of the cardinal, for the deliverance of the Church. Glaris was in the foremost rank. The whole population was brought into the field, ranged round their banner with their landaman and their pastor. Zuinglius behoved to march. The army passed the Alps, and the cardinal appeared amidst the confederates with the presents given him by the pope,—a ducal hat adorned with pearls and gold, and surmounted by the Holy Spirit, represented under the form of a dove. The Swiss escaladed the fortresses and towns, swam rivers in the presence of the enemy, unclothed, and with halberds in their hands; the French were every where put to flight; bells and trumpets resounded, and the population flocked from all quarters; the nobles supplied the army with wine and fruits in abundance; the monks and priests mounted on platforms, and proclaimed, that the

confederates were the people of God taking vengeance on the enemies of the Lord's spouse; and the pope becoming prophet, like Caiaphas of old, gave the confederates the title of "Defenders of the liberty of the Church." This sojourn of Zuinglius in Italy was not without its effect, in reference to his vocation of Reformer. On his return from this campaign, he began to study Greek, "in order," says he, "to be able to draw the doctrine of Jesus Christ from the very fountain of truth." Writing to Vadian, 23rd February, 1513, he says, "I have resolved so to apply myself to the study of Greek, that none will be able to turn me from it but God. I do it not for fame, but from love to sacred literature." At a later period, a worthy priest, who had been his school companion, having come to pay him a visit, said to him, "Master Ulric, I am assured that you are tainted with the new heresy, that you are a Lutheran." "I am not a Lutheran," said Zuinglius, "for I knew Greek before I heard of the name of Luther." To know Greek, to study the gospel in the original tongue, was, according to Zuinglius, the basis of the Reformation.

Zuinglins did more than recognise, at this early period, the great principle of evangelical Christianity—the infallible authority of the Holy Scriptures. Besides this, he understood how the meaning of the divine Word ought to be ascertained. "Those," said he, "have a very grovelling idea of the Scriptures who regard whatever seems to them at variance with their own reason as frivolous, vain, and unjust. Men have no right to bind the gospel at pleasure to their own sense, and their own interpretation."5 "Zuinglius raised his eye to heaven," said his dearest friend, "unwilling to have any other interpreter than the Holy Spirit himself."

Such, from the commencement of his career, was the man whom some have not scrupled to represent as having wished to subject the Bible to human reason. "Philosophy and theology," said he, "ceased not to raise up objections against me. I, at length, arrived at this conclusion, 'We must leave all these things, and seek our knowledge of God only in his Word.' I began," continues he, "earnestly to supplicate the Lord to give me his light, and though I read only the text of Scripture, it became far clearer to me than if I had read a host of commentators." Comparing the Scriptures with themselves and explaining passages that were obscure by such as were more clear, he soon had a thorough knowledge of the Bible, especially the New Testament.2 When Zuinglius thus turned toward the Holy Scriptures, Switzerland took her first step in the Reformation. Accordingly, when he expounded the Scriptures, every one felt that his lessons came from God, and not from man. "Work all divine!" here exlaims Oswald Myconius; "thus was the knowledge of heavenly truth restored to us!"

Zuinglius did not, however, despise the expositions of the most celebrated doctors: at a later period, he studied Origen, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Chrysostom, but not as authorities. "I study the doctors," says he, "with the same feelings with which one asks a friend, 'What do you understand by this?' " The Holy Scripture was, according to him, the touch-stone by which the most holy of the doctors were themselves to be tested.

Zuinglius's step was slow, but progressive. He did not come to the truth like Luther amid those tempests which compel the soul to seek a speedy shelter. He arrived at it by the peaceful influence of Scripture, whose power gradually gains upon the heart. Luther reached the wished-for shore across the billows of the boundless deep; Zuinglius, by allowing himself to glide along the stream. These are the two principal ways by which God leads men. Zuinglius was not fully converted to God and his gospel till the first period of his sojourn at Zurich; yet, in 1514 or 1515, at

the moment when the strong man began to bend the knee to God, praying for the understanding of his Word, the rays of that pure light by which he was afterwards illumined, first began to gleam upon him. At this period, a poem of Erasmus, in which Jesus Christ was introduced addressing man as perishing by his own fault, made a powerful impression on Zuinglius. When alone in his study, he repeated the passage in which Jesus complains that all grace is not sought from him, though he is the source of all that is good. “All!” said Zuinglius, “All!” And this word was incessantly present to his mind. “Are there then creatures, saints, from whom we ought to ask assistance? No! Christ is our only treasure.”

Zuinglius did not confine his reading to Christian writings. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the sixteenth century is the profound study of the Greek and Roman authors. The poetry of Hesiod, Homer, Pindar, enraptured him, and he has left us commentaries, or characteristics, on the two last poets. It seemed to him that Pindar spoke of his gods in such sublime strains that he must have had some presentiment of the true God. He studied Cicero and Demosthenes thoroughly, and learned from them both the art of the orator and the duties of the citizen. He called Seneca a holy man. The Swiss mountaineer loved also to initiate himself in the mysteries of nature, through the writings of Pliny. Thucydides, Sallust, Livy, Cæsar, Suetonius, Plutarch, and Tacitus, taught him to know the world. He has been censured for his enthusiastic admiration of the great men of antiquity, and it is true that some of his observations on this subject cannot be defended. But if he honoured them so much, it was because he thought he saw in them not human virtues, but the influence of the Holy Spirit. The agency of God, far from confining itself to ancient times within the limits of Palestine, extended, according to him, to the whole world. “Plato,” said he, “has also drunk at the Divine source. And if the two Catos, if Camillus, if Scipio had not been truly religious, would they have been so magnanimous?”2

Zuinglius diffused around him a love of letters. Several choice youths were trained in his school. “You offered me not only books, but also yourself,” wrote Valentine Tschudi, son of one of the heroes of the wars of Burgundy; and this young man, who at that time had already studied at Vienna and Bâle, under the most celebrated teachers, adds, “I have never met with any one who explained the classics with so much precision and profundity as yourself.” Tschudi repaired to Paris, and was able to compare the spirit which prevailed in that university, with that which he had found in the narrow Alpine valley, over which impend the gigantic peaks and eternal snows of the Dodi, the Glarnisch, the Viggis, and the Freyberg. “How frivolously,” says he, “the French youth are educated! No poison is so bad as the sophistical art in which they are trained—an art which stupifies the senses, destroys the judgment, brutifies the whole man. Man is thenceforth, like the echo, an empty sound. Ten women could not keep pace with one of these rhetoricians. In their prayers even they present their sophisms to God, (I know the fact,) and pretend, by their syllogisms, to constrain the Holy Spirit to hear them.” Such, then, were Paris and Glaris; the intellectual metropolis of Christendom, and a village of Alpine shepherds. A ray of the Divine Word gives more light than all human wisdom.

CHAP. IV

Zuinglius in regard to Erasmus—Oswald Myconius—The Vagrants—Œcolampadius—Zuinglius at Marignan—Zuinglius and Italy—Method of Zuinglius—Commencement of Reform—Discovery. A great man of this age, Erasmus, had much influence on Zuinglius, who, as soon as any of his

writings appeared, lost no time in procuring it. In 1514, Erasmus had arrived at Bâle, and been received by the bishop with marks of high esteem. All the friends of letters had immediately grouped around him. But the monarch of the schools had no difficulty in singling out him who was to be the glory of Switzerland. “I congratulate the Swiss nation,” wrote he to Zuinglius, “that by your studies and your manners, both alike excellent, you labour to polish and elevate them.” Zuinglius had a most ardent desire to see him. “Spaniards and Gauls went to Rome to see Titus Livy,” said he. He set out, and on arriving at Bâle, found a personage of about forty years of age, of small stature, a frail body, a delicate look, but a remarkably amiable and winning address.3 It was Erasmus. His affability removed the timidity of Zuinglius, while the power of his intellect overawed him. “Poor,” said Ulric to him, “as Eschines, when each of the scholars of Socrates offered a present to his master, I give you what Eschines gave—I give you myself.”

Among the literary men who formed the court of Erasmus, the Amerbachs, the Rhenans, the Frobeniuses, the Nessens, the Glareans, Zuinglius observed a youth from Lucerne, of twenty-seven years of age, named Oswald Geisshüsler. Erasmus hellenising his name, had called him Myconius. We will often designate him by his surname, to distinguish the friend of Zuinglius from Frederick Myconius, the disciple of Luther. Oswald, after studying first at Rothwyl with Berthold Haller, a young man of his own age, next at Berne, and lastly at Bâle, had in this last town been appointed rector of the school of St. Theodoret, and afterwards of that of St. Peter. The humble schoolmaster had a very limited income; but, notwithstanding, had married a young girl of a simplicity and purity of soul which won all hearts. We have already seen that Switzerland was then in a troubled state, foreign wars having stirred up violent disorders, and the soldiers having brought back to their country licentiousness and brutality. One dark and cloudy winter day, some of these rude men, in Oswald’s absence, attacked his quiet dwelling. They knocked at the door, threw stones, and applied the grossest expressions to his modest spouse. At last they burst open the windows, and having forced their way into the school and broken every thing to pieces, made off. Oswald arrived shortly after. His little boy, Felix, ran out to meet him crying, while his wife, unable to speak, showed signs of the greatest terror. He understood what had happened, and at that moment, hearing a noise in the street, unable to restrain himself, he seized a musket, and pursued the villains as far as the burying ground. They retreated, intending to defend themselves. Three of them rushed upon Myconius and wounded him, and, while his wound was being dressed, these wretches again attacked his house, uttering cries of fury. Oswald says no more of the matter. Such scenes frequently occurred in Switzerland at the beginning of the sixteenth century, before the Reformation had softened and disciplined manners. The integrity of Oswald Myconius, his thirst for science and virtue, brought him into connection with Zuinglius. The rector of the school of Bâle was alive to all that was grand in the curate or Glaris. Full of humility, he shunned the praises bestowed upon him by Zuinglius and Erasmus. “You schoolmasters,” often said the latter, “I esteem as highly as I do kings.” But the modest Myconius did not think so. “I only crawl along the ground,” said he. “From infancy I had always a feeling of littleness and humility.” A preacher who had arrived at Bâle about the same time as Zuinglius was attracting attention. Of a mild and pacific disposition, he led a tranquil life; slow and circumspect in conduct, his chief pleasure was to labour in his study, and produce concord among Christians. He was named John Hausschein, in Greek Œcolampadius, that is, “light of the house,” and was born of wealthy parents in Franconia, a year before Zuinglius. His pious mother longed to consecrate to literature and to God the only child whom He had left her. The father intended him first for a mercantile life, then for

law. But as Œcolampadius was returning from Bologna, where he had been studying law, the Lord, who designed to make him a lamp in the Church, called him to the study of theology. He was preaching in his native town when Capito, who had known him at Heidelberg, procured his appointment as preacher at Bâle. There he proclaimed Christ with an eloquence which filled his hearers with admiration.2 Erasmus admitted him to his intimacy. Œcolampadius was enraptured with the hours which he spent in the society of this great genius. “In the Holy Scriptures,” said the prince of literature, “one thing only ought to be sought, viz., Jesus Christ.” As a memento of his friendship he gave the young preacher the commencement of John’s Gospel. Œcolampadius often kissed this precious pledge of affection, and kept it suspended to his crucifix, “in order,” said he, “that I may always remember Erasmus in my prayers.”

Zuinglius returned to his mountains, his mind and heart full of all that he had seen and heard at Bâle. “I could not sleep,” wrote he to Erasmus, shortly after his return, “if I had not conversed for some time with you. There is nothing of which I boast so much as of having seen Erasmus.” Zuinglius had received a new impulse. Such journeys often exercise a great influence over the career of the Christian. The disciples of Zuinglius—Valentin, Jost, Louis, Peter, and Ægidius Tschudi; his friends, the land■man Æbli, the curate, Binzli of Wesen. Fridolin Brunnen, and the celebrated professor Glarean, saw with admiration how he grew in wisdom and knowledge. The old honoured him as a courageous servant of his country, and faithful pastors honoured him as a faithful servant of the Lord. Nothing was done in the district without taking his advice. All the good hoped that he would one day restore the ancient virtue of the Swiss.

Francis I, having mounted the throne and being desirous to vindicate the honour of the French name in Italy, the pope in alarm laboured to gain the cantons. Accordingly, in 1515, Ulric revisited the plains of Italy amid the phalanxes of his fellow-citizens. But the division which French intrigues produced in the army stung him to the heart. He was often seen in the middle of the camp energetically, and at the same time wisely, haranguing his hearers in full armour ready for battle. On the 8th September, five days before the battle of Marignan, he preached in the public square of Monza, where the Swiss soldiers, who remained true to their colours, had reassembled. “Had the counsels of Zuinglius been followed then and afterwards,” says Werner Steiner of Zug, “what evils would not our country have been saved!” But all ears were shut to words of concord, prudence, and submission. The vehement eloquence of Cardinal Schinner electrified the confederates, and hurried them impetuously to the fatal field of Marignan. There fell the flower of the Helvetic youth. Zuinglius, who had been unable to prevent all these disasters, threw himself, for the cause of Rome, into the midst of danger. His hand seized the sword. Sad error of Zuinglius! A minister of Christ, he more than once forgot that it was his duty to fight only with spiritual weapons, and he was to see in his own person a striking fulfilment of our Saviour’s prophecy, He who takes the sword shall perish by the sword.

Zuinglius and his Swiss had been unable to save Rome. The ambassador of venice was the first in the pontifical city who received news of the defeat of Marignan. Delighted, he repaired at an early hour to the Vatican. The pope came out of his apartment half dressed to give him an audience. Leo X, on learning the news, did not disguise his terror. At this moment of alarm he saw only Francis I, and hoped only in him. “Ambassador,” said he trembling to Zorsi, “we must throw ourselves into the arms of the king, and cry for mercy.” Luther and Zuinglius in their danger knew another arm, and invoked another mercy. This second sojourn in Italy was not without use to

Zuinglius. He observed the differences between the Ambrosian ritual used at Milan and that of Rome. He collected and compared together the most ancient canons of the mass. In this way a spirit of enquiry was developed in him even amid the tumult of camps. At the same time the sight of his countrymen led away beyond the Alps, and given up, like cattle, to the slaughter, filled him with indignation. “The flesh of the confederates,” it was said, “is cheaper than that of their oxen and their calves.” The disloyalty and ambition of the pope, the avarice and ignorance of the priests, the licentiousness and dissipation of the monks, the pride and luxury of prelates, the corruption and venality employed on all hands to win the Swiss, being forced on his view more strongly than ever, made him still more alive to the necessity of a reform in the Church. From this time Zuinglius preached the Word of God more clearly. In explaining the portions of the gospel and epistles selected for public worship, he always compared Scripture with Scripture. He spoke with animation and force,2 and followed with his hearers the same course which God was following with him. He did not, like Luther, proclaim the sores of the Church; but as often as the study of the Bible suggested some useful instruction to himself, he communicated it to his hearers. He tried to make them receive the truth into their hearts, and then trusted to it for the works which it behoved to produce. “If they understand what is true,” thought he, “they will discern what is false.” This maxim is good at the commencement of a Reformation, but a time comes when error must be boldly stigmatised. This Zuinglius knew very well. “The spring,” said he, “is the season to sow;” and with him it was now spring.

Zuinglius has marked out this period (1516) as the commencement of the Swiss Reformation. In fact, if four years before he had bent his head over the Word of God, he now raised it, and turned it toward his people, to make them share in the light which he had found. This forms a new and important epoch in the history of the development of the religious revolution of those countries, but it has been erroneously concluded, from these dates, that the Reformation of Zuinglius preceded that of Luther. It may be that Zuinglius preached the gospel a year before Luther’s Theses, but Luther himself preached it four years before these famous propositions. Had Luther and Zuinglius confined themselves merely to sermons, the Reformation would not have so quickly gained ground in the Church. Neither Luther nor Zuinglius was the first monk or the first priest who preached a purer doctrine than that of the schoolmen. But Luther was the first who publicly, and with indomitable courage, raised the standard of truth against the empire of error, called general attention to the fundamental doctrine of the gospel—salvation by grace, introduced his age to that new career of knowledge, faith, and life, out of which a new world has arisen; in a word, began a true and salutary revolution. The great struggle, of which the Theses of 1517 were the signal, was truly the birth-throe of the Reformation, giving it at once both a body and a soul. Luther was the first Reformer. A spirit of enquiry began to breathe on the mountains of Switzerland. One day the curate of Glaris, happening to be in the smiling district of Mollis, with Adam its curate, Bunzli, curate of Wesen, and Varachon, curate of Kerensen, these friends discovered an old liturgy, in which they read these words: “After baptising the child, we give him the sacrament of the Eucharist and the cup of blood.” “Then,” said Zuinglius, “the supper was at that period dispensed in our churches under the two kinds.” The liturgy was about two hundred years old. This was a great disvery for these priests of the Alps. The defeat of Marignan had important results in the interior of the cantons. The conqueror, Francis I, lavished gold and flattery in order to gain the confederates, while the emperor besought them by their honour, by the tears of widows and orphans, and the blood of their brethren, not to sell themselves to their murderers. The French party gained the

ascendancy at Glaris, which, from that time, was an uncomfortable residence to Ulric.

Zuinglius, at Glaris, might perhaps have remained a man of the world. Party intrigues, political questions, the empire, France, or the Duke of Milan, might have absorbed his whole life. Those whom God means to prepare for great services he never leaves amid the turmoil of the world. He leads them apart, and places them in a retreat where they commune with Him and their own consciences, and receive lessons never to be effaced. The Son of God himself, who in this was a type of the training given to his servants, spent forty days in the desert. It was time to remove Zuinglius from political movements, which, continually pressing upon his thoughts, might have banished the Spirit of God from them. It was time to train him for another stage than that on which courtiers, cabinets, and parties move, and where he should have wasted powers worthy of nobler employment. His country, indeed, needed something else. It was necessary that a new life should now come down from heaven, and that he who was to be the instrument in communicating it should unlearn worldly things, in order to learn things above. The two spheres are entirely distinct; a wide space separates these two worlds, and before passing entirely from the one to the other, Zuinglius was to sojourn for a time on neutral ground, in a kind of intermediate and preparatory state, to be there taught of God. God accordingly took him away from the factions of Glaris; and, with a view to this noviciate, placed him in the solitude of a hermitage—confining within the narrow walls of an abbey this noble germ of the Reformation, which was shortly after to be transplanted to a better soil, and cover the mountains with its shadow.

CHAP. V

Meinrad of Hohenzollern—Our Lady of Einsidlen—Calling of Zuinglius—The Abbot—Geroldsek—Companionship in Study—The Bible copied—Zuinglius and Superstition—First Opposition to Error—Sensation—Hedio—Zuinglius and the Legates—The Honours of Rome—The Bishop of Constance—Samson and Indulgences—Stapfer—Charity of Zuinglius—His Friends.

Meinrad of Hohenzollern, a German monk, about the middle of the ninth century, wandering on till he came between the lakes of Zurich and Wallstetten, had stopped upon a hill, resting on an amphitheatre of firs, and there built a cell. Banditti imbrued their hands in the blood of the saint. The bloody cell was long deserted, but towards the end of the tenth century, a convent and a church, in honour of the Virgin, were erected on the sacred spot. On the eve of the day of consecration, when the Bishop of Constance and his priests were at prayers in the church, a celestial chant, proceeding from invisible voices, suddenly echoed through the chapel. They prostrated themselves and listened in amaze. The next day, when the bishop was going to consecrate the chapel, a voice repeated thrice, “Stop, brother, stop! God himself has consecrated it!” It was said, that Christ in person had blessed it during the night, that the chant which they had heard proceeded from angels, apostles, and saints, and that the Virgin, standing upon the altar, had blazed forth like a flash of lightning. A bull of Pope Leo VII forbade the faithful to question the truth of this legend. Thenceforward an immense crowd of pilgrims ceased not to repair to Our Lady of the Eremites to the “consecration of angels.” Delphi and Ephesus, in ancient, and Loretto in modern times, alone have equalled the fame of Einsidlen. It was in this strange place that, in 1516, Ulric Zuinglius was called as priest and preacher.

Zuinglius hesitated not. “Neither ambition nor avarice takes me there,” said he; “but the intrigues of the French.” Higher motives determined him. On the one hand, having more solitude, more calmness, and, a less extensive parish, he could devote more time to study and meditation; on the other hand, this place of pilgrimage would give him facilities for spreading the knowledge of Jesus Christ to the remotest countries. The friends of evangelical preaching at Glaris expressed deep grief. “What worse could happen to Glaris,” said Peter Tschudi, one of the most distinguished citizens of the canton, “than to be deprived of so great a man.” His parishioners finding him immovable, resolved to leave him the title of pastor of Glaris, with part of the benefice, and the means of returning when he chose.3

Conrad of Rechberg, a gentleman of ancient family, grave, candid, intrepid, and occasionally somewhat rude, was one of the most celebrated sportsmen of the district to which Zuinglius was removed. He had established on one of his farms a manêge in which he reared a breed of horses which became celebrated in Italy. Such was the abbot of our Lady of the Eremites. Rechberg was equally averse to the pretensions of Rome and the discussions of theologians. One day, during a visitation of the Order, some observations were made to him. “I am master here, not you,” said he, somewhat rudely; “get along.” One day at table when Leo Juda was discussing some difficult point with the administrator of the convent, the hunting abbot exclaimed, “You, there, leave your disputes to me. I exclaim with David, ‘Have pity on me, O God, according to thy goodness, and enter not into judgment with thy servant.’ I have no need to know any more.”

Baron Theobald of Geroldsek was administrator of the monastery. He was is of a meek spirit, sincerely pious, and had a great love of literature. His favourite design was to form a society of well-informed men in his convent; and it was for this reason he had given a call to Zuinglius. Eager for instruction and reading, he begged his new friend to direct him. “Read the Holy Scriptures,” replied Zuinglius, “and that you may the better understand them, study Jerome. However,” added he, “the time will come, (and, by God’s help, it is not far off,) when Christians will not set a high value either on Jerome or any other doctor, but only on the word of God. The conduct of Geroldsek gave indication of his progress in the faith. He allowed the nuns of a convent dependent on Einsidlen to read the Bible in the vulgar tongue; and, some years after, Geroldsek came to live at Zurich beside Zuinglius, and to die with him on the field of Cappel. The charm which hung about Zuinglius soon united him in tender friendship, not only with Geroldsek, but also the chaplain Zink, the excellent Œxlin, and other inmates of the abbey. These studious men, far from the noise of party, joined together in reading the Scriptures, the Fathers of the Church, the master-pieces of antiquity, and the writings of the restorers of letters. This interesting society was often enlarged by friends from a distance. Among others, Capito one day arrived at Einsidlen. The two old friends of Bâle walked together over the convent and the wild scenery in its neighbourhood, absorbed in conversation, examining the Scriptures, and seeking to know the Divine will. There was a point on which they were agreed, and it was this—“The pope of Rome must fall.” At this time Capito was more courageous than he was at a later period.

Repose, leisure, books, friends—all these Zuinglius had in this tranquil retreat—and he accordingly grew in understanding and in faith. At this period (May, 1517) he commenced a work which was of great utility to him. As in old time the kings of Israel wrote the law of God with their own hand, so Zuinglius with his copied the Epistles of St. Paul. The only editions of the New Testament then in existence were of large size, and Zuinglius wished to have one which he could

carry about with him. These Epistles he learned by heart, as he did afterwards the other books of the New, and a part of the Old Testament. Thus his heart became always more attached to the sovereign authority of the Word of God. He was not satisfied with merely acknowledging this; he was, moreover, desirous to bring his life into true subjection to it. His views gradually became more decidedly Christian. The end for which he had been brought into this desert was accomplished. It is no doubt true that Zurich is the place where his whole soul became thoroughly pervaded with Christian principle; but even now at Einsidlen he made decided progress in the work of sanctification. At Glaris he had taken part in the amusements of the world; at Einsidlen he was more anxious for a life unsullied by any taint of worldliness. Beginning to have a better idea of the great spiritual interests of the people, he gradually learned what God designed to teach him.

Providence had also other views in bringing him to Einsidlen. Here he obtained a nearer view of the superstitions and abuses which had invaded the Church. An image of the Virgin which was carefully preserved in this monastery, had, it was said, the power of working miracles. Above the gate of the Abbey appeared this presumptuous inscription:—“Here is obtained a plenary remission of all sins.” A multitude of pilgrims flocked to Einsidlen from all parts of Christendom, to merit this grace by their pilgrimage. The church, the abbey, and the whole valley were crowded with devout worshippers on the festivals of the Virgin. But it was especially at the grand festival of “the consecration of the angels,” that the hermitage was crowded to overflowing. Thousands of individuals of both sexes climbed the acclivity of the hill leading to the oratory, singing hymns and counting their beads. These devout pilgrims crowded into the Church, thinking they were there nearer God than any where else. The residence of Zuinglius at Einsidlen was, in regard to the exposure of papal abuses, similar in effect to Luther’s visit to Rome. Zuinglius’ education for reformer was completed at Einsidlen. God alone is the source of salvation, and he is so every where,—these were the two truths which he learned at Einsidlen, and they became fundamental articles in his creed. The serious impression produced on his soul soon manifested itself externally. Struck with the many prevailing evils, he resolved to oppose them boldly. Not hesitating between his conscience and his interest, he stood up openly, and, in plain and energetic terms, attacked the superstition of the surrounding crowds: “Think not,” said he from the pulpit, “that God is in this temple more than in any other part of his creation. Whatever be the country in which you dwell, God encompasses you, and hears you as well as in our Lady of Einsidlen. Can useless works, long pilgrimages, offerings, images, the invocation of the Virgin, or the saints, obtain the grace of God?… What avails the multitude of words in which we embody our prayers? What avails a glossy hood—a head well shaven—a long robe with its neat folds, and mules caparisoned with gold? God looks to the heart, but our heart is alienated from God.” But Zuinglius wished to do more than lift his voice against superstition. He wished to satisfy that eager longing for reconciliation with God, felt by many of the pilgrims who had flocked to the chapel of our Lady of Einsidlen. “Christ,” cried he, like a John Baptist in this new wilderness of Judea, “Christ, who was once offered on the cross, is the expiatory victim, who, even through eternity, makes satisfaction for the sins of all believers.” Thus Zuinglius advanced. The day when this bold sermon was heard in the most venerated sanctuary of Switzerland, the standard prepared against Rome began to be more distinctly displayed on its mountain heights, and there was, so to speak, a heaving of reform reaching even to their deepest foundations. In fact, universal astonishment seized the multitude on hearing the discourse of the eloquent priest. Some walked off in horror; others hesitated between the faith of their fathers and the doctrine fitted to secure their peace, while several came to Jesus

Christ who was thus preached to them, and finding rest to their souls, took back the tapers which they had intended to present to the Virgin. A crowd of pilgrims returned to their homes, announcing every where what they had heard at Einsidlen. “Christ alone saves, and saves everywhere.” Bands, astonished at what they heard, stopped short without finishing their pilgrimage. The worshippers of Mary diminished from day to day. Their offerings formed almost the whole income of Zuinglius and Geroldsek; but the intrepid witness of the truth felt happy to be impoverished in order that souls might be spiritually enriched.

During the feast of Pentecost, in the year 1518, among the numerous hearers of Zuinglius, was a learned man of meek temper and active charity, named Gaspard Hedio, doctor of theology at Bâle. Zuinglius preached on the cure of the paralytic, (Luke 5:1-39) where our Saviour declares, “The Son of Man hath power upon earth to forgive sins,” words well fitted to strike the crowd assembled in the Church of the Virgin. The preacher roused, enraptured, and inflamed his audience, especially the doctor from Bâle. A long time after, Hedio expressed his high admiration; “How beautiful,” said he, “this discourse, how profound, weighty, complete, penetrating, and evangelical; how much it reminds one of the ενεργειυ (energy) of the ancient doctors. From that moment Hedio admired and loved Zuinglius.3 He would fain have gone to him, and opened his heart; he wandered around the abbey but durst not approach, kept back, as he expresses it, by a superstitious timidity. He again mounted his horse and slowly retired from our Lady, ever and again turning his head to the spot which contained so great a treasure, and feeling in his heart the keenest regret.

Thus Zuinglius preached; less forcibly, no doubt, than Luther, but with more moderation, and not less success. He did nothing precipitately, and did not come so violently into collision with men’s minds as the Saxon Reformer; he expected every thing from the power of truth. He displayed the same wisdom in his relations with the heads of the Church. Far from immediately declaring himself their enemy, he long remained their friend. They were exceedingly indulgent to him, not only because of his learning and talents, (Luther had the same claims to the regard of the bishops of Mentz and Brandenburg,) but especially because of his attachment to the pope’s political party, and the influence possessed by such a man as Zuinglius in a republican state. In fact, several cantons, disgusted with the service of the pope, were disposed to break with him But the legates flattered themselves they might retain several of them by gaining Zuinglius, as they gained Erasmus, with pensions and honours. At this time the legates, Ennius and Pucci, went frequently to Einsidlen, where from its proximity to the democratic cantons, it was more easy to carry on negotiations with them. But Zuinglius, far from sacrificing the truth to the demands and offers of Rome, omitted no opportunity of defending the gospel. The famous Schinner, who had then some disturbance in his diocese, passed some time at Einsidlen. “The whole papacy,” said Zuinglius one day, “rests on a bad foundation. Put your hand to the work, remove errors and abuses, or you will see the whole edifice crumble to pieces with fearful uproar”2

He spoke with the same frankness to legate Pucci. Four times did he return to the charge. “With the help of God,” said he to him, “I will continue to preach the gospel, and this preaching will shake Rome.” Then he pointed out to him what was necessary to save the Church. Pucci promised every thing, but did nothing. Zuinglius declared that he renounced the pension from the pope. The legate entreated him to retain it; and Zuinglius, who at that time had no thought of placing himself in open hostility to the head of the Church, consented for three years to receive it. “But think not,” added

he, “that for the love of money I retrench a single syllable of the truth.” Pucci, alarmed, made the Reformer be appointed chaplain acolyte to the pope. It was an avenue to new honours. Rome thought to frighten Luther by sentences of condemnation, and to win Zuinglius by favours—darting her excommunications at the one, and displaying her gold and magnificence to the other. She thus endeavoured, by two different methods, to attain the same end, and silence the bold lips which dared, in spite of the pope, to proclaim the Word of God in Germany and Switzerland. The latter method was the more skilful, but neither of them succeeded. The enfranchised souls of the preachers of truth were equally inaccessible to menace and favour.

Another Swiss prelate, Hugo of Landenberg, bishop of Constance, at this time gave some hopes to Zuinglius. He ordered a general visitation of the churches. But Landenberg, a man of no character, allowed himself to be led alternately by Faber, his vicar, and by an abandoned female, from whose sway he was unable to escape. He occasionally appeared to honour the gospel, and yet any one who preached it boldly was in his eyes only a disturber. He was one of those men too common in the Church, who, though loving truth better than error, have more indulgence for error than for truth, and often end by turning against those with whom they ought to make common cause. Zuinglius applied to him, but in vain. He was to have the same experience which Luther had; to be convinced that it was useless to invoke the heads of the Church, and that the only method of restoring Christianity was to act as a faithful teacher of the Word of God. An opportunity of doing so soon occurred. In August, 1518, a Franciscan monk was seen travelling on the heights of St. Gothard, in those lofty passes which have been laboriously cut across the steep rocks separating Switzerland from Italy. Having come forth from an Italian convent, he was the bearer of papal indulgences which he was commissioned to sell to the good Christians of the Helvetic league. Brilliant success, obtained under two preceding popes, had signalised his exertions in this shameful traffic. Companions, intended to puff off the merchandise which he was going to sell, were accompanying him across mountains of snow and ice coeval with the world. This avaricious band, in appearance miserable enough, and not unlike a band of adventurers roaming for plunder, walked in silence, amid the noise of the foaming torrents which give rise to the Rhine, the Reuss, the Aar, the Rhone, the Tessino, and other rivers, meditating how they were to plunder the simple population of Helvetia. Samson (this was the Franciscan’s name) and his company first arrived in Uri, and there commenced their traffic. They had soon done with these poor peasants, and passed into the canton of Schwitz. Here Zuinglius was, and here the combat between these two servants of two very different masters was to take place. “I can pardon all sins,” said the Italian monk, the Tezel of Switzerland. “Heaven and hell are subject to my power, and I sell the merits of Jesus Christ to whoever will purchase them, by paying in cash for an indulgence.”

Zuinglius heard of these discourses, and his zeal was inflamed.

He preached powerfully against them. “Jesus Christ, the Son of God,” said he, “thus speaks, ‘Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will gve you rest.’ Is it not then audacious folly and insensate temerity to say on the contrary, Purchase letters of indulgence! run to Rome! give to the monks! sacrifice to the priests! If you do these things I will absolve you from your sins! Jesus Christ is the only offering; Jesus Christ is the only sacrifice; Jesus Christ is the only way.”2

Every body at Schwitz began to call Samson rogue and cheat. He took the road to Zug, and for this time the two champions failed to meet.

Scarcely had Samson left Schwitz when a citizen of this canton, named Stapfer, a man of distinguished talent, and afterward secretary of state, was with his family reduced to great distress. “Alas,” said he, when applying in agony to Zuinglius, “I know not how to satisfy my own hunger and the hunger of my poor children.” Zuinglius knew to give where Rome knew to take; he was as ready to practise good works, as to combat those who taught that they were the means of obtaining salvation. He daily gave liberally to Stapfer.4 “It is God,” said he, anxious not to take any glory to himself, “It is God who begets charity in the believer, and gives him at once the thought, the resolution, and the work itself. Whatever good a righteous man does it is God who does it by his own power.” Stapfer remained attached to him through life; and, four years after, when he had become secretary of state, and felt wants of a higher kind, he turned towards Zuinglius, and said to him with noble candour, “Since you provided for my temporal wants, how much more may I now expect from you wherewith to appease the hunger of my soul!” The friends of Zuinglius increased. Not only at Glaris, Bâle, and Schwitz, did he find men of like spirit with himself; in Uri there was the secretary of state, Schmidt; at Zug, Colin Müller and Werner Steiner, his old companions in arms at Marignan: at Lucerne, Xylotect and Kilchmeyer; Wittembach at Berne, and many others in many other places. But the curate of Einsidlen had no more devoted friend than Oswald Myconius. Oswald had quitted Bâle in 1516, to take charge of the cathedral school at Zurich. In this town there were no learned men, and no schools of learning. Oswald laboured along with some well-disposed individuals, among others, Utinger, notary to the pope, to raise the Zurich population out of ignorance and initiate them in ancient literature. At the same time he defended the immutable truth of the Holy Scriptures, and declared that if the pope or emperor gave commands contrary to the gospel, obedience was due to God alone, who is above both emperor and pope.

CHAP. VI

Zurich—The College of Canons—Election to the Cathedral—Fable—Accusations—Confession of Zuinglius—The Designs of God Unfolded—Farewell to Einsidlen—Arrival at Zurich—Courageous Declaration of Zuinglius—First Sermons—Effects—Opposition—Character of Zuinglius—Taste for Music—Arrangement of the Day—Circulation by Hawkers.

Seven centuries had elapsed since Charlemagne had attached a college of canons to this cathedral, over whose school Oswald Myconius then presided. These canons having degenerated from their first institution, and desiring in their benefices to enjoy the sweets of indolence, elected a priest to preach and take the cure of souls. This situation having become vacant some time after Oswald’s arrival, he immediately thought of his friend. What a prize it would be for Zurich! Zuinglius’ appearance was prepossessing. He was a handsome man, of graceful address, and pleasing manners. His eloquence had already given him celebrity, while the lustre of his genius made him conspicuous among all the confederates. Myconius spoke of him to the provost of the chapter, Felix Frey, (who from the appearance and talents of Zuinglius was already prepossessed in his favour,)2 to Utinger, an old man who was held in high respect, and to canon Hoffman, a man of an upright open disposition, who, having long preached against foreign service, was favourably inclined to Ulric. Other Zurichers had, on different occasions, heard Zuinglius at Einsidlen, and had returned full of admiration. The election of preacher to the cathedral soon set all the inhabitants of

Zurich in motion. Different parties were formed. Several laboured night and day for the election of the eloquent preacher of Our Lady of the Eremites. Myconius having informed his friend—“Wednesday next,” replied Zuinglius, “I will come and dine at Zurich, and talk over matters.” He accordingly arrived. A canon to whom he was paying a visit said to him, “Could you come among us to preach the word of God?” “I could,” replied he; “but will not come unless I am called.” He then returned to his abbey. This visit spread alarm in the camp of his enemies. Several priests were urged to apply for the vacancy. A Suabian, named Laurent Fable, even preached as a candidate, and the rumour went that he was elected. “It is then quite true,” said Zuinglius, on learning it, “that a prophet has no honour in his own country, since a Suabian is preferred to a Swiss. I know what value to set on popular applause.” Zuinglius immediately after received a letter from the secretary of Cardinal Schinner, informing him, that the election had not taken place. But the false news which he had at first received nettled the curate of Einsidlen. Knowing that a person so unworthy as this Fable aspired to the place, he was more desirous to obtain it for himself, and wrote about it to Myconius, who next day replied, “Fable will always continue fable: my masters have learned that he is already the father of six boys, and possesses I know not how many benefices.”2 The enemies of Zuinglius did not abandon their opposition. All, it is true, agreed in extolling his learning to the skies; but said some, “He is too fond of music;” others, “He loves the world and pleasure;” others again, “In early life he was too closely connected with giddy companions.” There was even one individual who charged him with an instance of seduction. Zuinglius was not without blemish. Though superior to the ecclesiastics of his time he more than once, in the first years of his ministry, gave way to youthful Propensities. It is difficult to estimate the influence of an impure atmosphere on those who live in it. There were in the papacy certain established irregularities, allowed and sanctioned as conformable to the laws of nature. A saying of Ænсas Sylvius, afterwards pope under the name of Pius II, gives an idea of the sad state of public morals at this period. We give it in a note.4 Disorder had become the rule, order the exception.

Oswald displayed the greatest activity in favour of his friend. He exerted all his powers in defending him, and happily succeeded. He went to burgomaster Roust, to Hoffman, Frey, and Utinger. He praised Zuinglius for his probity, honesty, and purity, and confirmed the Zurichers in the favourable opinion which they had of the curate of Einsidlen. Little credit was given to the speeches of his adversaries. The most influential persons said, that Zuinglius should be preacher at Zurich. The canons said so also, but in a whisper. “Hope,” wrote Oswald to him with a full heart, “for I hope.” At the same time he told him of the accusations of his enemies. Although Zuinglius was not yet become altogether a new man, he belonged to the class of those whose conscience is awakened, and who may fall into sin, but never without a struggle, or without remorse. It had often been his resolution to stand alone in the midst of the world, and maintain a life of holiness. But when he saw himself accused, he did not pretend to boast that he was without sin. Writing to canon Utinger, he said. “Having nobody to go along with me in the resolutions which I had formed, several even of those about me, being offended at them, alas! I fell, and like the dog of whom St. Peter speaks, (2 Peter 2:22) returned to my vomit. Ah! God knows with what shame and anguish I have torn up these faults from the depths of my heart, and laid them before Almighty God, to whom, however, I would be less afraid to confess my misery than to mortal man.”2 But while Zuinglius confessed himself to be a sinner, he, at the same time vindicated himself from the most offensive charges which were brought against him. He declared that he had ever abhorred the

idea of invading the sanctity of married life, or seducing innocence,—vices at that time but too common. “or the truth of this,” says he, “I appeal to all with whom I have lived.”4 The election took place on the 11th December, and out of the twenty-four votes which were given, Zuinglius had seventeen. It was time that the Reformation should begin in Switzerland. The chosen instrument which Divine Providence had been preparing during three years in the retreat of Einsidlen, was ready and must now be translated elsewhere. God, who had chosen the new university of Wittemberg, situated in the heart of Germany, and under the protection of the wisest of princes, to call Luther thither, made choice in Switzerland of the city of Zurich, regarded as the head of the confederation, there to station Zuinglius, and to bring him into contact not only with one of the most intelligent, simple, resolute, and intrepid communities of Switzerland, but also with all the cantons which are grouped around this ancient and powerful state. The hand which had taken hold of a young shepherd of Sentis, and led him to the school of Wesen, now brought him forward, powerful in word and in deed, in the face of all, to regenerate his countrymen. Zurich was about to become a focus of light to Switzerland. The day which announced the election of Zuinglius was to Einsidlen a day at once of joy and grief. The circle which had been formed there was about to be broken up by the withdrawal of its most valuable member, and who could say whether superstition was not going again to take possession of this ancient place of pilgrimage?… The council of state in Schwitz conveyed the expression of its sentiments to Ulric by designating him as “reverend, learned, most gracious master, and good friend.” “At least do you yourself give us a successor worthy of you,” said Geroldsek in despair to Zuinglius. “I have got for you,” replied he, “a little lion, simple and wise; a man initiated in the mysteries of sacred science.” “Let me have him,” immediately rejoined the administrator. It was Leo Juda, at once the gentle and intrepid friend with whom Zuinglius had been so intimate at Bâle. Leo accepted the call which brought him near his dear Ulric. Ulric took farewell of his friends, quitted the solitude of Einsidlen, and arrived at that delightful spot where, smiling and instinct with life, rises the town of Zurich, surrounded by its amphitheatre of vine-clad hills, enamelled with meadows and orchards, crowned with forests, and overtopped by the lofty peaks of the Albis.

Zurich, the centre of the political interests of Switzerland, where the most influential persons in the nation frequently assembled, was the place best fitted to act upon the whole country, and shed the seeds of truth over all its cantons. Accordingly, the friends of letters and the Bible hailed the appointment of Zuinglius with acclamation. At Paris, in particular, the Swiss students, who were there in great numbers, were enraptured with the news. But if Zuinglius had the prospect of a great victory at Zurich, he had also the prospect of a severe contest. Glarean wrote him from Paris, “I foresee that your learning will stir up great enmity;3 but be of good courage, and you will, like Hercules, subdue monsters.” On the 27th December, 1518, Zuinglius arrived at Zurich, and took up his quarters at the hotel of Einsidlen. He received a cordial and honourable welcome. The chapter immediately met to receive him, and invited him to take his seat in the midst of them. Felix Frey presided; the canons, friendly or hostile to Zuinglius, sat indiscriminately around their provost. There was considerable excitement in the meeting; every one felt, perhaps without distinctly acknowledging it to himself, how serious the commencement of this ministry was likely to prove. Some apprehension being entertained of the innovating spirit of the young priest, it was agreed to set before him the most important duties of his office. “You will use your utmost endeavour,” he was gravely told, “to secure payment of the revenues of the chapter, without neglecting the least of them. You will exhort the faithful both from the pulpit and in the confessional, to pay the first fruits

and tithes, and to show by their offerings that they love the Church. You will make it your business to increase the revenues which are derived from the sick, from sacrifices, and generally from every ecclesiastical act." The chapter added, "As to the administration of the sacraments, preaching, and personal presence, amid the flock, these too are duties of the priest. However, in these different respects, and particularly in regard to preaching, you may supply your place by a vicar. You should administer the sacraments only to persons of distinction, and after being requested. You are expressly forbidden to do it to all persons indiscriminately."

Strange rule to be given to Zuinglius! Money, money, still money!… Was it then for this that Christ established his ministry? Still prudence tempers his zeal; he knows that we cannot all at once deposit the seed in the ground, see the growth of the tree, and gather its fruit. Zuinglius, therefore, without explaining his views on what was enjoined him, humbly expressed his gratitude for the honourable appointment which he had received, and stated what he calculated on being able to do. "The life of Jesus," said he, "has been too long hidden from the people. I will preach on the whole gospel of St. Matthew, chapter by chapter, following the mind of the Holy Spirit, drawing only at the wellsprings of Scripture, digging deep into it, and seeking the understanding of it by persevering fervent prayer.3 I will consecrate my ministry to the glory of God; the praise of His only Son; the real salvation of souls, and their instruction in the true faith." This new language made a deep impression on the chapter. Some expressed joy, but the majority openly disapproved.5 "This mode of preaching is an innovation," exclaimed they, "this innovation will soon lead to others, and where is it to stop?" Canon Hoffman in particular thought it his duty to prevent the fatal effects of a choice which he had himself patronised. "This exposition of Scripture," said he, "will be more hurtful than useful to the people." "It is not a new method," replied Zuinglius, "it is the ancient method. Recollect the homilies of St. Chrysostom on St. Matthew, and of St. Augustine on St. John. Besides, I will use moderation, and give none any reason to complain."

Thus Zuinglius abandoned the exclusive use of fragments of the gospel as practised since the days of Charlemagne; re-establishing the Scripture in its ancient rights, he, from the commencement of his ministry, united the Reformation to the primitive ages of Christianity, and prepared a more profound study of the Word of God for ages to come. But he did more. The strong and independent position which he took up in the face of the Church showed that the work in which he had engaged was new. The figure of the Reformer stood out in bold relief to the public eye, and the Reformation advanced.

Hoffman, having failed in the chapter, addressed a written request to the provost to prohibit Zuinglius from shaking the popular, belief. The provost sent for the new preacher, and spoke to him with great kindness. But no human power could close his lips. On the 31st December, he wrote to the council of Glaris, that he entirely resigned the cure of souls which had hitherto been reserved for him, and gave himself wholly to Zurich, and to the work which God was preparing for him in this town. On Saturday, being new-year's-day, and also the birthday of Zuinglius, who had completed his thirty-fifth year, he mounted the pulpit of the cathedral. A great crowd, eager to see a man who had already acquired so much celebrity, and to hear this new gospel, of which every one began to speak, filled the church. "It is to Christ," said Zuinglius, "that I wish to conduct you; to Christ, the true source of salvation. His divine word is the only nourishment which I would give to your heart and life." Then he announced that to-morrow, the first Sunday of the year, he would begin to expound the gospel according to St. Matthew. Accordingly, the preacher, and a still larger

audience than the day before, were at their posts. Zuinglius opened the gospel—the gospel which had so long been a sealed book—and read the first page, going over the history of the patriarchs and prophets mentioned in the-first chapter of St. Matthew, and expounding it in such a way that all were astonished and delighted, and exclaimed, “We never heard anything like this.”

He continued thus to expound St. Matthew, according to the original Greek. He showed how the whole Bible found at once its exposition and its application in the very nature of man. Delivering the loftiest truths of the gospel in simple language, his preaching reached all classes, the learned and the wise, as well as the ignorant and simple. He extolled the infinite mercies of God the Father, and implored all his hearers to put their confidence m Jesus Christ alone as the only Saviour.2 At the same time, he earnestly called them to repentance; forcibly attacked the errors which prevailed among the people; fearlessly rebuked luxury, intemperance, extravagance in dress, the oppression of the poor, idleness, foreign service, and foreign pensions. “In the pulpit,” says one of his companions, “he spared no one, pope, emperor, kings, dukes, princes, lords, not even the confederates. All his energy, and all the joy of his heart were in God: accordingly he exhorted all the inhabitants of Zurich to put their confidence in Him only.” “Never was man heard to speak with so much authority,” says Oswald Myconius, who with joy and high hopes watched the labours of his friend. The gospel could not be preached in vain in Zurich. A continually increasing multitude of men of all classes, and more especially of the common people, flocked to hear him. Several Zurichers had ceased to attend on public worship. “I derive no benefit from the discourses of these priests,” often exclaimed Füsslin, a poet, historian, and counsellor of state; “they do not preach the things of salvation; for they do not comprehend them. I see nothing in them but covetousness and voluptuousness. Henry Räuschlin, treasurer of state, one who diligently read the Scriptures, was of the same opinion: “The priests,” said he, met in thousands at the Council of Constance … to burn the best man among them.” These distinguished men, led by curiosity, went to hear Zuinglius’ first sermon. Their countenances bespoke the emotion with which they followed the orator. “Glory to God!” said they, on coming out; “this is a preacher of the truth. He will be our Moses to deliver us from Egyptian darkness.”5 From this moment they became the Reformer’s intimate friends. “Powers of the world,” said Füsslin, “cease to proscribe the doctrine of Christ! After Christ the Son of God was put to death, sinners were raised up. And now, should you destroy the preachers of truth, you will see their places supplied by glaziers, carpenters, potters, founders, shoemakers, and tailors, who will teach with power.” In Zurich, at the outset, there was only one shout of admiration, but when the first moment of enthusiasm was over, the adversary resumed courage. Worthy persons alarmed at the idea of a Reformation, gradually drew off from Zuinglius. The violence of the monks which had been veiled for an instant, reappeared, and the college of canons resounded with complaints. Zuinglius stood immovable. His friends beholding his courage, felt in his presence as if a man of apostolic times had reappeared. Among his enemies, some scoffed and jeered; others uttered insulting menaces, but he endured all with Christian patience.2 “Whoso,” he was wont to say, “would gain the wicked to Jesus Christ must wink at many things,”—an admirable saying which ought not to be lost sight of. His character and general bearing towards all contributed as much as his discourses to win their hearts. He was at once a true Christian and a true republican. The equality of mankind was not with him a mere watchword; it was written on his heart and manifested in his life. He had neither that pharisaical pride, nor that monastic gruffness, which are equally offensive to the simple and the wise of the world. Men were drawn towards him, and felt at case when conversing with him. Strong and mighty in the pulpit, he

was affable to all whom he met in the streets, or in the public squares. At the places where the merchants or incorporations met he was often seen among the citizens expounding the leading points of Christian doctrine, or conversing familiarly with them. He gave the same cordial reception to peasant and patrician. “He invited country folks to dine with him,” says one of his bitterest enemies, “walked with them, spoke to them of God, made the devil enter into their hearts and his writings into their pockets. He even went so far that the leading persons in Zurich visited those peasants, entertained them, and walked over the town with them, showing them all sorts of attention.”

He continued to cultivate music “with moderation,” says Bullinger: nevertheless the enemies of the gospel took advantage of it, and called him “The evangelical flute and lute player.” Faber having one day reproached him with his fondness for music, Zuinglius, with noble candour, replied, “My dear Faber, you know not what music is. I have, it is true, learned to play on the lute, the violin, and other instruments, and am able by these means to pacify little Children; but you of course are too holy for music. Do you not know that David was a skilful player on the harp, and in this way drove the evil spirit out of Saul?… Ah! if you knew the sound of the heavenly lute, the evil spirit of ambition and avarice by which you are possessed would come out of you also.” Perhaps this was Zuinglius’ foible, though it was in a spirit of cheerfulness and Christian liberty that he cultivated this art, which religion has always associated with her sublimest flights. He set some of his Christian poems to music, and did not scruple sometimes to amuse the youngest of his flock with his lute. He showed the same good nature to the poor. “He ate and drank,” says one of his contemporaries, “with all who invited him,—he despised no one; he was most compassionate to the poor; always firm and always joyful in bad as in good fortune. No evil made him afraid; his words were at all times full of energy, and his heart full of consolation.”2 Thus Zuinglius increased in popularity—after the example of his Master, seated alternately at the table of the common people and the banquet of the great, but still constantly intent on the work to which God had called him. At the same time he was an indefatigable student. In the morning, till ten, he read, wrote, and translated: Hebrew in particular engaged his attention. After dinner he attended to those who had any thing to tell him, or any advice to ask of him: took a walk with his friends and visited his hearers. At two he resumed his studies. He took a short walk after supper, and afterwards wrote letters which often occupied him till midnight. He always stood when he studied, and did not allow himself to be interrupted unless on important business. But the labours of a single individual were not sufficient. A person, named Lucian, one day came to him with the writings of the German Reformer. He had been sent by Rhenan, a learned man, then resident at Bâle, and indefatigable in circulating the Reformer’s writings throughout Switzerland. Rhenan had become aware that the hawking of books was an important means of diffusing evangelical doctrine. Lucian had travelled almost over the whole of Switzerland, and knew everybody. “See,” said Rhenan to Zuinglius, “whether this Lucian has the necessary prudence and ability; if he has, let him go from town to town, burgh to burgh, village to village, and even from house to house, among the Swiss, with Luther’s writings, especially his exposition on the Lord’s Prayer, written for the laity. The more he is known the more purchasers will he find. But care must be taken not to let him hawk other books. If he has none but Luther’s, his sale of them will be the greater.” Thus the humble roof of many a Swiss family was penetrated with some rays of light. There was one other book, however, which Zuinglius should have caused to be hawked with those of Luther—the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

CHAP. VII

Indulgences—Samson at Berne—Samson at Baden—The Dean of Bremgarten—Young Henry Bullinger—Samson and the Dean—Internal struggles of Zuinglius—Zuinglius against Indulgences—Samson dismissed.

Zuinglius had not long to wait for an opportunity of displaying his zeal in a new vocation. Samson, the famous indulgence merchant, was slowly approaching Zurich. This miserable trafficker had come from Schwitz to Zug, 20th September, 1518, and had remained there three days. An immense crowd had gathered round him. The poorest were the most eager, so that they prevented the rich from coming forward. This did not suit the monk; accordingly, one of his attendants began to bawl out to the populace, “Good people, do not throng so! Let those come who have money. We will afterwards try to content those who have none.” From Zug Samson and his band repaired to Lucerne; from Lucerne to Underwald; then crossing the fertile Alps with their rich valleys, passing beneath the eternal ice of Oberland, and in these spots, the grandest in Switzerland, exposing their Roman merchandise, they arrived near Berne. The monk was at first prohibited to enter the town, but succeeded at last in obtaining an introduction by means of persons whom he had in his pay. Exhibiting his wares in the church of St. Vincent he began to cry louder than ever. “Here,” said he to the rich, “are indulgences on parchment for a crown.” “There,” said he to the poor, “are indulgences on ordinary paper for two farthings!” One day, a celebrated knight, James de Stein, came up prancing on a dapple grey horse; the monk greatly admired the horse. “Give me,” says the knight, “an indulgence for myself, for my troop of five hundred strong, for all my vassals of Belp, and all my ancestors; I will give you my dapple grey horse in exchange.” It was a high price for the horse, but the courser pleased the Franciscan, and the bargain was struck. The horse went to the monk’s stable, and all these souls were declared for ever exempted from hell. Another day, he give a burgher, for thirteen florins, an indulgence, in virtue of which his confessor was authorised to absolve him from any species of perjury.2 So much was Samson in repute, that Counsellor May, an enlightened old man, having said something against him, was obliged to go down on his knees, and ask pardon of the arrogant monk. This was the monk’s last day, and a loud ringing of bells announced his immediate departure from Berne. Samson was in the church standing on the steps of the high altar. Canon Henry Lupulus, formerly Zuinglius’s master, was acting as his interpreter. “When the wolf and the fox rendezvous together in the field,” said canon Anselm, turning to the Schulthess of Walleville, “the best thing for you, worthy Sir, is to put your sheep and geese in safety.” But the monk cared little for these sarcasms, which, besides, did not reach his ear. “Kneel,” said he to the superstitious crowd, “repeat three Paters, three Ave Marias, and your souls will forthwith be as pure as at the moment of baptism.” Then all the people fell upon their knees. Samson wishing even to outdo himself, exclaimed, “I deliver from the torments of purgatory and hell all the spirits of the departed Bernese, whatever may have been the manner and place of their death.” These jugglers, like those at fairs, kept their finest feat for the last.

Samson set out with a heavy purse towards Zurich, crossing Argovia and Baden. The farther on he got, the monk, whose appearance on passing the Alps was so shabby, proceeded with more pride and splendour. The Bishop of Constance, irritated that Samson had not employed him to legalise his bulls, had forbidden all the curates of his diocese to open their churches to him. At Baden, nevertheless, the curate durst not long oppose his traffic. This redoubled the monk’s effrontery. Making the round of the burying ground at the head of a procession, he seemed to fix

his eyes on some object in the air, while his acolytes sung the hymn for the dead, and pretending to see souls flying from the burying ground to heaven, he exclaimed—“Ecce volant! See how they fly.” One day, an inhabitant of the place getting up into the church steeple, a great number of feathers were soon seen in the air falling down on the astonished procession; “See how they fly,” exclaimed the wag of Baden, shaking a feather cushion from the steeple. Many began to laugh. Samson fell into a rage, and could not be appeased till he learned that the individual was subject to fits of derangement: he left Baden in a huff.

Continuing his journey, he arrived, towards the end of February, 1519, at Bremgarten, at the solicitation of the Schulthess and second curate, who had seen him at Baden. No individual in that district had a higher reputation than dean Bullinger of Bremgarten. Though far from enlightened as to the errors of the Church and the Word of God, being open, zealous, eloquent, kind to the poor, and ready to do a service to the humblest, he was loved by every body. He had in his youth formed a connection with the daughter of a counsellor of the place. This was the usual expedient of such of the priests as were unwilling to live in general licentiousness. Anna had borne him five sons, but this had in no way lessened the respect which the dean enjoyed. There was not in Switzerland a more hospitable house than his. A great lover of the chace, he was seen surrounded with ten or twelve dogs, and accompanied by the barons of Hallwyll, the abbot Mury, and the gentry of Zurich, scouring the fields and forests around. He kept open table, and none of his guests was more jovial than himself. When the deputies to the Diet were on their way to Baden, on passing through Bremgarten they failed not to take their seats at the dean’s table. “Bullinger,” said they, “keeps court like the most powerful baron.” In this house strangers remarked a child of an intelligent countenance. Henry, one of the dean’s sons, from his earliest years, had many narrow escapes. Having been seized with the plague, preparations were making for his funeral when he showed some signs of life, and was restored to his delighted parents. On another occasion, a wandering beggar, having won him by caresses, was carrying him off from his family, when some persons in passing recognised and rescued him. At three years of age he could repeat the Lord’s prayer and the apostles’ creed. One day having slipt into the church, he got into his father’s pulpit, stood up gravely, and at the full stretch of his voice, cried out, “I believe in God the Father,” and so on. At twelve, he was sent to the Latin school of Emmeric, his heart overwhelmed with fear; for those times were dangerous for a young boy without experience. When the students of an university thought its discipline too severe, they not unfrequently left it in troops, carrying the children with them, and encamped in the woods, from which they sent the youngest of their number to beg, or sometimes with arms in their hands they rushed forth on the passing traveller, robbed him, and then consumed their booty in debauchery. Henry was happily kept from evil in this distant abode. Like Luther, he gained his livelihood by singing before the houses, for his father wished to teach him to live by his own shifts. He was sixteen when he opened a New Testament. “I found in it,” says he, “every thing necessary for man’s salvation, and thenceforth I laid it down as a principle to follow the Holy Scriptures alone, and reject all human additions. I believe neither the fathers nor myself, but explain Scripture by Scripture, without adding any thing or taking any thing away.” God was thus preparing this young man who was one day to succeed Zuinglius. He is the author of the manuscript journal which we often quote.

About this time Samson arrived at Bremgarten with all his train. The bold dean undismayed by this petty Italian army, prohibited the monk from vending his wares in his neighbourhood. The

Schulthess, town clerk, and second pastor, Samson's friends, had met in a room of the inn at which he had alighted, and were standing quite disconcerted around the impatient monk. The dean arrived—"Here are the papal bulls," said the monk to him, "open your church." The Dean.—"I will not allow the purses of my parishioners to be emptied by means of letters not authenticated, for the bishop has not legalised them;" The Monk (in a solemn tone).—"The pope is above the bishop. I enjoin you not to deprive your flock of this distinguished grace." The Dean.—"Should it cost me my life, I wont open my church." The Monk (with indignation).—"Rebellious priest! in the name of our most holy lord the pope, I pronounce against you the greater excommunication, and will not absolve you till you ransom your unheard-of audacity at the price of three hundred ducats." … The Dean (turning on his heel and retiring).—"I will know how to answer before my lawful judges: as for you and your excommunication I have nothing to do with them." The Monk (transported with rage).—"Impudent brute! I am on my way to Zurich, and will there lay my complaint before the deputies of the Confederation." The Dean.—"I can appear there as well as you, and this instant I set out."

While these things were taking place at Bremgarten, Zuinglius, who saw the enemy gradually approaching, kept preaching vigorously against indulgences. Vicar Faber of Constance encouraged him, promising him the bishop's support.4 "I know," said Samson, while proceeding towards Zurich, "that Zuinglius will attack me, but I will stop his mouth." Zuinglius was in truth too much alive to the value of pardon by Christ not to attack the paper indulgences of these men. Often, like Luther, he trembled because of sin; but in the Saviour found deliverance from his fears. This modest but brave man was advancing in the knowledge of God. "When Satan frightens me," said he, "by crying to me: You do not this, and you do not that, and yet God commands them!—immediately the soft voice of the gospel consoles me, saying: What thou canst not do (and assuredly thou canst do nothing,) Christ does for thee." "Yes," continues the pious evangelist, "when my heart is agonised because of my powerlessness, and the feebleness of my flesh, my spirit revives at the sound of this glad news: Christ is thy innocence! Christ is thy righteousness! Christ is thy salvation! Thou art nothing, thou canst do nothing! Christ is the Alpha and the Omega! Christ is all, and can do all. All created things will forsake and deceive thee, but Christ, the Holy and Righteous One, will receive and justify thee … "Yes," exclaims Zuinglius, "He is our righteousness, and the righteousness of all who shall ever appear as righteous before the judgment seat of God!…"

Indulgences could not stand a moment when confronted with such truths; and hence Zuinglius never hesitated to attack them. "No man," said he, "is able to forgive sins. Christ alone, very God and very man, is able to do it. Go, buy indulgences … but rest assured you are not at all forgiven. Those who vend forgiveness of sins for money are the companions of Simon Magus, the friends of Balaam and the ambassadors of Satan."

Dean Bullinger, still warm from his conference with the monk, arrived at Zurich before him. He came to complain to the Diet against this shameless dealer and his traffic. Envoys from the bishop had arrived for the same purpose. They made common cause, and promised to support each other. The spirit which animated Zuinglius breathed upon this town, and the council of State resolved to oppose the monk's entry into Zurich.

Samson had arrived in the suburbs, and alighted at an inn. One foot was already on the stirrup preparatory to his entry, when deputies from the council arrived, and while making the customary offer of wine to him as a papal envoy, intimated to him that he might dispense with appearing in Zurich. “I have something to communicate to the Diet in the name of his holiness,” replied the monk. It was a trick. However, it was resolved to admit him; but as he spoke only of his bulls he was dismissed, after being compelled to retract the excommunication which he had pronounced against the dean of Bremgarton. He went off in a rage, and the pope shortly after recalled him to Italy. A car drawn by three horses, and loaded with the money of which his lies had robbed the poor, preceded him on the steep tracts of St. Gothard, which eight months before he had crossed in poverty, without style, merely the bearer of a few papers. On this occasion the Helvetic showed more firmness than the Germanic Diet. The reason was, because no cardinals and bishops sat in it. Hence the pope deprived of these supports dealt more gently with Switzerland than Germany. In other respects, the affair of indulgences, which played so important a part in the Reformation of Germany, is only an episode in that of Switzerland.

CHAP. VIII The Labours of Zuinglius—The Baths of Pfeffers—God’s time—The Great Death—Zuinglius seized with the Plague—His Enemies—His Friends—Convalescence—General Joy—Effect of the Plague—Myconius at Lucerne—Oswald encourages Zuinglius—Zuinglius at Bâle—Capito called to Mentz—Hedio at Bâle—An Unnatural Son—Preparation for Battle.

Zuinglius did not spare himself. His many labours called for some relaxation, and he was ordered to the baths of Pfeffers. “Ah!” said Herus, one of the pupils who lodged with him, and who thus expressed the feeling of all who knew Zuinglius, “had I a hundred tongues, a hundred mouths, a brazen throat, as Virgil expresses it; or rather had I the eloquence of Cicero, how could I express all I owe you, and all that I feel at this separation.” Zuinglius, however, set out and reached Pfeffers through the astonishing gorge formed by the impetuous torrent of the Jamina. He descended into that infernal abyss, as the hermit David called it, and arrived at the baths, which are perpetually agitated by the dashing of the torrent, and bedewed by the spray of its foaming water. Where Zuinglius lodged it was so dark that candles were burnt at mid-day. He was even assured by the inmates, that frightful phantoms sometimes appeared in the darkness.

Even here Zuinglius found opportunity to serve his Master. His affability won the heart of several of the patients, among others a celebrated poet, Philip Ingentinus, professor at Friburg, in Brigau, who thenceforward became a zealous supporter of the Reformation.

God watched over his own work, and was pleased to hasten it. Zuinglius’ defect lay in his strength. Strong in body, strong in character, strong in talents, he was to see all these varieties of strength broken, that he might thereby become such an instrument as God loves to employ. He stood in need of a baptism, that of adversity, infirmity, feebleness, and pain. Such a baptism Luther had received at that period of agony when the cell and long passages of the convent of Erfurt resounded with his cries. Zuinglius was to receive it by being brought into contact with sickness and death. The heroes of this world—the Charles Twelfths and Napoleons—have a moment which is decisive of their career and their glory, and it is when they all at once become conscious of their strength. There is an analogous moment in the life of God’s heroes, but it is in a contrary direction; it is when they recognise their impotence and nothingness; thenceforth they receive strength from on high. Such a work as that of which Zuinglius was to be the instrument is never accomplished by

man’s natural strength; it would immediately wither away like a tree transplanted after its full growth, and when in full leaf. A plant must be feeble in order to take root, and a grain of corn must die in the ground before it can yield a full return. God led Zuinglius, and with him the work of which he was the stay, to the gates of the grave. It is from among bones and darkness, and the dust of the dead, that God is pleased to take the instruments, by means of which he illumines, regenerates, and revives the earth.

Zuinglius was hidden among the immense rocks which hem in the furious torrent of the Jamina, when he unexpectedly learned that the plague, or as it was termed “the great death,” was at Zurich. This dreadful scourge broke out in August, on St. Lawrence day, lasted till Candlemas, and carried off two thousand five hundred persons. The young people who lodged with Zuinglius had immediately left, conformably to directions which he had given. His house was empty, but it was to him the very moment to return. He hurriedly quitted Pfeffers, and reappearing in the bosom of his flock, now decimated by the plague, he immediately sent to Wildhaus for his young brother Andrew, who wished to attend him. From that moment he devoted himself entirely to the victims of this dreadful scourge. Every day he preached Christ and his consolations to the sick.3 His friends delighted to see him safe and sound in the midst of so many fatal darts, still felt a secret alarm. Conrad Brunner, who himself died of the plague a few months after, writing him from Bâle said; “Do good, but at the same time remember to take care of your life.” It was too late: Zuinglius was seized with the plague. The great preacher of Switzerland was stretched on a bed from which, perhaps, he was never again to rise. He communed with himself, and turned his eye heavenward. He knew that Christ had given him a sure inheritance, and disclosing the feelings of his heart in a hymn remarkable for unction and simplicity, of which, not being able to give the antique and expressive phraseology, we have endeavoured to preserve the rhythm and literal meaning, he exclaimed:—2 My door has opened …

Death appears. My God! my strength!

Dispel all fears!

Oh, Jesus! raise Thy pierced arm, And break the sword That caused alarm But if my soul In life’s mid-day Thy voice recalls,

Then I obey.

Ah! let me die, For I am thine;

Thy mansions wait Such faith as mine.

Meanwhile the disease gains ground, and this man, the hope of the Church and of Switzerland, is beheld by his despairing friends as about to become the prey of the tomb. His senses and strength forsake him. His heart becomes alarmed, but he is still able to turn towards God, and exclaims:— My ills increase;

Haste to console;

Terrors overwhelm My heart and soul.

Death is at hand, My senses fail, My voice is choked, Now, Christ! prevail.

Lo! Satan strains To snatch his prey;

I feel his hand, Must I give way?

He harms me not,

I fear no loss, For here I lie Before thy cross.

Canon Hoffman, sincere in his own belief, could not bear the idea of allowing Zuinglius to die in the errors which he had preached. Accordingly he waited on the provost of the Chapter, and said to him, “Think of the danger of his soul. Does he not give the name of fantastical innovators to all the doctors who have appeared for the last three hundred and eighty years and more—to Alexander Hales, St. Bonaventura, Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, and all the canonists? Does he not maintain that their doctrines are the dreams which they dreamed in their cowls within the walls of their cloisters? Better had it been for the town of Zurich that Zuinglius had, for a series of years, destroyed our vintage and harvest! There he lies at the brink of death! Do, I beseech you, save his poor soul!” It would seem that the provost was more enlightened than the canon, and deemed it unnecessary to convert Zuinglius to St. Bonaventura and Albert the Great. He was left at peace. The whole town was in mourning. All the faithful cried to God night and day, beseeching him to restore their faithful pastor. Terror had passed from Zurich to the mountains of the Tockenburg, where also the plague had appeared. Seven or eight persons had perished in the village, among them a servant of Nicolas, a brother of Zuinglius.3 No letter was received from the Reformer, and his young brother Andrew wrote, “Tell me, my dear brother, in what state you are. The abbot and all our brothers desire to be remembered.” As the parents of Zuinglius are not mentioned it would seem that they were now dead. The news of Zuinglius’ illness, and even a rumour of his death, spread in Switzerland and Germany. “Alas!” exclaimed Hedio in tears, “the safety of the country, the gospel trumpet, the magnanimous herald of truth is smitten with death in the flower of his life, and, so to speak, in the spring tide of his days.” When the news reached Bâle the whole town was filled with lamentation and mourning.2 The spark of life which remained in Zuinglius was, however, rekindled. Though his body was still feeble, his soul was impressed with the unaltered conviction that God had called him to replace the torch of his Word on the candlestick of the Church. The plague had abandoned its victim, and Zuinglius exclaims with emotion:— My God! my Father!

Healed by thee On earth again

I bend my knee.

Now sin no more Shall mark my days My mouth, henceforth, Shall sing thy praise. The uncertain hour, Come when it may, Perchance may bring Still worse dismay.

But, let it come, With joy I’ll rise, And bear my yoke Straight to the skies.

Zuinglius was no sooner able to hold the pen (this was in the beginning of November) than he wrote to his family. This gave inexpressible delight to them all, especially to his young brother Andrew, who himself died of the plague the following year, and at whose death Ulric, to use his own words, wept and cried like a woman. At Bâle Conrad Brunner, a friend of Zuinglius, and Bruno Amerbach, a famous printer, both young men, were cut off after three days’ illness. The rumour having spread in this town that Fuinglius also had fallen, the whole university was in mourning. “He whom God loves is perfected in the flower of his life,” said they.2 How great was their joy when

Collinus, a student of Lucerne, and afterwards a merchant in Zurich, brought word that Zuinglius had escaped the jaws of death. John Faber, vicar to the bishop of Constance, long the friend and afterwards the most violent adversary of Zuinglius, wrote to him. “O my dear Ulric, how delighted I am to learn that you have escaped the jaws of cruel death. When you are in danger, the Christian commonwealth is threatened. The design of the Lord in these trials is to urge you forward in the pursuit of eternal life.” This was, indeed, the design, and it was accomplished, though in a different way from what Faber anticipated. The plague of 1519, which made such fearful ravages in the north of Switzerland, was, in the hand of God, a powerful means of converting a great number of persons. But on none had it a greater influence than on Zuinglius. Hitherto he had been too much disposed to regard the gospel as mere doctrine; but now it became a great reality. He returned from the gates of the grave with a new heart. His zeal was more active, his life more holy, his word more free, Christian, and powerful. This was the period of Zuinglius’ complete emancipation. He from this time devoted himself to God. The new life thus given to the Reformer was communicated at the same time to the Swiss Reformation. The Divine rod, the great death, in passing over all their mountains and descending into all their valleys, added to the sacredness of the movement which was then taking place. The Reformation being plunged, like Zuinglius, into the waters of affliction and of grace, came forth purer and more animated. In regard to the regeneration of Switzerland, the gospel sun was now at its height.

Zuinglius, who still strongly felt the want of new strength, received it in intercourse with his friends. His closest intimacy was with Myconius. They walked hand in hand, like Luther and Melancthon. Oswald was happy at Zurich. It is true, his position was cramped; but every thing was softened by the virtues of his modest spouse. It was of her that Glarean said, “Were I to meet a young girl resembling her, I would prefer her to the daughter of a king.” But a faithful voice was often heard disturbing the sweet friendship of Zuinglius and Myconius. It was that of canon Xylotect, who, calling to Oswald from Lucerne, summoned him to return to his country. “Lucerne,” said he to him, “not Zurich, is your country. You say that the Zurichers are your friends: granted; but do you know what the evening star will bring you? Serve your country. This I advise; I implore; and, if I am able, command.” Xylotect, not confining himself to words, procured the appointment of Myconius to the college school of Lucerne. After this Oswald no longer hesitated. He saw the finger of God in the appointment, and determined to make the sacrifice, how great soever it might be. Who could say whether he might not be an instrument in the hand of the Lord to diffuse the doctrine of peace in warlike Lucerne? But how painful the separation between Zuinglius and Myconius! They parted in tears. Ulric shortly after wrote to Oswald, “Your departure has been as serious a loss to the cause which I defend, as that which is sustained by an army in battle array when one of its wings is destroyed.2 Ah! I now am aware of all that my Myconius was able to do, and how often, without my knowing it, he maintained the cause of Christ.”

Zuinglius felt the loss of his friend the more, because the plague had left him in a state of great feebleness. Writing on the 30th November, 1519, he says, “It has weakened my memory and wasted my intellect.” When scarcely convalescent, he had resumed all his labours. “But,” said he, “in preaching I often lose the thread of my discourse. I feel languid in all my members, and somewhat as if I were dead.” Moreover, Zuinglius, by his opposition to indulgences, had excited the wrath of their partisans. Oswald strengthened his friend by letters which he wrote him from Lucerne. And did he not also receive pledges of assistance from the Lord in the protection which

He gave to the Saxon champion who was gaining such important victories over Rome? “What think you,” said Myconius to Zuinglius, “of the cause of Luther? For my part I have no fear either for the gospel or for him. If God does not protect his truth, who will protect it? All that I ask of the Lord is, not to withdraw his aid from those who hold nothing dearer than his gospel. Continue as you have begun, and an abundant recompence awaits you in heaven.” The visit of an old friend helped to console Zuinglius for the loss of Myconius. Bunzli, who had been his teacher at Bâle, and had succeeded the dean of Wesen, the Reformer’s uncle, arrived at Zurich, in the first week of the year 1520, and Zuinglius and he thereafter resolved to set out together to Bâle to sec their common friends. This visit of Zuinglius bore fruit. “Oh, my dear Zuinglius!” wrote John Glother to him at a later period, “never will I forget you. The thing which binds me to you is the goodness with which, during your stay at Bâle, you came to see me, me, a petty schoolmaster, living in obscurity without learning or merit, and of humble station! What wins me is the elegance of your manners, and that indescribable meekness with which you subdue all hearts, even stones, if I may so speak.”2 But Zuinglius’ visit was still more useful to his old friends. Capito, Hedio, and others, were electrified by the power of his eloquence. The former commencing in Bâle the work which Zuinglius was doing at Zurich, began to expound the gospel of St. Matthew before an auditory which continued to increase. The doctrine of Christ penetrated and inflamed all hearts. The people received it joyfully, and with acclamation hailed the revival of Christianity. It was the aurora of the Reformation. Accordingly a conspiracy of monks and priests was soon formed against Capito. It was at this time that Albert, the young cardinal-archbishop of Mentz, who felt desirous of attaching a man of so much learning to his person, called him to his court.4 Capito, seeing the difficulties which were thrown in his way, accepted the invitation. The people were moved, and, turning with indignation against the priests, raised a tumult in the town. Hedio was proposed as his successor, but some objected to his youth, while others said, “He is his pupil.” “Truth bites,” said Hedio: it is not advantageous to offend too delicate ears by telling it.6 No matter, nothing will turn me from the straight path.” The monks redoubled their efforts. “Believe not those,” exclaimed they from the pulpit, “who say that the sum of Christian doctrine is found in the Gospel and in St. Paul. Scotus has done more for Christianity than St. Paul himself. All the learning that has ever been spoken or printed has been stolen from Scotus. All that has been done since by men eager for fame has been to throw in some Greek and Hebrew terms, which have only darkened the matter. The tumult increased; and there was reason to fear that, on Capito’s departure, it would become still more serious. “I will be almost alone,” thought Hedio, “poor I, to struggle with these formidable monsters.” Accordingly, he invoked the assistance of God, and wrote to Zuinglius. “Inflame my courage by writing often. Learning and Christianity are now placed between the hammer and the anvil. Luther has just been condemned by the universities of Louvain and Cologne. If ever the Church was in imminent danger, it is at this hour.”2

Capito left Bâle for Mentz, 28th April, and Hedio succeeded him. Not content with the public assemblies in the church at which he continued his exposition of St. Matthew, he proposed, in the month of June, as he wrote Luther, to have private meetings in his own house, to give more thorough evangelical instruction to those who might feel the want of it. This powerful method of communicating the truth, and exciting in the faithful an interest and zeal in divine things, could not fail then, as it never does, to awaken opposition in the men of the world and in domineering priests, both of whom, though from different motives, are equally desirous that God should be worshipped only within the precincts of a particular building. But Hedio was invincible. At the same

period when he formed this good resolution at Bâle, there arrived at Zurich one of those characters who often emerge, like impure froth, from the vortex of revolutions.

Senator Grebel, a man of great influence in Zurich, had a son named Conrad, a youth of remarkable talents, and a relentless enemy of ignorance and superstition, which he attacked with cutting satire. He was boisterous, violent, sarcastic, and bitter in his expression, without natural affection, given to debauchery, always talking loudly of his own innocence, while he could see nothing but what was wrong in others. We speak of him here because he is afterwards to play a melancholy part. At this period, Vadian married a sister of Conrad, and Conrad, who was studying at Paris where his misconduct had deprived him of the use of his limbs, desiring to be present at the marriage, appeared suddenly about the beginning of June amidst his family. The poor father received the prodigal son with a gentle smile, his fond mother with tears. The tenderness of his parents made no change on his unnatural heart. His kind and unhappy mother having some time after been brought to the gates of death, Conrad wrote his brother-in-law Vadain:—"My mother is recovered; she again rules the house, sleeps, awakes, grumbles, breakfasts, scolds, dines, makes a racket, sups, and is perpetually a burden to us. She runs, cooks, re-cooks, sweeps the house, toils, kills herself with fatigue, and will shortly bring on a relapse."

Such was the man who, at a later period, pretended to lord it over Zuinglius, and who took the lead among fanatical anabaptists. Divine Providence perhaps allowed such characters to appear at the period of the Reformation that their disorders might the better bring out the wise, Christian, and orderly spirit of the Reformers.

Everything announced that the battle between the gospel and the papacy was about to commence. "Let us stir up the temporisers," wrote Hedio to Zurich; "the peace is broken, let us arm our hearts: the enemies we shall have to combat are most fierce." Myconius wrote in the same strain to Ulric, who, however, answered their warlike appeals with admirable meekness. "I should like," said he, "to gain these obstinate men by kindness and good offices, rather than overcome them by violence and disputation.3 That they call our doctrine, (which however is not ours,) a doctrine of the devil, is nothing more than natural. It proves to me that we are indeed the ambassadors of Christ. The devils cannot be silent in his presence."

CHAP. IX The Two Reformers—The Fall of Man—Expiation of the God-Man—No merit in Works—Objections refuted—Power of Love to Christ—Election—Christ alone Master—Effects of this Preaching—Despondency and Courage—First Act of the Magistrate—Church and State—Attacks—Galster.

Though desirous to follow the path of meekness, Zuinglius was not idle. Since his illness his preaching had become more profound and enlivening. More than two thousand persons in Zurich had received the word of God into their heart, made profession of the evangelical doctrine, and were themselves able to announce it.

Zuinglius' faith was the same as Luther's, but more the result of reasoning. Luther advances with a bound. Zuinglius owes more to clearness of perception. Luther's writings are pervaded with a thorough personal conviction of the benefits which the cross of Christ confers upon himself, and this conviction, glowing with heat and life, is the soul of all he says. The same thing doubtless exists in Zuinglius, but in an inferior degree. He had looked more to the Christian system as a

whole, and admired it particularly for its beauty, for the light which it sheds into the human mind, and the eternal life which it brings to the world. The one is more the man of heart, the other more the man of intellect; and hence it is that those who do not experimentally know the faith which animated these two great disciples of the Lord, fall into the grossest error, making the one a mystic and the other a rationalist. The one is more pathetic, perhaps, in the exposition of his faith, and the other more philosophical, but both believe the the same truths. They do not, however, look at all secondary questions from the same point of view, but that faith which is one, that faith which quickens and justifies its possessor, that faith which no confession, no article of doctrine can express, is in the one as in the other. The doctrine of Zuinglius has often been so much misrepresented, that it seems proper here to give an account of what he preached at this time to the increasing crowds who flocked to the cathedral of Zurich. The fall of Adam, Zuinglius regarded as the key to man's history. "Before the fall," said he one day, "man had been created with a free will, so that he was able, if he chose, to keep the law; his nature was pure, being as yet untainted by the malady of sin; his life was in his own hand. But wishing to be equal to God, he died … and not he only, but every one of his descendants. All men being dead in Adam none can be recalled to life until the Spirit, who is God himself, raise them from death." The people of Zurich who listened eagerly to this powerful orator were saddened when he set before them the sinful state into which human nature has fallen, but soon after heard words of joy, and learned to know the remedy which is able to recall man to life. "Christ very man and very God," said the eloquent voice of this shepherd—son of the Tockenburg, "has purchased for us a redemption which will never terminate. The eternal God died for us: His passion then is eternal: it brings salvation for ever and ever: it appeases divine justice for ever in favour of all those who lean upon this sacrifice with firm and immovable faith." "Wherever sin exists," exclaimed the Reformer, "death must necessarily supervene. Christ had no sin, there was no guile in his mouth, and yet he died! Ah! it was because he died in our stead. He was pleased to die in order to restore us to life, and as he had no sins of his own, the Father, who is full of mercy, laid the burden of our sins upon him.2" The Christian orator continued, "Since the will of man rebelled against the supreme God, it was necessary, if eternal order was to be re-established and man saved, that the human will should be made subject in Christ to the divine will." He often repeated that it was for the faithful people of God, that the expiatory death of Jesus Christ had been endured.4

Those in the city of Zurich who were eager for salvation, found rest on hearing these good news. But old errors still remained, and these it was necessary to destroy. Setting out from this great truth of a salvation which is the gift of God, Zuinglius forcibly discoursed against the pretended merit of human works. "Since eternal salvation," said he, "proceeds solely from the merits and death of Jesus Christ, the merit of our works is nothing better than folly, not to say rash impiety. Could we have been saved by our works it had not been necessary for Jesus Christ to die. All who have ever come to God came to him by the death of Jesus Christ.6

Zuinglius perceived the objections which some of his hearers felt against these doctrines. Some of them called upon him and stated them. He mounted the pulpit and said—"People, more curious perhaps than pious, object that this doctrine makes men giddy and dissolute. But of what consequence are the objections or fears which human curiosity may suggest? Whosoever believes in Jesus Christ is certain that every thing which comes from God is necessarily good. If, then, the gospel is of God it is good. And what other power would be capable of implanting among

men innocence, truth, and love? O God! most compassionate, most just, Father of mercies," exclaimed he in the overflowing of his piety, "with what love hast thou embraced us, us thy enemies! With what great and certain hopes hast thou inspired us, us who should have known nothing but despair: and to what glory hast thou in thy Son called our littleness and nothingness! Thy purpose in this ineffable love is to constrain us to yield thee love for love!…"

Then dwelling on this idea, he showed that love to the Redeemer is a more powerful law than the commandments. "The Christian," said he, "delivered from the law depends entirely on Christ. Christ is his reason, his counsel, his righteousness, and whole salvation. Christ lives in him and acts in him. Christ alone guides him, and he needs no other guide." And making use of a comparison adapted to his hearers, he added, "If a government prohibits its citizens, under pain of death, from receiving pensions and presents at the hands of princes, how gentle and easy this law is to those who, from love to their country and to liberty, would, of their own accord, refrain from so culpable a proceeding; but on the contrary, how tormenting and oppressive it feels to those who think only of their own interest. Thus the righteous man lives joyful in the love of righteousness, whereas the unrighteous walks groaning under the heavy weight of the law which oppresses him."3 In the cathedral of Zurich was a considerable number of veteran soldiers who felt the truth of these words. Is not love the mightiest of legislators? Is not every thing that it commands instantly accomplished? Does not he whom we love dwell in our heart, and does it not of itself perform what he enjoins? Accordingly, Zuinglius, waxing bold, declared to the people of Zurich that love to the Redeemer was alone capable of making man do things agreeable to God. "Works done out of Jesus Christ are not useful," said the Christian orator; "since every thing is done of him, in him, and by him, what do we pretend to arrogate to ourselves? Wherever faith in God is, there God is, and wherever God is, there is a zeal which presses and urges men to good works. Only take care that Christ be in thee and thou in Christ, and then doubt not but he will work. The life of the Christian is just one continued work by which God begins, continues, and perfects in man every thing that is good."5

Struck with the grandeur of this divine love which existed from eternity, the herald of grace raised his voice to all the timid or irresolute. "Can you fear," said he, "to approach the tender Father who has chosen you? Why has he chosen us in his grace? Why has he called us? Why has he drawn us? Was it that we might not dare to go to him?" …

Such was the doctrine of Zuinglius. It was the doctrine of Christ himself. "If Luther preaches Christ he does what I do," said the preacher of wurich; "those who have been brought to Christ by him are more numerous than those who have been brought by me. But no matter! I am unwilling to bear any other name than that of Christ, whose soldier I am, and who alone is my head. Never was a single scrap written by me to Luther, or by Luther to me. And why? In order to show to all how well the spirit of God accords with himself, since, without having heard each other, we so harmoniously teach the doctrine of Jesus Christ."

Thus Zuinglius preached with energy and might. The large cathedral could not contain the crowds of hearers. All thanked God that a new life was beginning to animate the lifeless body of the Church. Swiss from all the cantons, brought to Zurich either by the Diet or by other causes, being touched by this new preaching, carried its precious seeds into all the Helvetic valleys. One acclamation arose from mountains and cities. Nicolas Hageus, writing from Lucerne to Zurich,

says, “Switzerland has hitherto given birth to Scipios, Cæsars, and Brutuses, but has scarcely produced two men who had the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and could nourish men’s hearts, not with vain disputes, but with the Word of God. Now that Divine Providence gives Switzerland Zuinglius for its orator, and Oswald Myconius for its teacher, virtue and sacred literature revive among us. O happy Helvetia! could you but resolve at length to rest from all your wars, and, already so celebrated, become still more celebrated for righteousness and peace.”4 “It was said,” wrote Myconius to Zuinglius, “that your voice could not be heard three yards off. But I now see it was a falsehood; for all Switzerland hears you.” “You possess intrepid courage,” wrote Hedio to him from Bâle, “I will follow you as far as I am able.”6 “I have heard you,” said Sebastian Hofmeister of Schaffausen, writing to him from Constance.” Ah, would to God that Zurich, which is at the head of our happy confederation was delivered from the disease, and health thus restored to the whole body.” But Zuinglius met with opponents as well as admirers. “To what end,” said some, “does he intermeddle with the affairs of Switzerland?” “Why,” said others, “does he, in his religious instructions, constantly repeat the same things?” Amid all these combats the soul of Zuinglius was often filled with sadness. All seemed to be in confusion, as if society were turned upside down. He thought it impossible that any thing new should appear without something of an opposite nature being immediately displayed.3 When a hope sprang up in his heart, a fear immediately sprang up beside it. Still he soon raised his head. “The life of man here below,” said he, “is a war; he who desires to obtain glory must attack the world in front, and, like David, make this haughty Goliath, who seems so proud of his stature, to bite the dust. The Church,” said he, like Luther, “has been acquired by blood, and must be renewed by blood. The more numerous the defilements in it, the more must we arm ourselves, like Hercules, in order to clean out these Augean stables.5 I have little fear for Luther,” added he, “even should he be thundered against by the bolts of this Jupiter.”

Zuinglius stood in need of repose, and repaired to the waters of Baden. The curate of the place, an old papal guard, a man of good temper, but completely ignorant, had obtained his benefice by carrying a halberd. True to his soldier habits, he spent the day and part of the night in jovial company, while Stäheli, his vicar, was indefatigable in fulfilling the duties of his office. Zuinglius invited the young minister to his house. “I have need of Swiss help,” said he to him, and from this moment Ständi was his fellow-labourer. Zuinglius, Stäheli, and Luti, afterwards pastor of Winterthur, lived under the same roof. The devotedness of Zuinglius was not to pass unrewarded. The Word of God, preached with so much energy, could not fail to produce fruit. Several magistrates were gained, experiencing the Word to be their consolation and their strength. The Council, grieved at seeing the priests, and especially the monks, shamelessly delivering from the pulpit whatever came into their heads, passed a resolution, ordering them not to advance anything in their discourses “that they did not draw from the sacred sources of the Old and New Testament.” It was in 1520 that the civil power thus interposed for the first time in the work of the Reformation; acting as a Christian magistrate, say some—since the first duty of the magistrate is to maintain the Word of God and defend the best interests of the citizens; depriving the Church of its liberty, say others,—by subjecting it to secular power, and giving the signal for the series of evils which have since been engendered by the connection between Church and State. We will not give any opinion here on this great controversy which in our day is carried on with so much warmth in several countries. It is sufficient for us to point out its commencement at the period of the Reformation. But there is another thing also to be pointed out—the act of these magistrates was

itself one of the effects produced by the preaching of the Word of God. At this period the Reformation in Switzerland ceased to be the work of private individuals, and began to be included within the national domain. Born in the heart of a few priests and literary men, it extended, rose, and took up elevated ground. Like the waters of the ocean, it gradually increased till it had overflowed an immense extent. The monks were confounded: they were ordered to preach nothing but the Word of God, and the greater part of them had never read it. Opposition provokes opposition. The resolution of the council became the signal of more violent attacks on the Reformation. Plots began to be formed against the curate of Zurich. His life was in danger. One evening, when Zuinglius and his vicars were quietly conversing in their house, some citizens arrived in great haste, and asked, “Are your doors well bolted? Be this night on your guard.” “Such alarms were frequent,” adds Stäheli; but we were well armed, and a guard was stationed for us in the street.” In other places, means still more violent were resorted to. An old man of Shaffausen, named Galster, a man of piety, and of an ardour rare at his period of life, happy in the light which he had found in the gospel, laboured to communicate it to his wife and children. His zeal, perhaps indiscreet, openly attacked the relics, priests, and superstitions with which this canton abounded. He soon became an object of hatred and terror even to his own family. The old man, penetrating their fatal designs, left his home broken-hearted, and fled to the neighbouring forest. There he lived several days subsisting on whatever he could find, when suddenly, on the last night of the year 1520, torches blazed in all directions through the forest, and the cries of men and the barking of dogs re-echoed under its dark shades. The council had ordered a hunt in the woods to discover him. The dogs scented him out, and the unhappy old man was dragged before the magistrate. He was ordered to abjure his faith, but remained immovable, and was beheaded.

CHAP. X A new Combatant—The Reformer of Berne—Zuinglius encourages Haller—The Gospel at Lucerne—Oswald Persecuted—Preaching of Zuinglius—Henry Bullinger and Gerold of Knonan—Rubli at Bâle—The Chaplain of the Hospital—War in Italy—Zuinglius against Foreign Service. The year, the first day of which was signalised by this bloody execution, had scarcely commenced when Zuinglius was waited on in his house at Zurich by a young man, of about twenty-eight years of age, tall in stature, and with an exterior which bespoke candour, simplicity, and diffidence. He said his name was Berthold Haller. Zuinglius, on hearing the name, embraced the celebrated preacher of Berne, with that affability which made him so engaging. Haller, born at Aldingen in Wurtemberg,3 had first studied at Rotweil under Rubellus, and afterwards at Pforzheim, where Simler was his teacher, and Melanethon his fellow-student. The Bernese, who had already distinguished themselves by arms, at this time resolved to invite literature into the bosom of their republic. Rubellus, and Berthold, not twenty-one years of age, repaired thither. Sometime after, the latter was appointed canon, and ultimately preacher of the cathedral. The gospel which Zuinglius preached had extended to Berne; Haller believed, and thenceforth longed to see the distinguished man, whom he now looked up to as his father. He went to Zurich after Myconius had announced his intended visit. Thus met Haller and Zuinglius. The former, a man of great meekness, unbosomed his griefs; and the latter, a man of might, inspired him with courage. One day, Berthold said to Zuinglius, “My spirit is overwhelmed … I am not able to bear all this injustice. I mean to give up the pulpit and retire to Bâle beside Wittembach, and there occupy myself exclusively with sacred literature.” “Ah!” replied Zuinglius, “I too have my feelings of despondency, when unjust attacks are made upon me; but Christ awakens my conscience, and urges me on by his terrors and his promises. He alarms me when he says, ‘Whoso shall be

ashamed of me before men, of him will I be ashamed before my Father;' and he sets my mind at case when he adds, 'Whoso shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father.' My dear Berthold, rejoice! Our name is written in indelible characters in the register of citizenship on high. I am ready to die for Christ.2 Let your wild cubs," added he, "hear the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and you will see them become tame. But this task must be performed with great gentleness, lest they turn again and rend you." Haller's courage revived. "My soul," said he to Zuinglius, "is awakened out of its sleep. I must preach the gospel. Jesus Christ must again be established in this city, from which he has been so long exiled."4 Thus the torch of Berthold was kindled at the torch of Zuinglius, and the timid Haller threw himself into the midst of the ferocious bears, who, as Zuinglius expresses it, "were gnashing their teeth, and seeking to devour him."

It was in another part of Switzerland, however, that persecution was to begin. Warlike Lucerne came forward, like a foe in full armour couching his lance. In this canton, which was favourable to foreign service, a martial spirit predominated, and the leading men knit their brows when they heard words of peace fitted to curb their warlike temper. Meanwhile the writings of Luther having found their way into the town, some of the inhabitants began to examine them, and were horrified. It seemed to them that an infernal hand had traced the lines; their imagination was excited, their senses became bewildered, and their rooms seemed as if filled with demons, flocking around them, and glaring upon them with a sarcastic smile. They hastily closed the book, and dashed it from them in dismay. Oswald, who had heard of these singular visions, did not speak of Luther to any but his most intimate friends, and contented himself with simply preaching the gospel of Christ. Nevertheless, the cry which rung through the town was, "Luther and the schoolmaster (Myconius) must be burnt."6 "I am driven by my adversaries like a ship by the raging billows," said Oswald to one of his friends. One day, in the beginning of the year 1520, he was unexpectedly summoned to appear before the council, and told, "Your orders are, not to read the writings of Luther to your pupils, not to name him in their presence, and not even to think of him." The lords of Lucerne pretended, it seems, to have a very extensive jurisdiction. Shortly after, a preacher delivered a sermon against heresy. The whole audience was moved, and every eye was turned on Myconius; for whom but he could the preacher have in his eye? Oswald kept quietly in his seat, as if the matter had not concerned him. But on leaving the church, as he was walking with his friend, Canon Xylotect, one of the counsellors, still under great excitement, passed close to them, and passionately exclaimed, "Well, disciples of Luther, why don't you defend your master?" They made no answer. "I live," said Myconius, "among fierce wolves; but I have this consolation, that the most of them are without teeth. They would bite if they could, but not being able, they bark." The senate assembled: for the people began to be tumultuous. "He is a Lutheran," said one of the counsellors: "he is a propagator of new doctrines," said another: "he is a seducer of youth," said a third. "Let him appear, let him appear." The poor schoolmaster appeared and again listened to prohibitions and menaces. His unsophisticated soul was torn and overwhelmed. His gentle spouse could only console him by shedding tears. "Every one is rising up against me," exclaimed he in his agony. "Assailed by so many tempests, whither shall I turn, how shall I escape?… Were it not for Christ I would long ago have fallen under these assaults." "What matters it," wrote Doctor Sebastian Hofmeister of Constance to him, "whether Lucerne chooses to keep you or not? The whole earth is the Lord's. Every land is a home to the brave. Though we should be the most wicked of men our enterprise is just, for we teach the Word of Christ."

While the truth encountered so many obstacles at Lucerne it was victorious at Zurich. Zuinglius was incessant in his labours. Wishing to examine the whole sacred volume in the original tongues, he zealously engaged in the study of Hebrew, under the direction of John Boschenstein, a pupil of Reuchlin. But if he studied Scripture, it was to preach it. The peasants who flocked to the market on Friday to dispose of their goods, showed an eagerness to receive the Word of God. To satisfy their longings, Zuinglius had begun, in December 1520, to expound the Psalms every Friday after studying the original. The Reformers always combined learned with practical labours—the latter forming the end, the former only the means. They were at once students and popular teachers. This union of learning and charity is characteristic of the period. In regard to his services on Sunday, Zuinglius, after lecturing from St. Matthew on the life of our Saviour, proceeded afterwards to show from the Acts of the Apostles how the gospel was propagated. Thereafter he laid down the rules of the Christian life according to the Epistles to Timothy, employed the Epistle to the Galatians in combating doctrinal errors, combined with it the two Epistles of St. Peter, in order to show to the despisers of St. Paul that both apostles were animated by the same spirit, and concluded with the Epistle to the Hebrews, in order to give a full display of the benefits which Christians derive from Jesus Christ their sovereign priest. But Zuinglius did not confine his attention to adults; he sought also to inspire youth with the sacred flame by which his own breast was animated. One day in 1521, while he was sitting in his study reading the Fathers of the Church, taking extracts of the most striking passages, and carefully arranging them into a large volume, his door opened, and a young man entered whose appearance interested him exceedingly. It was Henry Bullinger, who was returning from Germany, and impatient to become acquainted with the teacher of his country, whose name was already famous in Christendom. The handsome youth fixed his eye first on Zuinglius, and then on the books, and felt his vocation to do what Zuinglius was doing. Zuinglius received him with his usual cordiality which won all hearts. This first visit had great influence on the future life of the student, who was on his return to the paternal hearth. Another youth had also won Zuinglius' heart: this was Gerold Meyer of Knonau. His mother, Anna Reinhardt, who afterwards occupied an important place in the Reformer's life, had been a great beauty, and was still distinguished for her virtues. John Meyer of Knonau, a youth of a noble family, who had been brought up at the court of the bishop of Constance, had conceived a strong passion for Anna, who, however, belonged to a plebeian family. Old Meyer of Knonau had refused his consent to their marriage, and after it took place disinherited his son. In 1513 Anna was left a widow with a son and two daughters, and devoted herself entirely to the education of her poor orphans. The grandfather was inexorable. One day, however, the widow's maid-servant having in her arms young Gerold, then a beautiful sprightly child of three years of age, stopped at the fish market, when old Meyer, who was looking out at a window, observed him, and, continuing to gaze after him, asked to whom that beautiful lively child belonged. "It is your son's child," was the answer. The heart of the old man was moved—the ice immediately melted—all was forgotten, and he clasped in his arms the widow and children of his son. Zuinglius loved, as if he had been his own son, the noble and intrepid youth Gerold, who was to die in the flower of his age side by side with the Reformer, with his sword in his hand, and surrounded alas! with the dead bodies of his enemies. Thinking that Gerold would not be able to prosecute his studies at Zurich, Zuinglius, in 1521, sent him to Bâle.

Young Knonau did not find Hedio the friend of Zuinglius there. Capito being obliged to accompany the archbishop Albert to the coronation of Charles V, had procured Hedio to supply his place. Bâle

having thus, one after another, lost her most faithful preachers, the church there seemed forsaken; but other men appeared. Four thousand hearers squeezed into the church of William Roubli, curate of St. Alban. He attacked the mass, purgatory, and the invocation of saints; but this turbulent man who was eager to draw the public attention upon himself, declaimed more against error than in support of truth. On Corpus Christi day he joined the public procession, but in place of the customary relics, caused the Holy Scriptures to be carried before him, splendidly bound, and bearing this inscription:—"The Bible; this is the true relic, the others are only dead bones." Courage adorns the servant of God; affectation disgraces him. The work of an evangelist is to preach the Bible, and not to make a presumptuous display of it. The enraged priests accused Roubli before the council. A mob immediately gathered in Cordelier Square. "Protect our preacher," said the citizens to the council. Fifty Ladies of distinction interceded in his behalf; but Roubli was obliged to quit Bâle. At a later period he took part like Grebel in Anabaptist disorders. The Reformation, in the course of its development, every where threw off the chaff which mingled with the good grain. At this period a modest voice was heard from the humblest of the chapels, clearly proclaiming the evangelical doctrine. It was that of young Wolfgang Wissemberger, son of a counsellor of state and chaplain of the hospital. All in Bâle who felt new religious wants attached themselves to the gentle chaplain, preferring him to the presumptuous Roubli. Wolfgang began to read the mass in German. The monks renewed their clamour, but this time they failed, and Wissemberger continued to preach the gospel; "for," says an old chronicler, "he was a burgess and his father a counsellor." This first success of the Reformation in Bâle, while it was the prelude of still greater success, at the same time tended greatly to promote the progress of the work throughout the Confederation. Zurich no longer stood alone. Learned Bâle began to be charmed with the new doctrine. The foundations of the new temple were enlarged. The Reformation in Switzerland obtained a fuller development. The centre of the movement was, however, at Zurich. But, to the deep grief of Zuinglius, important political events occurred in 1521, and in some measure distracted men's minds from the preaching of the gospel. Leo X, who had offered his alliance at once to Charles V and Francis I, had at last declared for the emperor. War between the two rivals was on the point of breaking out in Italy. The French general Lautrec had said, "There will be nothing left of the pope but his ears." This bad jest increased the pontiff's anger. The king of France claimed the aid of the Swiss cantons, all of which, with the exception of Zurich, had formed an alliance with him; he obtained it. The pope flattered himself he would gain Zurich, and the cardinal of Sion, ever given to intrigue, and confident in his ability and his finesse, hastened thither to obtain soldiers for his master. But from his old friend Zuinglius he encountered a vigorous opposition. He was indignant that the Swiss should sell their blood to strangers, and his imagination figured to itself the swords of the Zurichers under the standard of the pope and the emperor in the plains of Italy crossing the swords of the confederates united under the colours of France. At such scenes of fratricide his patriotic and Christian soul shuddered with horror. Thundering from the pulpit he exclaimed, "Would you rend and overthrow the confederation?3 … We attack the wolves which devour our flocks, but offer no resistance to those who prowl around seeking to devour men.… Ah! it is not without cause that these hats and mantles are of scarlet. Shakes their robes and ducats and crowns will tumble out of them, twist them and you will see the blood of your brother, your father, your son, and your dearest friend trickling down from them." The energetic voice of Zuinglius was heard in vain. The cardinal with the red hat succeeded, and two thousand seven hundred Zurichers set out under the command of George Berguer. Zuinglius was

heart-broken. Still, however, his influence was not lost. For a long time the banners of Zurich were not again to be unfurled, and pass the gates of the town in the cause of foreign powers.

CHAP. XI

Zuinglius against the Precepts of Man—Fermentation during Lent—Truth advances during Combat—The Deputies of the Bishops—Accusation before the Clergy and Council—Appeal to the Great Council—The Coadjutor and Zuinglius—Decree of the Grand Council—State of Matters—Attack by Hoffman.

Torn in his feelings as a citizen, Zuinglius devoted himself with new zeal to the preaching of the gospel, urging it with growing energy. “I will not cease,” said he, “to labour to restore the ancient unity of the Church of Christ.” He began the year 1522 by showing what difference there is between the precepts of the gospel and the precepts of men. The season of Lent having arrived, he raised his voice still more loudly. After laying the foundation of the new edifice, he wished to clear away the rubbish of the old. “For four years,” said he to the multitude assembled in the cathedral, “you with ardent thirst received the holy doctrine of the gospel. Enkindled by the flames of charity, fed with the sweets of heavenly manna, it is impossible to have still any relish for the sad element of human traditions.” Then attacking compulsory abstinence from flesh for a certain time, he exclaimed in his bold eloquence, “There are some who pretend that it is an evil, and even a great sin, to eat flesh, although God never forbade it; and yet do not consider it a crime to sell human flesh to the foreigner, and drag it to slaughter.”3 The friends of foreign service who were present were filled with indignation and rage at these bold words, and vowed not to forget them.

While preaching thus forcibly, Zuinglius still continued to say mass: he observed the usages established by the Church, and even abstained from meat on the forbidden days. He was persuaded that the first thing necessary was to enlighten the people. But certain turbulent spirits did not act with so much wisdom. Roubli, who had become a refugee at Zurich, allowed himself to be carried away by the impulse of an extravagant zeal. The old curate of St. Alban, a Bernese captain, and Conrad Huber, a member of the great Council, often met at the house of the last to eat meat on Friday and Saturday, and made a boast of it. The question of abstinence was the engrossing topic. An inhabitant of Lucerne, who had come to Zurich, said to one of his friends there, “You do wrong in eating flesh during Lent.” The friend answered, “You Lucerne folks also take the liberty of eating it on the forbidden days.” The inhabitant of Lucerne rejoined, “We have purchased it from the pope.” The friend—“And we from the butcher. If it is a question of money, the one is surely as good as the other.” The council, a complaint having been lodged against the transgressors of the ecclesiastical ordinances, asked the advice of the curates. Zuinglius answered that the act of eating meat every day was not blameable in itself; but that it ought to be abstained from so long as competent authority had not given any decision on the point. The other members of the clergy concurred in this opinion. The enemies of the truth took advantage of this favourable circumstance. Their influence was on the wane. Victory was on the side of Zuinglius. It was necessary, therefore, to make haste and strike a decisive blow. They importuned the Bishop of Constance. “Zuinglius,” exclaimed they, “is the destroyer of the flock, and not its shepherd.”

Ambitious Faber, the old friend of Zuinglius, had returned full of zeal for the papacy from a visit which he had just paid to Rome. From the inspiration of this proud city the first troubles of Switzerland were to proceed. It was necessary that there should be a decisive struggle between

evangelical truth and the representatives of the pontiff. It is especially when attacked that the truth manifests its whole power. Under the shade of opposition and persecution, Christianity at first acquired the power which overthrew her enemies. God was pleased, in like manner, to conduct his truth through difficult paths at the period of revival which we now describe. The priests then, as in the days of the apostles, assailed the new doctrine. But for their attacks it might, perhaps, have remained obscurely hid in some faithful souls. But God watched over it to manifest it to the world. Opposition struck out new paths for it, launched it on a new career, and fixed the eyes of the nation upon it. It was like a breath of wind scattering far and wide seeds which might otherwise have remained inert in the spots on which they fell. The tree destined to shelter the Helvetic population was indeed planted in the bosom of their valleys, but storms were necessary to strengthen the roots and give full development to the branches. The partisans of the papacy, seeing the fire which was slowly burning in Zurich, threw themselves upon it to extinguish it, and thereby only caused its flames to spread. On the afternoon of the 7th April, 1522, three ecclesiastic deputies from the Bishop of Constance were seen entering the town of Zurich. Two of them had a stern and angry, the third, a gentle expression of countenance. It was the coadjutor of the Bishop Melchior Battli, Doctor Brendi, and John Vanner, preacher of the cathedral, an evangelical man who, during the whole affair, remained silent. It was night when Luti called in haste on Zuinglius, and said, “Officers from the bishop have arrived; a great blow is preparing: all the partisans of ancient customs are in motion. A notary has called a meeting of all the priests at an early hour tomorrow morning, in the hall of the Chapter.” The assembly of the clergy having accordingly met next day, the coadjutor rose and delivered a speech, which seemed to his opponents full of violence and pride. He affected, however, not to mention Zuinglius by name. Some priests, who had been recently gained to the gospel, and were still irresolute, were terrified; their pale checks, their silence, and their sighs, showed that they had lost all courage.3 Zuinglius rose and delivered a speech, which closed the mouths of his adversaries. At Zurich, as in the other cantons, the most violent enemies of the new doctrine were in the Lesser Council. The deputation, defeated before the clergy, carried their complaints before the magistrates. Zuinglius was absent, and there was no reply to be dreaded. The result appeared decisive. The gospel and its defenders were on the point of being condemned without a hearing. Never was the Reformation of Switzerland in greater danger. It was going to be stifled in the cradle. The counsellors in favour of Zuinglius appealed to the Great Council. It was the only remaining plank for escape, and God employed it to save the cause of the gospel. The two hundred were convened. The partisans of the papacy used every mean to exclude Zuinglius, who, on the other hand, did all he could to gain admission. As he himself expresses it, he knocked at every door, and left not a stone unturned, but all in vain! “The thing is impossible,” said the burgomasters;” “the Council has decreed the contrary.” “Then,” relates Zuinglius, “I remained quiet, and with deep sighs carried the matter before Him who hears the groaning of the prisoner, supplicating him to defend His own gospel.”2 The patient, resigned waiting of the servants of God is never disappointed. On the 9th April, the Two Hundred assembled. “We wish to have our pastors here,” immediately exclaimed the members who were in favour of the Reformation. The Lesser Council resisted, but the Great Council decided that the pastors should be present to hear the charge, and answer it, if they thought fit. The deputies from Constance were introduced, and then the three curates of Zurich, Zuinglius, Engelhard, and old Röschli.

After the parties thus brought face to face had for some time eyed each other, the coadjutor rose. “Had his heart and his head been equal to his voice,” says Zuinglius, “he would, in sweetness, have surpassed Apollo and Orpheus, and in force the Gracchi and Demosthenes.”

“The civil constitution,” said the champion of the papacy, “and Christianity itself, are threatened. Men have appeared teaching new, offensive and seditions doctrines.” Then, after speaking at great length, he fixed his eye on the assembled senate, and said, “Remain with the Church, remain in the Church. Out of it none can be saved. Ceremonies alone can bring the simple to the knowledge of salvation, and the pastors of the flocks have nothing else to do than to explain their meaning to the people.” As soon as the coadjutor had finished his speech, he and his party were preparing to leave the council-hall, when Zuinglius said to him, warmly, “Mr. Coadjutor, and you who accompany him, remain, I pray you, till I have defended myself.” The Coadjutor.—“We are not employed to dispute with any man whatever.”

Zuinglius.—“I mean not to dispute, but to explain to you, without fear, what I have taught up to this hour.”

Burgomaster Roust to the Deputies of Constance.—“I pray you listen to the curate’s reply.” The Coadjutor—“I too well know the man with whom I would have to do. Ulric Zuinglius is too violent for any man to dispute with!”

Zuinglius.—“When did it become the practice to attack an innocent man so strongly, and afterwards refuse to hear him? In the name of our common faith—in the name of the baptism which both of us have received—in the name of Christ, the author of salvation and life, listen to me. If you cannot as deputies, at least do it as Christians.”

After firing a volley into the air, Rome retired with hasty steps from the field of battle. The Reformer only asked to speak, and the agent of the papacy thought only of flight. A cause thus pleaded was already gained on the one side and lost on the other. The two hundred could not contain their indignation; a murmur burst forth in the assembly. The burgomaster again pressed the deputies. They felt ashamed, and silently resumed their seats. Then Zuinglius said:

“The Coadjutor speaks of seditious doctrines subversive of civil laws. Let him know that Zurich is quieter, and more obedient to the laws than any other town in Switzerland, and this all good citizens attribute to the gospel. Is not Christianity the most powerful safeguard of justice among a people? What are ceremonies good for, unless it be to sully the face of Christ and Christians?4 Yes, there is another method than these vain observances to bring simple people to the knowledge of the truth—a method which Christ and the Apostles followed in the gospel itself! Have no dread of its not being comprehended by the people! Whoever believes comprehends. The people can believe, and therefore can comprehend. This is a work of the Divine Spirit, and not of human reason. For the rest, he who does not find forty days sufficient may, for me, if he likes, fast every day in the year! All I ask is, that nobody be compelled to do so, and that, for neglect of the minutest observance, the Zurichers be not accused of separating from the communion of Christians …”

“I did not say so,” exclaimed the Coadjutor. “No,” said his colleague, Dr. Brendi, “he did not say it.” But the whole senate confirmed the assertion of Zuinglius, who continued:

“Worthy citizens, let not this accusation move you! The foundation of the Church is that rock, that Christ, who gave Peter his name, because he confessed him faithfully. In every nation whosoever believeth with the heart in the Lord Jesus Christ is saved. This is the Church out of which no man can be saved. As to us ministers of Christ, to explain the gospel and follow it is the whole of our duty. Let those who live by ceremonies make it their business to explain them.” This was to touch the sore part. The Coadjutor blushed and said nothing. The two hundred adjourned, and afterwards, the same day, decided that the pope and cardinals should be requested to explain the controverted point, and that in the meantime flesh should not be eaten during Lent. This was to leave matters on the old footing, and answer the bishop in such a way as to gain time. This struggle had advanced the work of the Reformation. The champions of Rome and of the Reformation had been in presence of each other, and before the eyes of the whole community, and the advantage had not been on the side of the pope. This was the first engagement in what was to be a long and severe campaign, and to exhibit many alternations of grief and joy. But a first victory at the outset gives courage to the whole army, and fills the enemy with dismay. The Reformation had obtained possession of a territory of which it was not again to be deprived. If the Council deemed it necessary to proceed with some degree of caution, the people loudly proclaimed the defeat of Rome. “Never,” said they in the exultation of the moment, “never will they be able to reassemble their beaten and scattered troops.” “You,” said they to Zuinglius, “have with the spirit of St. Paul attacked these false apostles and their Ananias, their whited walls … The utmost the satellites of antichrist can now do is to gnash their teeth against you!” Voices were heard from the centre of Germany joyfully proclaiming “the glory of reviving theology.”2 At the same time, however, the enemies of the gospel mustered their forces. If they were to strike there was no time to be lost, for it would soon be beyond the reach of their blows. Hoffman laid before the chapter a long accusation against the Reformer. “Were the curate even able,” said he, “to prove by witnesses what sins, what irregularities have been committed by ecclesiastics in such a convent, such a street, such a tavern, it would still be his duty not to give any names. Why does he give out (it is true I have scarcely ever heard him myself) that he alone draws his doctrine at the fountain-head, and that others search for it only in sinks and puddles? Is it not impossible, seeing the diversity of spirits, for all to preach the same thing?”

Zuinglius defended himself at a full meeting of the Chapter, scattering the accusations of his opponent “as a bull with his horns tosses straw into the air.” The affair which had appeared so serious ended in laughter at the canon’s expence. But Zuinglius did not stop here; on the 16th April, he published a treatise On the free use of food.

CHAP. XII

Grief and Joy in Germany—Ambush against Zuinglius—Mandate of the Bishop—Archeteles—The Bishop addresses the Diet—Prohibition to attack the Monks—Declaration of Zuinglius—The Nuns of Œtenbach—Zuinglius’ address to Schwitz The Reformer’s immovable firmness delighted the friends of truth, and particularly the Evangelical Christians of Germany, so long deprived by the captivity of the Wartburg, of the mighty apostle who had first raised his head in the bosom of the Church. Pastors and faithful people, now exiled by the inexorable decree which the papacy had obtained at Worms from Charles V, found an asylum in Zurich. Nesse, the professor of Frankfort, whom Luther visited when on his way to Worms, in a letter to Zuinglius says—“Oh, how I am delighted to learn with what authority you preach Christ. Speak words of encouragement to those

who, by the cruelty of wicked bishops, are obliged to flee far from our churches in sorrow." But the adversaries of the Reformation did not confine their cruel plots against its friends to Germany. Scarcely an hour passed at Zurich in which the means of getting rid of Zuinglius were not under consideration. One day he received an anonymous letter, which he immediately communicated to his two vicars. It said, "Snares environ you on every side, mortal poison is ready to deprive you of life.5 Eat only in your own house, and of bread baked by your own cook. The walls of Zurich contain men who are plotting your ruin. The oracle which revealed this to me is truer than that of Delphi. I am on your side, you will yet know me." The day following that on which Zuinglius received this mysterious letter, at the moment when Staheli was going to enter the church of Eau, a chaplain stopped him and said, "Make all haste and quit the house of Zuinglius; a catastrophe is preparing. Fanatics in despair of being able to arrest the Reformation by word, armed themselves with the poniard. When mighty revolutions are accomplished in society, assassins are often thrown up from the impure dregs of the agitated population. God guarded Zuinglius.

While murderers saw their plots defeated, the legitimate organs of the papacy again began to agitate. The bishop and his counsellors were determined to renew the war. From every quarter information to this effect reached Zuinglius, who, leaning on the divine promise, exclaimed with noble confidence, "I fear them … as a lofty shore fears the threatening waves.… συν τ■ Θε■ with God," added he. On the 2nd May, the Bishop of Constance published an order in which, without naming either Zurich or Zuinglius, he complained of the attempts of artful persons to renew the condemned doctrines, and of discussions by the learned and the ignorant, in all places on the most solemn mysteries. John Wanner, the preacher of the cathedral of Constance, was the first that was attacked. "I would rather," said he, "be a Christian with the hatred of many, than abandon Christ for the friendship of the world." But it was at Zurich that the growing heresy required to be crushed. Faber and the bishop knew that Zuinglius had several enemies among the canons, and they were desirous to turn this hatred to account. Toward the end of May, a letter from the bishop arrived at Zurich addressed to the provost and his chapter. "Sons of the church," said the prelate, "let them perish that will perish, but let no one sever you from the church." At the same time the bishop urged the canons to prevent the false doctrines engendered by pernicious sects from being preached and discussed, whether in private or in public. When this letter was read in the chapter, all eyes were turned upon Zuinglius, who, understanding what was meant, said, "I see you think that this letter concerns me; have the goodness to put it into my hand, and by the help of God I will answer it."

Zuinglius did reply in his "Archêtelés," a word which signifies the beginning and end, "for I hope," said he, "that this first answer will also be the last." He spoke in it in very respectful terms of the bishop, and attributed all the attacks of his enemies to some intriguers. "What then have I done?" said he, "I have called all men to the knowledge of their maladies, I have laboured to bring them to the true God and to his Son Jesus Christ. With that view I have employed not captious exhortations, but words simple and true, such as the sons of Switzerland can comprehend." Then passing from the defensive and becoming the assailant, he finely adds, "Julius Cæsar, feeling himself mortally wounded, endeavoured to draw up the folds of his robe that he might fall in a becoming manner. The fall of your ceremonies is at hand; act so at least that they may fall decently, and that in every place light may be quickly substituted for darkness." This was all that the bishop gained by his letter to the chapter of Zurich. Now, therefore, that friendly remonstrances

were vain, it was necessary to strike more decisive blows. Faber and Landenberg turned in another direction—towards the Diet, the national council. There deputies from the bishop arrived to state that their master had issued an order, prohibiting all the priests of his diocese from innovating in matters of doctrine, but that his authority being disregarded he now wished the aid of the heads of the confederation to assist him in bringing the rebellious to obedience, and defending the true and ancient faith.3 The enemies of the Reformation were in a majority in this first assembly of the nation, which a short time before had issued a decree prohibiting the preaching of all priests whose discourses, as it was expressed, produced discord among the people. This decree of the Diet, which thus, for the first time, took up the question of the Reformation, had no result, but now having determined on vigorous measures, this body summoned before it Urban Weiss, pastor of Feilispach, near Baden, whom public rumour charged with preaching the new faith and rejecting the old. Weiss was respited for some time on the intercession of several individuals, and on bail for a hundred florins offered by his parishioners. But the Diet had taken its part, and having just given proof of it, the priests and monks began every where to resume courage. At Zurich, even after the first decree, they had begun to behave more imperiously. Several members of council were in the practice, morning and evening, of visiting the three convents, and even taking their victuals there. The monks laboured to indoctrinate their kind table companions, and urged them to procure a decree of the government in their favour. “If Zuinglius won’t be silent,” said they, “we will cry louder still!” The Diet had taken part with the oppressors. The council of Zurich knew not what to do. On the 7th of June, it issued an order forbidding any one to preach against the monks, “but scarcely was the order resolved upon, than,” says the chronicle of Bullinger, “a sudden noise was heard in the council chamber, and made every one look at his neighbour.” Peace was not re-established. The war waged from the pulpit waxed hotter and hotter. The council named a deputation who called the pastors of Zurich and the readers and preachers of the convents to meet them in the provost’s house; after a keen discussion, the burgomaster enjoined the two parties not to preach any thing which might interrupt concord. “I cannot accept this injunction,” said Zuinglius; “I mean to preach the gospel freely and unconditionally in conformity to the resolution previously adopted. I am bishop and pastor of Zurich; it is to me that the care of souls has been entrusted. It was I that took the oath, not the monks. They ought to yield, not I. If they preach lies I will contradict them, and that even in the pulpit of their own convent. If I myself preach a doctrine contrary to the Holy Gospel, then I ask to be rebuked, not only by the chapter, but by any citizen whatever, and moreover, to be punished by the Council.”2 “We,” said the monks, “we demand to be permitted to preach the doctrines of St. Thomas.” The committee of the Council having deliberated, ordered that Thomas, Scotus, and the other doctors, should be let alone, and nothing preached but the Holy Gospel. Thus the truth had once more gained the victory. But the wrath of the partisans of the papacy increased. The Ultra-Montanc canons could not conceal their anger. They impertinently eyed Zuinglius in the chapter, and by their looks seemed to demand his life.

Zuinglius was not deterred by their menaces. There was one place in Zurich where, thanks to the Dominicans, the light had not yet penetrated; this was the nunnery of Œtenbach. The daughters of the first families of Zurich there took the veil. It seemed unjust that these poor females, confined within the walls of their monastery, should alone be excluded from hearing the Word of God. The Great Council ordered Zuinglius to repair to it, and the Reformer having mounted a pulpit which had hitherto been given up to the Dominicans, preached “on the clearness and certainty of the

Word of God." He at a later period published this remarkable discourse, which was not without fruit, and irritated the monks still more. A circumstance occurred to augment this hatred, and give it a place in many other hearts. The Swiss, headed by Stein and Winkelried, had just experienced a bloody defeat at Bicoque. They had rushed impetuously on the enemy, but the artillery of Pescaire and the lancers of that Freundsberg, whom Luther had met at the door of the hall of Worms, had thrown down both leaders and colours, whole companies falling and disappearing at once. Winkelried and Stein, Mulinen, Diesbachs, Bonstettens, Tschudis, and Pfyffers, were left on the battle-field. Schwitz, especially, had been mown down. The bloody wrecks of this dreadful conflict had returned to Switzerland, spreading mourning at every step. A wail of grief had resounded from the Alps to the Jura, and from the Rhone to the Rhine. But none had felt a deeper pang than Zuinglius. He immediately sent an address to Schwitz dissuading its citizens from foreign service. "Your ancestors," said he to them, with all the warmth of a Swiss heart, "forgot their enemies in defence of their liberties, but they never put Christians to death in order to gain money. These foreign wars bring innumerable calamities on our country. The scourges of God chastise our confederacy, and Helvetic freedom is on the eve of being lost between the selfish caresses and the mortal hatred of foreign princes. Zuinglius went hand in hand with Nicolas Flue, and renewed the entreaties of that man of peace. This exhortation having been presented to the assembly of the people of Schwitz had such an effect that a resolution was passed to desist prospectively for twenty-five years from capitulation. But the French party soon succeeded in getting the generous resolution rescinded, and Schwitz was thenceforth the canton most decidedly opposed to Zuinglius and his works. The very disasters which the partisans of foreign capitulation brought upon their country only increased the hatred of those men against the bold minister, who endeavoured to rescue his country from all this misfortune and all this disgrace. Thus throughout the confederation a party which daily grew more and more violent was formed against Zurich and Zuinglius. The customs of the Church and the practices of the recruiters being at once attacked, they made common cause in resisting the impetus of Reform by which their existence was threatened. At the same time external enemies multiplied. Not merely the pope but other foreign princes also vowed inextinguishable hatred to the Reformation, because it was aiming to deprive them of those Helvetic halberds, to which their ambition and their pride owed so many triumphs? But the cause of the gospel had still God on its side and the best among the people: this was sufficient. Besides, individuals from different countries exiled for their faith were led by the hand of Providence to give Switzerland their aid.

CHAP. XIII A French monk—He teaches in Switzerland—Dispute between the Monk and Zuinglius—Discourse of the Leader of the Johannites—The Carnival at Berne—The Eaters of the Dead—The Skull of St. Anne—Appenzel—The Grisons—Murder and Adultery—Marriage of Zuinglius. On Saturday the 12th July there was seen entering the streets of Zurich a monk, tall, thin, stiff, gaunt, clad in a grey cordelier frock, and mounted upon an ass. He had the look of a foreigner, and his bare feet almost touched the ground. He arrived thus by the road from Avignon. He did not know one word of German, but by means of Latin succeeded in making himself understood. Francis Lambert (this was his name) asked for Zuinglius and delivered him a letter from Berthold Haller. "The Franciscan father," wrote the Bernese curate, "who is no less than the apostolic preacher of the general convent of Avignon, has, for nearly five years, been teaching Christian truth: he has preached in Latin to our priests at Geneva, at Lausanne in presence of the bishop, at Friburg, and finally at Berne. His subjects were, the Church, the priesthood, the sacrifice

of the mass, the traditions of the Roman bishops, and the superstitions of the religious orders. It seemed to me wonderful to hear such things from a cordelier and a Frenchman—circumstances, both of which, as you know, imply a host of superstitions."2 The Frenchman himself related to Zuinglius how the writings of Luther having been discovered in his cell, he had been obliged to take a hasty leave of Avignon; how he had first preached the gospel at Geneva, and thereafter at Lausanne. Zuinglius, overjoyed, gave the monk access to the church of Notre Dame, assigning him a seat in the choir near the high altar. Lambert here delivered four sermons, in which he forcibly attacked the errors of Rome, but in the fourth he defended the invocation of the saints and the Virgin.

"Brother, you are in error," immediately exclaimed an animated voice. It was the voice of Zuinglius. Canons and chaplains thrilled with joy when they saw a quarrel rising between the Frenchman and the heretical curate. "He has attacked you," said they all to Lambert: "demand a public discussion." The man of Avignon did so, and at ten o'clock on the morning of the 12th of July, the two chaplains met in the hall of the canons. Zuinglius opened the Old and New Testament in Greek and Latin: he discussed and lectured till two. Then the French monk, clasping his hands, and raising them towards heaven, exclaimed, "I thank thee, O God, that thou hast by this illustrious instrument given me such a clear knowledge of the truth! Henceforth," added he, turning towards the assembly, "in all my distresses I will invoke God only and leave off my beads. To-morrow I resume my journey. I go to Bâle to see Erasmus of Rotterdam, and thence to Wittemberg to see the monk Martin Luther." He accordingly remounted his ass and set out. We will again meet with him. He was the first exile from France, for the cause of the gospel, who appeared in Switzerland and Germany—a modest fore-runner of many thousands of refugees and confessors.

Myconius had no such consolation. On the contrary he saw Sebastian Hofmeister, who had come from Constance to Lucerne, and there boldly preached the gospel, obliged to quit the city. Then Oswald's grief increased. The moist climate of Lucerne disagreed with him. He was wasted by fever; and the physicians declared that if he did not change his residence he would die. Writing to Zuinglius, he says, "There is no place I should like better to be than beside yourself, and no place worse than at Lucerne. Men torture, and the climate consumes me. My disease, some say, is the punishment of my iniquity. Ah, it is vain to speak, vain to act: every thing is poison to them. There is One in heaven on whom alone my hope depends." This hope was not vain. It was towards the end of March, and the feast of the Annunciation was at hand. The evening before there was a great solemnity in commemoration of a fire which in 1540 had reduced the greater part of the town to ashes. Multitudes from the surrounding districts had flocked into Lucerne, and several hundreds of priests were then assembled. Some distinguished orator was usually employed to preach on this great occasion. Conrad Schmid, commander of the Johannites, arrived to discharge the duty. An immense crowd thronged the church. What was the general astonishment on hearing the commander lay aside the pompous Latin to which they had been accustomed, and speak in good German, so that all could comprehend him, enforce with authority and holy fervour the love of God in sending his Son, eloquently prove that external works cannot save, and that the promises of God are truly the power of the gospel. "God forbid," said the commander to his astonished audience, "that we should receive a chief so full of lies as the Bishop of Rome, and reject Jesus Christ. If the Bishop of Rome dispenses the bread of the gospel, let us receive him as pastor, but not as head; and if he does not dispense it, let us not receive him in any way whatever." Oswald

was unable to restrain his joy. “What a man!” exclaimed he: “what a discourse! what majesty! what authority! what overflowing of the Spirit of Christ!” The impression was general. To the agitation which filled the town succeeded a solemn silence; but all this was transient. When nations shut their ears against the calls of God, these calls are diminished from day to day, and soon cease. Thus it was at Lucerne. At Berne, while the truth was preached from the pulpit, the papacy was attacked at the merry-makings of the people. Nicolas Manuel, a distinguished layman, celebrated for his poetical talents, and advanced to the first offices in the state, indignant at seeing his countrymen pillaged by Samson, composed carnival dramas, in which, with the keen weapon of satire, he attacked the avarice, pride, and luxury of the pope and the clergy. On the Shrove Tuesday “of the Lords,” (the clergy were at this time the lords, and began Lent eight days before the common people,) all Berne was engrossed with a drama or mystery entitled, “The Eaters of the Dead,” which young boys were going to perform in the street of La Croix. The people flocked to it in crowds. In regard to the progress of art, these dramatic sketches of the beginning of the sixteenth century are of some interest; but we give them here with a very different view. We would have been better pleased not to have had to quote squibs of this description on the part of the Reformation, for truth triumphs by other arms. But the historian does not make his facts. He must give them as he finds them. At length, to the delight of the eager crowds assembled in the street of La Croix, the representation began. The pope is seen clad in gorgeous robes, and seated on a throne. Around him stand his courtiers, his body guards, and a promiscuous band of priests of high and low degree; behind are nobles, laymen, and mendicants. A funeral train shortly appears: it is a rich farmer on the way to his last home. Two of his relatives walk slowly in front of the coffin with napkins in their hand. The train having arrived in front of the pope, the bier is laid down at his feet, and the drama begins: first relative in a tone of deep grief O noble army of the sainted host, Take pity on our doleful plight; Our cousin, our illustrious boast, From life, alas, has taken flight.

Expence we grudge not; cheerfully we’ll pay For priests, monks, and nuns, in costly array:

Yea, one hundred crowns we’ll freely devote If thereby exemption may surely be bought From purgatory, that dread scourge, With which our frightened souls they urge. The Sacristan, breaking off from the band surrounding the pope, and running hastily to Curate Robert Ever-More—

Something to drink, Master Curate, I crave; A farmer of note now goes to his grave. the curate One!—nay you must tell me of ten: My thirst will ne’er be quenched till then.

Life flourishes when mortals die, For death to me brings jollity. the sacristan Ah! could it shorten mankind’s breath!

I’d ring a merry peal for death! No other trade succeeds so well As tolling out life’s parting knell. the curate But does the bell of death the portals draw Of heaven’s wide gate? I cannot, may not say;

What boots it? to my house it brings Both fish and flesh, and all good things. the curate’s niece Tis well: I, too, anon will claim my share. This day this soul must pay to me my fare— A robe, white, red, and green, a flowered damas, A pretty kerchief likewise for my eyes at mass.

Cardinal High-Pride adorned with a red hat, and close by the pope:—

If death brought us no heritage, Would we cause die in flower of age, On battle-plain, Such heaps of slain, Roused by intrigue, by envy fired?

Yes, Rome with Christian blood grows fat!

Therefore I hoist this scarlet hat, To tell the trophies thus acquired bishop wolf-belly In papal rites I'll live and die, And clothe me in silk embroidery; In foray or chace I'll take my pleasure, And eat and drink in ample measure; Had I been priest in days of yore, A peasant's dress I then had wore.

We once were shepherds, but now we reign kings, For a shepherd I'll pass 'mong the lambkins poor things … a voice When? When shall this be? bishop When the wool of the flock shall be gathered by me.

We truly are wolves, yet we're shepherds of sheep, They must feed us, or death is the best they shall reap. His Holiness forbids to marry; This yoke the wisest ne'er could carry— But then! when priests do cross the score, The scandal only swells my store, And makes my train extend the more.

Nought I refuse, e'en farthings tell, A monied priest may have a belle.

Four florins a-year will wipe it away; Does an infant appear?—again he must pay. On two thousand florins I reckon each year, Were they chaste, I should starve on a pittance I fear.

Then hail to the pope; on my knees I adore And swear in his faith to live evermore; His church I'll defend, and till death I avow, He alone is the god before whom I will bow. the pope The people now at length believe That priests can all their sins reprieve At pleasure—that to them is given Full power to shut or open heaven.

Preach loudly, every high decree, Of him, the conclave's majesty.

Then, we are kings, the laity slaves: But if the gospel standard waves We're lost; for no where does it say, Make sacrifice, let priests have pay. The gospel course for us would be, To live and die in poverty.

Instead of steeds to mark my state, And chariots on my sons to wait, A paltry ass must needs supply A seat for sacred majesty.

No, I cannot take such legacy, I'll thunder at such temerity;

Let us but will—the world will nod, And nations adore us as God.

Slighting their rights I mount my throne, And partition the world among my own;

Vile laity must keep far aloof, Nor dare to enter our blest roof, To touch our tribute, or our gold.

Holy water e'en let them hold.

We will not continue this literal translation of Manuel's drama. The agony of the clergy on learning the efforts of the Reformers, and their rage against those who threaten to interfere with their irregularities, are painted in lively colours. The dissolute manners of which this piece gave so vivid a representation were too common not to strike the spectator with the truth of the picture. The people were excited. Many jibes were heard as they retired from the play in the street of La Croix;

but some who took the matter more seriously, spoke of Christian liberty and papal despotism, and contrasted the simplicity of the gospel with the pomp of Rome. The contempt of the people was soon displayed in the public streets. On Ash Wednesday, the indulgences were promenaded through the town amid satirical songs. In Berne, and throughout Switzerland a severe blow had been given to the ancient edifice of the papacy.

Sometime after this representation, another comedy was acted at Berne, but there was no fiction in it. The clergy, council, and corporation had assembled in front of the Upper Gate, waiting for the skull of St. Anne, which the famous knight, Albert of Stein, had gone to fetch from Lyons. At length Stein appeared, holding the holy relic wrapt in a covering of silk. As it passed, the Bishop of Lausanne knelt down before it. This precious skull, the skull of the Virgin's mother, is carried in procession to the church of the Dominicans, and, amid the ringing of bells, enters the church, where it is placed with great solemnity on the altar consecrated to it, behind a splendid grating. But amid all this joy, a letter arrives from the abbot of the convent of Lyon, where the relics of the saint were deposited, intimating that what the monks had sold to the knight was a profane bone taken at random from the burying ground. The trick thus played off on the illustrious city of Berne filled its citizens with deep indignation. The Reformation was making progress in other parts of Switzerland. In 1521, Walter Klarer, a young man of Appenzel, returned to his native canton from the university of Paris. Luther's writings fell into his hands, and, in 1522, he preached the evangelical doctrine with all the ardour of a young convert. An innkeeper, named Rausberg, a wealthy and pious man, and a member of the council of Appenzel, opened his house to all the friends of truth. Bartholomew Berweger, a famous captain, who had fought for Julius II and for Leo X, having at this time returned from Rome, began forthwith to persecute the evangelical ministers. One day, however, remembering how much vice he had seen at Rome, he began to read the Bible, and to attend the sermons of the new preachers; his eyes were opened, and he embraced the gospel. Seeing that the crowds could not be contained in the churches, he proposed that they should preach in the fields and the public squares, and, notwithstanding of keen opposition, the hills, meadows, and mountains of Appenzel, thenceforward often echoed with the glad tidings of salvation. The reformed doctrine, ascending the Rhine, made its way as far as ancient Rhætia. One day, a stranger from Zurich crossed the river, and waited on the saddler of Flasch, the frontier village of the Grisons. Christian Anhorn, the saddler, listened in astonishment to the language of his visitor. "Preach," said the whole village to the stranger, who was called James Burkli. He accordingly took his station in front of the altar. A number of persons arrived, with Anhorn at their head, and stood round to defend him from a sudden attack while he preached the gospel. The rumour of this preaching spread far and wide; and, on the following Sunday, an immense crowd assembled. Shortly after, a great proportion of the inhabitants of the district desired to have the Lord's Supper dispensed to them according to its original institution. But one day the tocsin suddenly sounded in Mayenfield; the people ran in alarm; and the priests, after pointing out the danger which threatened the Church, hastened at the head of the fanatical population to Flasch. Anhorn, who was working in the field, astonished at hearing the sound of bells at so unusual an hour, hastened home and concealed Burkli in a deep hole dug in his cellar. The house was by this time surrounded; the door was forced open, and the heretical preacher everywhere searched for in vain. At length the persecutors withdrew. The Word of God spread over the extent of the ten jurisdictions. The curate of Mayenfield, on returning from Rome, to which he had fled infuriated at the success of the gospel, exclaimed, "Rome has made me evangelical," and became a zealous

reformer. The Reformation soon extended to the league of “the House of God.” “Oh!” exclaimed Salandronius to Vadian, “if you but saw how the inhabitants of the mountains of Rhætia cast far from them the yoke of the Babylonish captivity!”

Shocking disorders hastened the day when Zurich and the neighbouring districts were to shake off the yoke. A married schoolmaster wishing to become a priest, obtained his wife’s consent, and they separated. The new curate was unable to keep his vow of celibacy, but not to outrage his wife’s feelings quitted the place where she lived, and, having taken up his residence in the diocese of Constance, formed a licentious connection. His wife hastened to the place. The poor priest took compassion on her, and dismissing the person who had usurped her rights, took back his lawful spouse. The procurator-fiscal forthwith drew up a charge against him: the vicar-general began to move; the council of the consistory deliberated … and the curate was ordered to abandon his wife or his benefice. The poor wife left the house weeping bitterly, and her rival returned in triumph. The Church declared itself satisfied, and thenceforth let the adulterous priest alone.

Shortly after a curate of Lucerne eloped with a married woman, and lived with her. The husband went to Lucerne and taking advantage of the priest’s absence brought away his wife. While returning they were met by the seducer, who immediately attacked the injured husband, and gave him a wound of which he died. All good men felt the necessity of re-establishing the divine law, which declares marriage honorable in all. The evangelical ministers had taught that the law of celibacy was of merely human origin, imposed by Roman pontiffs in opposition to the Word of God, which, when describing a true bishop, represents him as a husband and father. (1 Timothy 3:2 and 1 Timothy 3:4) They saw at the same time, that of all the abuses which had crept into the Church none had caused more numerous vices and scandals. They considered it not only as a thing lawful but as a duty in the sight of God to withdraw from its authority. Several of them at this time returned to the ancient practice of apostolic times. Xylotect was married. Zuinglius also married at this period. No lady was more respected in Zurich than Anna Reinhard, widow of Meyer of Knonau, the mother of Gerold. From the arrival of Zuinglius she had been one of his most attentive hearers: she lived in his neighbourhood, and he observed her piety, modesty, and fondness for her children. Young Gerold, who had become as it were his adopted son, brought him into closer connection with his mother. The trials already endured by this Christian woman, who was one day to be the most cruelly tried of all the women whose history is on record, had given her a gravity which made her evangelical virtues still more prominent. She was now about thirty-five years of age, and her own fortune amounted only to four hundred florins. It was on her that Zuinglius, on looking out for a companion for life, turned his eye. He felt how sacred and intimate the conjugal union is. He termed it “a most holy alliance.”2 “As Christ,” said he, “died for his people, and gave himself to them entirely, so ought husband and wife to do and suffer every thing for each other.” But Zuinglius, when he took Anna Reinhard to wife, did not immediately publish his marriage. This was undoubtedly a culpable weakness in a man otherwise so resolute. The light which he and his friends had acquired on the subject of celibacy was not generally diffused. The weak might have been offended. He feared that his usefulness in the Church might be paralysed if his marriage were made public. He sacrificed part of his happiness to these fears—fears to which, though respectable perhaps, he should have been superior.4

CHAP. XIV

How Truth triumphs—Society at Einsidlen—Request to the Bishops—to the Confederates—The Men of Einsidlen separate—A Scene in a Convent—A Dinner by Myconius—The Strength of the Reformers—Effect of the Petitions to Lucerne—The Council of the Diet—Haller at the Town-House—Friburg—Destitution of Oswald—Zuinglius comforts him—Oswald quits Lucerne—First severity of the Diet—Consternation of the Brothers of Zuinglius—His Resolution—The Future—The Prayer of Zuinglius.

Meanwhile still higher interests occupied the friends of truth. The Diet, as we have seen, urged by the enemies of the Reformation, had ordered the evangelical preachers to desist from preaching the doctrines which troubled the people. Zuinglius felt that the moment for action had arrived, and with the energy which characterised him, called a meeting of the ministers of the Lord, the friends of the gospel, at Einsidlen. The strength of Christians is neither in carnal weapons, nor the flames of martyrdom—it is in a simple but unanimous and intrepid profession of these great truths to which the world must one day be subjugated. In particular, God calls upon those who serve him to hold these heavenly doctrines prominently forth in presence of the whole people without being dismayed by the clamour of adversaries. Those truths are able of themselves to secure their triumph, and as of old with the ark of God, idols cannot stand in their presence. The time had come when God willed that the great doctrine of salvation should be confessed in Switzerland. It was necessary that the gospel standard should be planted on some eminence. Providence was going to draw humble but intrepid men out of unknown retreats that they might bear a striking testimony in presence of the nation.

Towards the end of June and the beginning of July, 1522, pious ministers were seen proceeding in all directions towards the celebrated chapel of Einsidlen on a new pilgrimage. From Art, in the canton of Schwitz, came its curate, Balthasar Traschel; from Weiningen near Baden, curate Staheli; from Zug, Werner Steiner; from Lucerne, canon Kilchmeyer; from Uster, curate Pfister; from Hongg, near Zurich, curate Stumpff; from Zurich itself, canon Fabricius, chaplain Schmid, the preacher of the hospital, Grosmann, and Zuinglius. Leo Juda, curate of Einsidlen, most cordially welcomed all these ministers of Jesus Christ to the ancient abbey. Since the time when Zuinglius took up his residence in it, this place had been a citadel of truth, and a hotel of the just.2 In like manner had thirty-three bold patriots, resolved to break the yoke of Austria, met two hundred years before in the solitary plain of Grutli. The object of the meeting at Einsidlen was to break the yoke of human authority in the things of God. Zuinglius proposed to his friends to present earnest addresses to the cantons, and to the bishop, praying for the free preaching of the gospel, and at the same time for the abolition of compulsory celibacy, the source of so many irregularities. The proposal was unanimously adopted. Ulric had himself prepared the addresses. That to the bishop was first read. It was dated 2nd July, 1522, and signed by all the evangelists we have mentioned. The preachers of the truth in Switzerland were united in cordial affection. Many others besides sympathised with the party at Einsidlen: such were Haller, Myconius, Hedio, Capito, Œcolampadius, Sebastian Meyer, Hoffmister, and Wanner. This harmony is one of the finest traits in the Swiss Reformation. These excellent persons always acted as one man, and remained friends till death. The men of Einsidlen were aware that it was only by the power of faith that the members of the Confederation, divided by foreign enlistments, could become one body. But their views were carried higher. “The celestial doctrine,” said they to their ecclesiastical head, in the address of 2nd July, “that truth which God the Creator has manifested by his Son to the human

race now plunged in evil, has been long veiled from our eyes by the ignorance, not to say the malice of certain men. But God Almighty has resolved to re-establish it in its primitive condition. Join yourself to those who demand that the multitude of the faithful return to their head, who is Christ. For our part we have resolved to promulgate his gospel with indefatigable perseverance, and at same time with such wisdom that none can complain. Favour this enterprise; astonishing, perhaps, but not rash. Be like Moses on the march at the head of the people coming out of Egypt, and overthrow the obstacles which oppose the triumphant progress of truth."

After this warm appeal, the evangelists met at Einsidlen came to celibacy. Zuinglius had no longer any demand to make on this head for himself, having already one answering the description given by Paul of what a minister's wife ought to be, grave, sober, faithful in all things. (1 Timothy 3:2) But he thought of his brethren, whose consciences were not yet like his, emancipated from human ordinances. He sighed moreover for the time when all the servants of God might live openly and without fear in the bosom of their own family, keeping their children, says the apostle, in subjection, with all gravity (1 Timothy 3:4) "You are not ignorant," said the men of Einsidlen, that hitherto chastity has been deplorably violated by the priests. When on the consecration of the servants of the Lord he who speaks for all is asked, 'Are those whom you present righteous? He answers—They are righteous. Are they learned? They are learned. But when he is asked—Are they chaste? he answers: As far as human weakness permits. Everything in the New Testament condemns licentiousness: every thing in it sanctions marriage." Then follows the quotation of a great number of passages. "Wherefore," they continued, "we implore you by the love of Christ, by the liberty which he has purchased for us, by the misery of so many weak and wavering souls, by the wounds of so many ulcerated consciences, by every thing human and divine; … allow that which was rashly done to be wisely repealed, lest the majestic edifice of the Church fall with fearful uproar, and drag boundless ruin after it.3 See with what storms the world is threatened. If wisdom interpose not it is all over with the priesthood." The petition to the Confederation was of greater length. The band of Einsidlen, addressing the Confederates, thus conclude: "Honoured Sirs,—we are all Swiss, and you are our fathers. There are some among us who have shown themselves faithful in combat, in plague, and other calamities. It is in the name of true chastity that we speak to you. Who knows not that we could satisfy sensual appetite far better by not submitting to the laws of a legitimate union? But it is necessary to put an end to the scandals which afflict the church of Christ. If the tyranny of the Roman pontiff would oppress us, fear nothing, brave heroes! The authority of the Word of God, the rights of Christian liberty, and the sovereign power of grace, guard around us. We have the same country, we have the same faith, we are Swiss, and the valour of our illustrious ancestors always manifested its power by an indomitable defence of those oppressed by injustice."

Thus in Einsidlen itself, in this old rampart of superstition, which is still, in our day, one of the most famous sanctuaries of Roman superstition, Zuinglius and his friends boldly raised the standard of truth and freedom. They appealed to the heads of the State and the Church. They fixed their thesis, like Luther, both on the gate of the episcopal palace and on that of the national council. The friends met at Einsidlen parted calm, joyful, full of hope in that God to whom they had committed their cause. Some passing near the battle-field of Morgarten, others over the chain of the Albis, and others again by different valleys or mountains, all returned to their posts. "There was truly something grand in these times," says Henry Bullinger, "in men thus daring to put themselves

forward, rallying around the gospel, and exposing themselves to all dangers. But God defended them so, that no evil reached them: for God preserves his people at all times." It was indeed something grand, it was a great step in the progress of the Reformation, one of the brightest days of religious revival in Switzerland. A holy confederation was formed at Einsidlen. Humble and courageous men had seized the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and the shield of faith. The gauntlet was thrown down, and the challenge given, not by a single man, but by men of different cantons, ready to sacrifice their lives. It only remained to await the battle.

Everything announced that it was to be fierce. Five days after (7th July), the magistracy of Zurich, wishing to give some satisfaction to the Roman party, summoned before them Conrad Grebel and Claus Hottinger, two of those extreme men who seemed desirous to go beyond the bounds of a wise Reformation. "We forbid you," said Burgomaster Roust, "to speak against the monks or on controverted points." At these words, a loud noise was heard in the chamber, says an ancient chronicle. God was so manifestly in favour of the work, that people were everywhere anticipating signs of his interposition. All present looked around in astonishment, without being able to discover the cause of this mysterious circumstance. But indignation was carried to its greatest height in convents. Every meeting held in them, whether for discipline or festivity, witnessed some new attack. One day, when a great festival was celebrated in the convent of Fraubrunn, the wine having got into the heads of the guests, they began to shoot the most envenomed arrows at the gospel. What especially excited the rage of these priests and monks was the evangelical doctrine—that in the Christian Church there ought to be no sacerdotal caste above believers. Only one friend of the Reformation, a simple layman, Macrin, schoolmaster at Solcure, was present. He at first shunned the contest by changing his seat to another table. But at last, no longer able to endure the furious invectives of the guests, he stood up boldly, and exclaimed, "Yes, all true Christians are priests, and offer sacrifice according to the words of St. Peter, 'You are a royal priesthood.'" At these words, one of the most intrepid bawlers, the dean of Burgdorff, a tall, stout man, with a stentorian voice, uttered a loud laugh. "You little Greeks and school rats! You a royal priesthood!… Beautiful priesthood!… Mendicant kings!… priests without prebends and benefices!" And instantly all the priests and monks fell with one accord on the impudent laic. But it was in Lucerne that the bold step of the men of Einsidlen was to produce the strongest sensation. The Diet had met in this town, and complaints arrived from all quarters against the rash preachers who were preventing Helvetia from quietly selling the blood of her sons to the stranger. On the 22nd July, as Oswald Myconius was entertaining canon Kilchmeyer, and several other friends of the gospel, at dinner, a boy, sent by Zuinglius, knocked at the door. He was the bearer of the two famous petitions from Einsidlen, and of a letter from Zuinglius, which requested Oswald to circulate them in Lucerne. "My advice is, that the thing be done quietly, by degrees, rather than all at once; but, for the love of Christ, it is necessary to forsake everything, even wife."

Thus the crisis approached in Lucerne: the shell had fallen, and could not but burst. The guests read the petitions. "May God bless this beginning," said Oswald, looking up to heaven, and then added, "This prayer must, from this moment, be the constant occupation of our hearts." The petitions were forthwith circulated, perhaps with more ardour than Zuinglius had requested. But the moment was singular. Eleven individuals, the flower of the clergy, had placed themselves in the breach: it was necessary to enlighten men's minds, to fix the irresolute, and gain over the most influential members of the Diet.

Oswald, in the midst of this labour, did not forget his friend. The young messenger had told him of the attacks which Zuinglius had to endure from the monks at Zurich. Writing him the same day, he says, “The truth of the Holy Spirit is invincible. Armed with the shield of the Holy Scriptures you have remained conqueror, not in one combat only, nor in two, but in three, and the fourth is now commencing.… Seize those powerful weapons which are harder than diamond! Christ, in order to protect his people, has need only of his Word. Your struggles give indomitable courage to all who have devoted themselves to Jesus Christ.” At Lucerne, the petitions did not produce the result anticipated. Some pious men approved of them, but these were few in number. Several, fearing to compromise themselves, were unwilling either to praise or blame. “These folks,” said others, “will never bring this affair to a good end!” All the priests murmured, grumbled, and muttered between their teeth. As to the people, they were loud against the gospel. A rage for war was awakened in Lucerne after the bloody defeat of Bicoque, and engrossed all thoughts.3 Oswald, who was an attentive observer of these different impressions, felt his courage shaken. The evangelical future which he had anticipated for Lucerne and Switzerland seemed to vanish. “Our people,” said he, uttering a deep sigh, “are blind to the things of heaven. In regard to the glory of Christ, there is no hope of the Swiss.”

Wrath prevailed, especially in the Council and the Diet. The pope, France, England, and the empire, all around Switzerland, was in agitation after the defeat of Bicoque, and the evacuation of Lombardy by the French under Lautrec. Were not political interests at that moment complicated enough before these eleven men came with their petitions to mingle religious questions with them? The deputies of Zurich alone were favourably disposed to the gospel. Canon Xylotect, afraid for his own life and that of his wife, (he had married into one of the first families in the country,) had refused, with tears of regret, to repair to Einsidlen and sign the addresses. Canon Kilchmeyer had shown greater courage. He, too, had everything to fear. “Condemnation threatens me,” he writes to Zuinglius, on the 13th August; “I await it without fear …” As he was writing these words, an officer of the council entered the room, and cited him to appear next day.” “If they put me in irons,” said he, continuing his letter, “I claim your help; but it will be easier to transport a rock from our Alps than to move me a finger’s breadth from the word of Jesus Christ.” The regard which was deemed due to his family, and the resolution which they had taken to let the storm fall upon Oswald, saved the canon.

Berthold Haller, probably because he was not a Swiss, had not signed the petitions. But full of courage, he, like Zuinglius, expounded the gospel according to Matthew. A vast crowd filled the cathedral of Berne. The word of God operated more powerfully on the people than Manuel’s dramas. Haller was summoned to the Town House; the people accompanied their good-natured pastor, and remained around the spot. The council was divided. “This concerns the bishop,” said the leading men. “The preacher must be handed over to my lord of Lausanne.” The friends of Haller trembled at these words, and told him to withdraw as quickly as possible. The people flocked round, and accompanied him to his house, where a great number of burghers remained in arms prepared to make a rampart of their bodies in defence of their humble pastor. The bishop and council were overawed by this energetic demonstration, and Haller was saved. Haller was not the only combatant at Berne. Sebastian Meyer at this time refuted the pastoral letter of the Bishop of Constance, and in particular the formidable charge, “that the gospellers teach a new doctrine, but that the old doctrine is the true.” “To be wrong for two thousand years,” said Meyer, “is not to

be right for a single hour; otherwise the heathen ought to have adhered to their belief. If the most ancient doctrines must carry the day, fifteen hundred years are more than five hundred years, and the gospel is more ancient than the ordinances of the pope." At this period the magistrates of Friburg intercepted letters addressed to Haller and Meyer by a canon of Friburg, named John Hollard, a native of Orb. They imprisoned, then deposed, and at last banished him. John Vannius, a chorister in the cathedral, shortly after embraced the evangelical doctrine; for in the Christian warfare one soldier no sooner falls than another takes his place. "How could the muddy water of the Tiber," said Vannius, "subsist beside the pure water which Luther has drawn from the spring of St. Paul." But the chorister's mouth was also closed. Myconius wrote to Zuinglius, "Scarcely will you find in Switzerland men more averse to the gospel than the Friburghers."

Lucerne ought to have been stated as an exception. This Myconius knew. He had not signed the famous petitions, but his friends had if he had not, and a victim was required. The ancient literature of Greece and Rome began, thanks to him, to shed some light in Lucerne; numbers arrived from different quarters to attend the learned professor, and the friends of peace were charmed with sounds sweeter than those of halberds, swords, and cuirasses, which alone had hitherto resounded in the warlike city. Oswald had sacrificed everything for his country. He had quitted Zurich and Zuinglius; he had lost his health; his wife was pining; his son was in childhood; if even Lucerne rejected him he could nowhere hope for an asylum. But no matter; factions have no pity, and the thing which ought to excite their compassion stimulates their rage. Herbenstein, burgomaster of Lucerne, an old and valiant warrior who had gained a distinguished name in the wars of Suabia and Burgundy, followed up the deposition of the teacher, and wished, to banish, from the canton, with himself, his Greek, his Latin, and his gospel. He succeeded. On coming out of the Council, after the sederunt at which Myconius had been deposed, Herbenstein met the Zurich deputy, Berguer. "We are sending you back your schoolmaster," said he to him ironically, "get a good lodging for him." "We wont let him sleep in the open air,"3 immediately replied the courageous deputy. But Berguer promised more than he could perform. The news given by the burgomaster were but too true, and were soon intimated to the unhappy Myconius. He is deposed and banished, and the only crime laid to his charge is that of being a disciple of Luther. He looks all around but nowhere finds a shelter. He sees his wife, his son, and himself, all three feeble and sickly, exiled from their country, and Switzerland, all around agitated by a whirlwind, which breaks and destroys every thing that stands in its way. "Here," said he then to Zuinglius, "is poor Myconius banished by the council of Lucerne.5 … Whither shall I go? I know not … Assailed yourself by these furious-storms how could you shelter me? I cry then in my distress to that God who is the first in whom I hope, who is ever bountiful, ever kind, and who never calls upon any to seek his face in vain. May He supply my wants!"

Thus spoke Oswald, and he was not obliged to wait long for a word of consolation. There was one in Switzerland inured to the battles of the faith. Zuinglius drew near to his friend, and comforting him, thus expressed himself, "The blows by which men attempt to overthrow the house of God are so violent, and the assaults which they make upon it so frequent that not only do the wind and rain beat upon it, as our Saviour predicted, (Matthew 7:27) but the hail and the thunder. Had I not perceived the Lord guiding the ship I should, long ere now, have cast the helm into the sea, but I see him amid the tempest, strengthening the tackling, arranging the yards, stretching the sails, what do I say? commanding the very winds … Should I not then be a coward unworthy of the

name of a man if I abandoned my post and fled to a shameful death? I confide entirely in his sovereign goodness. Let him govern, transport, hasten, retard, precipitate, arrest, break down, let him even plunge us to the bottom of the abyss, we fear nothing.2 We are vessels which belong to him. He can use us as he pleases, for honour or disgrace." After words thus full of faith Zuinglius continues. "As to your case this is my opinion. Present yourself before the council, and there deliver an address worthy of Christ and of yourself, that is to say, proper to touch and not to irritate men's hearts. Deny that you are a disciple of Luther, declare that you are a disciple of Jesus Christ. Let your pupils surround you, and let them speak, and if all this does not succeed, come to your friend, come to Zuinglius, and consider our home as your own fireside."

Oswald, strengthened by these words, followed the noble counsel of the Reformer, but all his efforts were useless. The witness to the truth behoved to quit his country. His enemies in Lucerne were so loud against him, that the magistrates would not allow any one to give him an asylum. Broken-hearted at the sight of so much enmity, the confessor of Jesus Christ exclaimed, "All that now remains for me is to beg from door to door to sustain my miserable life." Shortly after, the friend and most powerful assistant of Zuinglius, the first man in Switzerland who had united literary instruction with the love of the gospel, the reformer of Lucerne, and at a later period one of the leaders of the Helvetic church, was obliged, with his sickly wife and little boy, to quit this ungrateful city, where, out of all his family, the only one who had received the gospel was a sister. He crossed its ancient bridges, and bade adieu to those mountains which seem to rise from the bosom of the lake of Waldstetten up to the clouds. Canons Xylotect and Kilchmeyer, the only friends whom the Reformation yet numbered among his countrymen, followed shortly after. And, at the moment when this poor man, with two feeble companions, whose existence depended on him, with his eye turned towards its lake, and shedding tears for his deluded country, took leave of those sublime scenes which had surrounded his cradle, the gospel itself took leave of Lucerne, and Rome reigns in it to this day.

Shortly after the Diet itself, which was assembled at Baden, stung by the petitions of Einsidlen, (which, being printed, produced a great sensation,) and urged by the Bishop of Constance to strike a blow at innovations, had recourse to measures of persecution, ordered the authorities of the villages to bring before it all priests and laymen who should speak against the faith, seized, in its impatience, on the evangelist, who happened to be nearest at hand, Urban Weiss, pastor of Filispach, who had been previously released on caution, made him be brought to Constance, and then gave him up to the bishop, by whom he was long kept in prison. "Thus," says the Chronicle of Bullinger, "the persecution of the gospel by the confederates commenced, and that at the instigation of the clergy, who have at all times delivered Jesus Christ to Herod and Pilate."

Zuinglius was not to escape his share of trial. Blows to which he was most sensible were then struck at him. The rumour of his doctrines and his contests had passed Santis, penetrated the Tockenburg, and reached the heights of Wildhaus. The pastoral family from whom the Reformer had sprung were moved. Of the four brothers of Zuinglius, some had continued peacefully to occupy themselves with their mountain toils, whilst others, to the great grief of their brother, had quitted then flocks and served foreign princes. All were alarmed at the news which rumour brought as far as their chalets. They already saw their brother seized, dragged perhaps to Constance to his bishop, and a pile erected for him at the same place which had consumed the body of John Huss. These proud shepherds could not bear the idea of being called the brother of a heretic.

They wrote to Ulric, describing their sorrow and their fears. Zuinglius replied, “So long as God permits, I will perform the task which he has entrusted to me, without fearing the world and its proud tyrants. I know the worst that can happen to me. There is no danger, no misfortune which I have not long carefully weighed. My own strength is mere nothingness, and I know the power of my enemies, but I know also that I can do everything through Christ strengthening me. Were I silent, some other would be constrained to do what God now does by me, and I would be punished by God. Cast far from you all your anxiety, my dear brothers. If I have a fear, it is that I have been gentler and more easily persuaded than is suitable for this age. What shame, you say, will be cast on all our family if you are burnt, or put to death in some other way!2 O, dearly beloved brethren! the gospel derives from the blood of Christ this wondrous nature, that the most violent persecutions far from arresting, only hasten its progress. Those only are true soldiers of Christ who fear not to bear in their body the wounds of their Master. All my labours have no other end than to make men know the treasures of happiness which Christ has acquired for us, in order that all may flee to the Father through the death of his Son. If his doctrine offends you, your anger cannot stop me. You are my brothers, yes, my own brothers, the sons of my father, and the offspring of the same mother … but if you were not my brethren in Christ, and in the work of faith, my grief would be so extreme that nothing could equal it. Adieu. I will never cease to be your true brother, provided you do not yourselves cease to be the brethren of Jesus Christ.” The confederates seemed to rise against the gospel as one man. The petitions of Einsidlen had been the signal. Zuinglius, concerned for the lot of his dear Myconius, saw in this misfortune only the beginning of calamity. Enemies in Zurich: enemies abroad—a man’s own relatives becoming his enemies,—a furious opposition on the part of monks and priests,—violent measures of the Diet and the councils,—rude, perhaps bloody, assaults on the part of the partisans of foreign service,—the highest valleys of Switzerland, the cradle of the confederation, sending forth phalanxes of invincible soldiers to save Rome, and, at the sacrifice of life, annihilating the growing faith of the sons of the Reformation—such was the prospect at which the penetrating mind of the Reformer shuddered when he beheld it in the distance. What a prospect! Was not the work, scarcely well begun, on the point of being destroyed? Zuinglius, thoughtful and agitated, spread all his anguish before his God. “O Jesus,” said he, “you see how wicked men and blasphemers stun the ears of thy people with their cries. Thou knowest that from my infancy I have hated disputes, and yet in spite of myself thou hast ceased not to urge me on to the combat … Wherefore, I confidently call upon thee, as thou hast, begun so to finish. If in any thing I have built up improperly, beat it down with thy mighty hand. If I have laid some other foundation beside thine let thy powerful arm overthrow it.2 O most beloved vine, of which the Father is the vine-dresser, and of which we are the branches, forsake not thy offsping. For thou hast promised to be with us, even to the end of the world!”

It was on the 22nd of August, 1522, that Ulrich Zuinglius, the Reformer of Switzerland, when he saw violent storms descending from the mountains on the frail bark of faith, thus expressed the troubles and hopes of his soul in the presence of his God.

01.03. Volume 3

VOLUME 3 PREFACE TO VOLUME THIRD

Literary men in France, Switzerland, Germany, and England, urged on by a spirit of examination and research, are constantly enquiring after the original documents on which modern history is founded. I wish to contribute my mite to the accomplishment of the important task which our age appears to have undertaken. Hitherto I have not deemed it enough to peruse contemporary historians. I have interrogated eye-witnesses, private letters, and original narratives, and made use of some manuscripts, particularly that of Bullinger, which has since been printed. (Frauenfield, 1838–1840.) The necessity of having recourse to unpublished documents became more urgent on approaching, as I do in the twelfth book, the Reformation of France, with regard to which, in consequence of the continual turmoil in which the reformed church of that country has lived, we have only a few printed memoirs. In the spring of 1838, I endeavoured, as far as was in my power, to examine the manuscripts of the public libraries of Paris; it will be seen that a manuscript of the Royal Library, hitherto I believe unknown, throws great light on the first stages of the Reformation. In the autumn of 1839, I consulted the manuscripts in the library of the consistory of pastors of Neufchâtel, a collection which is very rich in regard to this period, from a bequest of the manuscripts of Farel's library, and through the kindness of the proprietor of Meuron, I obtained the use of the manuscript life of Farel by Choupard, into which the greater part of these documents have been transcribed. These manuscripts have enabled me to remodel one entire section of the Reformation in France. In addition to this assistance, and that furnished by the library of Geneva, I made an appeal, through the medium of the Archives du Christianisme, to all the friends of history and the Reformation, who may have any manuscripts at their disposal, and I here express my gratitude for different communications which have been made to me, in particular by the Rev. Mr. Ladevèze of Meaux. But though religious wars and persecutions have destroyed many precious documents, there doubtless still exist in different parts of France several which would be of essential service to the history of the Reformation, and I earnestly entreat all who may possess or have any knowledge of them to have the goodness to communicate with me on the subject. Documents of this nature are felt in our days to be common property, and, therefore, I hope that this appeal will not be in vain.

It will perhaps be thought that in writing a general history of the Reformation, I have entered too much into detail on its first beginnings in France. But these beginnings are little known: the events which form the subject of my twelfth book occupy only three or four pages in the 'Histoire Ecclesiastique des Eglises Reformées au Royaume de France,' by Theodore Beza, while other historians confine themselves almost entirely to political developments. It is true that in this part of my work I have not been able to describe scenes so imposing as the Diet of Worms. Nevertheless, independent of the religious interest attached to it, the humble but truly divine movement which I have attempted to describe, had perhaps more influence on the destinies of France than the celebrated wars of Charles V and Francis I. In a large machine the result is often produced not by the parts which make the greatest appearance, but by the most hidden springs.

Complaints have been made of the delay which has taken place in the publication of this third volume. Some would even have had me not to print the first before the whole was completed. There may be certain superior intellects to which conditions may be prescribed, but there are others whose feebleness must give conditions, and to this class I belong. To publish a volume at one time, at another time when I am able a second volume, and then a third, is the course which my primary duties and humble abilities allow me to take. Other circumstances, moreover, have interposed; severe afflictions have on two occasions interrupted the composition of this third volume, and concentrated all my affections and all my thoughts on the tomb of beloved children. The thought that it was my duty to glorify the adorable Master, who addressed those powerful calls to me, and accompanied them with so much divine consolation, could alone have given me the courage necessary to prosecute my labours.

These explanations seemed due to the kindness with which this work has been received in France, and especially in England, where the fourth edition of a translation is about to appear, beside two others in smaller form, which I am told are in course of preparation. Owing to this, no doubt, the Journal des Débats, in an article signed M. Chasles, has announced this history of the Reformation as an English work. I set a high value on the approbation of the protestant Christians of Great Britain, the representatives of evangelical principles and doctrines in the most remote regions of the globe, and I beg to assure them that I feel it to be a most valuable encouragement to my labours. The first book of the fourth volume will be devoted (God willing) to the Reformation of England and Scotland. The cause of truth recompenses those who embrace and defend it; and so it has proved with the nations who embraced the Reformation. In the eighteenth century, at the moment when Rome was anticipating her triumph through her Jesuits and scaffolds, victory slipt through her hands. Rome, like Naples, Portugal, and Spain, fell into interminable difficulties, while at the same time two protestant kingdoms arose in Europe, and began to exercise an influence which till then had belonged to Roman Catholic states. England came forth victorious from the Spanish and French assaults, which the pope had so long stirred up against her, and the Elector of Brandenburg, in spite of the wrath of Clement XI, encircled his head with a royal crown. From that period England has extended her dominion in every quarter of the world, and Prussia has taken a new rank among continental states, while a third power also separated from Rome, viz. Russia was growing up in her immense deserts. In this way evangelical principles have exerted their influence on the countries which have received them, and by righteousness nations have been exalted. Let evangelical states be well assured that to protestantism they owe their greatness. Should they abandon the position which God has given them, or incline anew towards Rome, that moment they lose their power and glory. Rome is now striving to gain them; alternately employing flattery and threatening, she would, like Delilah, lull them asleep upon her knees … but it is to rob them of their locks, that thus their enemies may be able to put out their eyes, and bind them with fetters of iron.

Herein, too, is a great lesson for France, with which the author feels himself so intimately connected through his forefathers. Should France, like her different governments, incline anew to the papacy, our belief is, that it will prove the signal of great disasters. Every one who attaches himself to the papacy will be compromised in its downfall. France has her only prospect of strength and greatness in turning towards the gospel. May this great truth be understood by rulers and people! In our day, it is true, there is great activity in the papacy. Though attacked by an inevitable

consumption, she would fain, by showy colours and feverish paroxysms, persuade others, and persuade herself, that she is still full of vigour. An attempt of this kind has been made by a theologian of Turin, in a treatise occasioned by this history, and in which it is pleasing to recognise a certain talent in presenting proofs, however feeble, with an air of candour to which we are little accustomed, and in a manner by no means offensive, notwithstanding of the sad and culpable facility with which the author, in his twelfth chapter, revives accusations against the Reformers, the falsehood of which has been completely demonstrated, and is generally acknowledged.

We will give an example, referring to matters contained in the present volume. James le Vasseur, doctor of Sorbonne, and canon and dean of the church of Noyon, wrote Annals of the Church of Noyon, (1633,) in which he is at a loss for epithets against our Reformer, and only consoles himself by the thought that Saint Eloi gave Calvin the mortal blow, (p. 1164). After saying that the Reformer in early life held benefices in the Church of Noyon, the canon in proof of this quotes a declaration of James Desmay, also a doctor of theology, in his “Life of Calvin the heresiarch,” who, after a very careful examination of every thing relating to the Reformer, says, “I have been unable to discover anything else in the same registers.” (Annales de Noyon, p. 1162). Then the devout historian of the Church of Noyon, after pouring out all his wrath on Calvin and all the members of his family, without mentioning a single act of the Reformer at variance with morality, but contenting himself with simply observing, that to call him heresiarch is to charge him with the sum of all crimes (ib.) adds a XCVI chapter, entitled, “Of another John Cauvin, chaplain Vicar of the same church of Noyon, not a heretic,” in which he says, “Another John Cauvin presented himself and was admitted to our choir at a vicarial chapel, but was shortly after dismissed for his incontinence, punishment having been repeatedly inflicted to no purpose. He was vicar for the diocese, and the belief of our old people is, that he served the cure of Trachy-le-Val in this diocese in the capacity of vicar, and then died a good catholic. He was, nevertheless, beaten with rods when in custody, as Desmay writes in his little book, pp. 39, 40, and yet he was a priest not subject to such discipline. He has, therefore, fallen into a blunder, taking this man for another vicar, also chaplain, named Baldwin le Jeune, doubly young in name and in manners, who had not then entered the priesthood or taken any holy orders. The conclusion of the capitulary is as follows:—… Quod Balduinus, le Jeune capellanus vicarialis, … pro scandalis commissis, ordinarunt prœfati domini ipsum cædi virgis, quia puer et nondum in sacris constitutus. I thought it my duty (continues the dean of Noyon) to add this chapter to the history of the first Calvin, ad diluendam homonymiam, (to guard against the similarity of names,) lest the one should be taken for the other, the catholic for the heretic.” Thus speaks the canon and dean of Noyon, pp. 1170, 1171. Now what is done by Doctor Magnin and the writers of the papacy whom he quotes? They announce quite gravely that Calvin was banished from his native town for bad conduct; that being convicted of a horrible crime, he would have been condemned to be publicly burnt had not the burning been commuted, at the prayer of the bishop, into scourging and branding with a hot iron, etc. (La Papauté, p. 109.) Thus, in spite of all the pains which the dean of Noyon took to add a chapter for fear the one should be taken for the other, the catholic for the heretic, the writers of the papacy uniformly attribute to the Reformer the misdeeds of his namesake. The thought uppermost with the canon of Noyon was the fair fame of this John Calvin who died a good catholic, and he trembled lest he should be charged with the heresy of Calvin. Accordingly he draws the distinction between them very clearly, giving the heresies to the one, and the incontinence to the other. But the result is the very opposite of what he anticipated. It is not “the heresy of Calvin” that has brought opprobrium on John Cauvin,

but the incontinence and chastisement of John Cauvin are brought forward for the purpose of throwing opprobrium on the Reformer. And such is the way in which history is written!—such, we will not say the bad faith, but the levity and ignorance of the apologists of the papacy! These blunders occur in the writings of men otherwise respectable, and who ought to have nothing in common with the hateful name of calumniator. The present volume gives a true account of the early life of Calvin.

M. Audin, as a sequel to his History of Luther, has recently published a History of Calvin, written under the influence of deplorable prejudice, and in which it is difficult to recognise the Reformers and the Reformation.

Perhaps, on another occasion, we shall make some addition to what we have said in our first book on the origin of the papacy. It were out of place to do it here.

I will only remark in general, that the human and natural causes which so well explain its origin are precisely those to which the Papacy appeals in order to demonstrate its divine institution. Thus Christian antiquity declares, that the universal episcopate was committed to all the bishops, so that the bishops of Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch, Ephesus, Rome, Carthage, Lyons, Arles, Milan, Hippo, Cesarea, etc., took an interest in whatever occurred throughout the Christian world. Shortly after Rome appropriated to herself this duty, which was incumbent on all, and arguing as if it were her concern only, converts it into a demonstration of her primacy.

We give another example. The Christian churches established in the great towns of the empire sent missionaries to the countries to which they stood related. This was done first of all by Jerusalem, then by Antioch, Alexandria, Ephesus, and at length by Rome; and Rome forthwith concluded, from what she did after others and less than others, that she was entitled to set herself above all others. These examples will suffice.

Let us only observe further, that in the West Rome alone enjoyed the honour which in the East was shared by Corinth, Philippi, Thessalonica, Ephesus, Antioch, and in a far higher degree by Jerusalem,—the honour of having had one or more apostles among her first teachers. Hence the Latin churches must naturally have had a certain degree of respect for Rome. But never would the eastern Christians, though they honoured her as the church of the political metropolis of the empire, acknowledge in her any ecclesiastical superiority. The celebrated general Council of Chalcedon assigned to Constantinople, previously the obscure Byzantium, the same privileges (τ■ ■σα πρεσβε■α) as Rome, and declared that it was entitled to equal dignity. Accordingly, when the papacy was distinctly formed in Rome, the East showed no desire to acknowledge a master of whom it had never heard; and standing on the ancient territory of catholicity, abandoned the West to the domination of the new sect which had risen up within its bosom. The East still styles herself, by way of pre-eminence, catholic and orthodox, and when the question is asked at one of these eastern Christians, whom Rome has united to herself by means of numerous concessions, “Are you a Catholic?”—“No,” he immediately replies, “I am papistian” (papist).—Journal of the Rev. Joseph Wolf. London, 1839, p. 225.

If this History has been subjected to criticism from the Romish party, it has also been subjected to it in a literary point of view. Individuals for whom I entertain great respect appear to attach more importance to a political or literary history of the Reformation, than to an exposition which points

out its spiritual principles and moving springs. I can understand this manner of viewing the subject, but I cannot adopt it. In my opinion, the essentials of the Reformation are its doctrines and inward life. Any work in which these do not occupy the first place, may be brilliant, but will not be faithfully and candidly historical. It will resemble a philosopher, who, wishing to describe man, should with great accuracy and graphic beauty explain every thing that relates to his body, but should give only a subordinate place to the divine inmate, the soul.

There are many defects, doubtless, in the feeble work of which I here present a new fragment to the Christian public, but the greatest defect I see in it is, that it does not breathe still more of the spirit of the Reformation. The more I succeed in calling attention to what manifests the glory of Christ, the more faithful I am to history. I willingly adopt as my law those words which a historian of the sixteenth century, still more celebrated as a warrior than a writer, after giving a part of the history of Protestantism, of which I do not purpose to treat, addresses to those who should think of completing his task,—"I give them the law which I take to myself, and it is, that while seeking the honour of this precious instrument, their principal aim should be the glory of the arm which prepared, employed, and wielded it at pleasure. For all the praises given to princes are unseasonable and misplaced, if they have not for their aim and foundation that of the living God, to whom belong honour and dominion for ever and ever."

Eaux-Vives, near Geneva, Feb. 1841.

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BOOK NINTH

First Reforms

1521–1522

CHAP. I

Progress of the Reformation—New Period—Advantages of Luther's Captivity—Agitation of Germany—Melancthon and Luther—Enthusiasm.…

Four years had elapsed since an ancient doctrine had again been preached in the church. The great doctrine of salvation by grace formerly published in Asia, Greece, and Italy, by Paul and his brethren, and again after several centuries discovered in the Bible by a monk of Wittemberg, had echoed from the plains of Saxony to Rome, Paris, and London, and the lofty mountains of Switzerland had repeated its energetic accents. The fountains of truth, liberty, and life had been again opened to humanity. Crowds had repaired thither and quaffed with joy, but those who had pressed forward and taken the draught had preserved their former appearance. All within was new, and yet all without seemed to have remained as before. The constitution of the Church, its ritual, and discipline, had not undergone any change. In Saxony, at Wittemberg even, in every place where the new ideas had penetrated, the papal worship gravely continued its pomp; the priest at the foot of the altar, in offering the host to God, seemed to produce an ineffable transformation; monks and nuns entered convents to undertake obligations that were to bind them for ever; pastors lived not as heads of families, brotherhoods assembled, pilgrimages were performed; the faithful hung up their votive offerings on the pillars of chapels; and all ceremonies, even to the most insignificant formality of the sanctuary, were celebrated as before. There was a

new doctrine in the world, but it had not given itself a new body. The language of the priest formed a striking contrast to the proceedings of the priest. He was heard thundering from the pulpit against the mass as an idolatrous worship, and then seen descending and taking his place before the altar, to celebrate this pompous ceremony with scrupulous exactness. Every where the new gospel resounded beside the ancient ritual. The priest himself did not perceive the strange inconsistency, and the people who listened with acclamation to the bold discourses of the new preachers, devoutly observed their ancient customs as if they were never to abandon them. At the domestic hearth and in social life, as in the house of God, every thing remained the same. There was a new faith in the world, but not new works. The season of spring had appeared, but winter seemed still to hold nature in chains; no flowers—no leaves—nothing external gave indication of the new season. But these appearances were illusory; a potent, though hidden sap was already circulating beneath, and on the eve of changing the world. To this course, a course fraught with wisdom, the Reformation perhaps owes its triumphs. Prior to the actual accomplishment of any revolution there must be a revolution in thought. The inconsistency already alluded to did not even strike Luther at the first glance. He seemed to consider it quite natural that, while men were receiving his writings with enthusiasm, they should at the same time remain devotedly attached to the abuses which these writings attacked. It might even be thought that he had traced out his plan beforehand, and resolved to produce a change of minds before introducing a change of forms. This, however, were to ascribe to him a wisdom the honour of which belongs to a higher source. He executed a plan which was not of his own devising. These matters he was able at a later period to acknowledge and comprehend, but he had not imagined them, and accordingly had not regulated them. God took the lead; Luther's part was to follow. Had Luther begun with an external reform: had he, immediately after he had spoken, attempted to abolish monastic vows, the mass, confession, and the existing forms of worship, he should undoubtedly have encountered the keenest opposition. Man must have time before he can adapt himself to great revolutions. Luther was by no means the violent, imprudent, rash innovator that some historians have represented. The people seeing nothing changed in the routine of their devotions, committed themselves without distrust to their new leader. They were even astonished at the attacks directed against a man who left them their mass, beads, and confessor, and attributed these attacks to the grovelling jealousy of obscure rivals, or the cruel injustice of powerful adversaries. Meanwhile Luther's ideas aroused the minds of men, improved their hearts, and so undermined the ancient edifice that it soon fell of its own accord, without any human hand. Ideas do not act instantaneously: they make their way in silence, like water which, filtering behind rocks, detaches them from the mountain on which they rest: all at once the work done in secret manifests itself, and a single day suffices to display the work of several years, perhaps several ages. A new era in the reformation commences. The truth is already re-established in doctrine, and doctrine is now going to re-establish the truth in all the forms of the church and of society. The agitation is too great for men's minds to remain fixed and immovable at the point at which they have arrived. On those dogmas which have been so powerfully shaken depend customs which are beginning to give way, and which must disappear along with them. There is too much courage and life in the new generation to feel under constraint in the presence of error. Sacraments, ritual, hierarchy, vows, constitution, domestic life, public life, all are about to be modified. The ship which has been slowly and laboriously built is about to leave the dock and be launched on the vast ocean. We shall have to follow its track across numerous perils. The captivity of the Wartburg separates these two

periods. Providence, which designed to give a mighty impulse to the Reformation, had prepared its progress by leading him who was selected to be the instrument of it into profound retirement. For a time the work seemed buried with the workman; but the seed must be deposited in the earth in order to produce fruit, and from the prison which seemed destined to be the Reformer's tomb the Reformation is going to come forth to make new conquests, and rapidly diffuse itself over the whole world.

Hitherto the Reformation had been concentrated in the person of the Reformer. His appearance before the Diet of Worms was undoubtedly the sublimest moment of his life. His character then appeared almost exempt from blemish, and hence it has been said, that if God who hid the Reformer during ten months within the walls of the Wartburg had, at that moment, withdrawn him for ever from the eye of the world, his end would have been a kind of apotheosis. But God wills not an apotheosis for his servants; and Luther was preserved to the Church in order that he might show by his very faults that the faith of Christians must be founded on the word of God alone. He was abruptly transported far from the scene where the great revolution of the sixteenth century was in course of accomplishment; the truth which he had for four years so powerfully preached continued in his absence to act upon Christendom, and the work of which he was only a feeble instrument thenceforth bore not the impress of a man but the seal of God himself.

Germany was moved by the captivity of Luther. The most contradictory reports circulated throughout her provinces. Men's minds were more agitated by the absence of the Reformer than they would have been by his presence. Here it was affirmed that friends, who had come from France, had set him in safety on the other bank of the Rhine. There it was said that assassins had put him to death. Even the smallest villages were anxious for information about Luther; the passing traveller was interrogated, and groups assembled in the market place. Sometimes an unknown orator gave the people an animated narrative of the manner in which the doctor had been carried off; he showed the barbarous horsemen binding fast the hands of their prisoner, hastening at full speed, dragging him on foot behind them, wearing out his strength, shutting their ears to his cries, causing the blood to spring from his fingers.2 "The dead body of Luther," added he, "has been seen pierced with wounds." Then cries of grief were heard. "Ah," said the multitude, "no more shall we see, no more shall we hear the noble-minded man whose voice stirred our hearts." The friends of Luther muttering wrath swore to avenge his death. Women and children, the lovers of peace, and the aged looked forward with alarm to new struggles. Nothing could equal the terror of the partisans of Rome. The priests and monks, thinking themselves sure of victory, because one man was dead, at first had been unable to conceal their joy, and had raised their heads with an insulting air of triumph, but now they would gladly have fled far away from the wrath and threats of the people.4 These men, who, while Luther was at liberty, had given free vent to their fury, trembled now that he was captive. Aleander especially was in consternation. "The only means of safety now left us," wrote a Roman Catholic to the Archbishop of Mentz, "is to kindle torches and make a search for Luther over the whole world, in order to restore him to the wishes of the nation." It might have been said that the Reformer's ghost, all pale, and clanking its chains, had appeared to spread terror and demand vengeance. The general exclamation was, "Luther's death will cause torrents of blood to flow!"2 No where were the minds of men more deeply agitated than at Worms itself; energetic measures were proposed both among people and princes. Ulrich von Hiitten and Hermann Busch filled the country with their plaintive songs and warlike cries. Charles V and the

nuncios were loudly accused. The nation took up the cause of the poor monk, who by the power of his faith had become its chief. At Wittemberg, his colleagues and friends, Melancthon especially, were at first astounded with grief. Luther had imparted to this young scholar the treasures of that sacred theology which had thenceforth completely filled his soul. It was Luther who had given substance and life to the purely intellectual culture which Melancthon had brought to Wittemberg. The profundity of the Reformer's doctrine had struck the young Hellenist, and his courage in maintaining the rights of the eternal word against all human authority, had filled him with enthusiasm. He had been associated with him in his work; he had seized the pen, and in that admirable style which he had derived from the study of antiquity, had successfully, and with a powerful hand, lowered the authority of the Fathers and the authority of Councils before the sovereign Word of God. The decision which Luther had in action Melancthon had in science. Never were more diversity and more unity exhibited in two individuals. "Scripture," said Melancthon, "imparts to the soul a holy and marvellous delight. It is a heavenly ambrosia." "The Word of God," exclaimed Luther, "is a sword, a war, a destruction; it springs upon the children of Ephraim like the lioness in the forest." Thus, in Scripture, the one saw a power of consolation, and the other an energetic opposition to the corruption of the world. Both held it to be the greatest thing on earth, and hence they understood each other perfectly. "Melancthon," said Luther, "is a miracle: all now acknowledge this. He is the most formidable enemy of Satan and the schoolmen, for he knows their folly, and the rock which is Christ. This little Greek surpasses me even in theology: he will be as useful to you as many Luthers." And he added, that he was ready to abandon an opinion if Philip did not approve of it. Melancthon, on his part, full of admiration for the knowledge which Luther had of Scripture, placed him far above the fathers of the Church. He had a wish to excuse the pleasantries for which Luther was sometimes upbraided, and compared him to a vessel of clay containing precious treasure under a coarse covering. "I will take good care not to blame him for them inconsiderately," said he. But these two souls so intimately united are now separated. These two valiant soldiers can no longer march together for the deliverance of the Church. Luther has disappeared, and is perhaps lost for ever. The consternation of Wittemberg was extreme: it might have been likened to an army standing with sullen and downcast look over the bloody remains of the general who was leading them on to victory.

Suddenly intelligence the most gratifying was received. "Our dearly beloved father lives," exclaimed Melancthon in the joy of his heart, "take courage and be strong." But grief soon resumed the ascendancy. Luther was alive but in prison. The edict of Worms with its cruel prescriptions,3 had been circulated by thousands throughout the empire, and even in the mountains of the Tyrol. Could the Reformation avoid being crushed by the iron hand which lay upon it? Melancthon's gentle spirit sank within him while he uttered a cry of grief. But above the hand of man a more powerful hand was at work: God himself deprived the formidable edict of its force. The German princes who had always sought to humble the power of Rome in the empire, trembled on seeing the alliance of the emperor with the pope, and feared lest it should result in the destruction of all their liberties. Accordingly, though Charles, on his passage through the Low Countries, smiled ironically as he saluted the flames which some flatterers and fanatics were kindling in the public places with the writings of Luther, these writings were read in Germany with constantly increasing avidity, and every day new pamphlets appeared to support the Reformation, and make new assaults on the papacy. The nuncios were disconcerted out of measure on seeing that the edict, which had cost them so much injustice, produced so little effect. "The ink of the

Emperor's signature," said some with bitterness, "was scarcely dry, before the decree itself was every where torn in pieces … The people become more and more attached to the wondrous man who unawed by the thunders of Charles and the pope, had confessed his faith with the courage of a martyr. "He offered to retract," observed others, "if he was refuted, but none ventured to undertake the refutation. Is not this a proof that what he teaches is true?" Accordingly, at Wittemberg and throughout the empire, the first movement of alarm was succeeded by a movement of enthusiasm. Even the Archbishop of Mentz, seeing how strongly the sympathy of the people was expressed, did not venture to give permission to the Cordeliers to preach against the Reformer. The university, which seemed on the eve of destruction, raised its head. There the new doctrines were two well established to be shaken by Luther's absence. In a short time the academic halls could scarcely contain the crowds of hearers.

CHAP. II

Luther in the Wartburg—Object of his Captivity—Agonies—Sickness—Labour of Luther—On Confession—To Latomus—Walks.

Meanwhile Knight George (this was Luther's name in the Wartburg) lived solitary and unknown. "If you saw me," wrote he to Melancthon, "you would take me for a knight, and would scarcely be able to recognise me." Luther at first took some repose, enjoying a leisure which he had never tasted till this time. He moved freely within the fortress, but could not go beyond its walls.3 All his wants were supplied, and he had never been better treated. Many thoughts filled his soul, but none could trouble him. He cast his eyes alternately to the surrounding forests, and raised them towards heaven—"A singular captive!" exclaimed he, "captive both with and against my will."5

Writing to Spalatin, he says, "Pray for me; your prayers are the only thing I want. I give myself no concern with all that is said and done with regard to me in the world. At length I am at rest." … This letter, as well as several others of the same period, is dated from the isle of Patmos. Luther compared the Wartburg to the celebrated island to which the anger of the emperor Domitian banished the apostle John. The Reformer reposed amid the dark forests of Thuringia from the violent struggles which had agitated his soul. Here he studied Christian truth, not for disputation, but as a means of regeneration and life. The commencement of the Reformation behoved to be polemical; new times demanded new exertions. After rooting up the thorns and brambles, it was necessary to sow the seed peacefully in men's hearts. Had Luther been obliged incessantly to fight new battles, he could not have accomplished a lasting work in the Church. By his captivity he escaped a danger which might perhaps have destroyed the Reformation—that of always attacking and destroying, without ever defending and building up. This humble retreat produced a result still more precious. Raised as it were upon a pedestal by his countrymen, he was within a step of the abyss, and a moment of giddiness might have sufficed to throw him headlong into it. Some of the first agents in the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland were dashed to pieces against the rock of spiritual pride and fanaticism. Luther was a man very subject to the infirmities of our nature, and he did not entirely escape these dangers. Still the hand of God delivered him from them for a time, by suddenly withdrawing him from intoxicating triumphs, and consigning him to the depth of an unknown retreat. His soul there communed with itself near to God; it was there bathed in the waters of adversity; his sufferings, his humiliations, constrained him at least for a time to walk with the humble, and the principles of the Christian life thenceforth were developed in his soul with new

energy and freedom.

Luther's quiet was not of long duration. Seated on the walls of the Wartburg, he spent whole days absorbed in profound meditation. Sometimes the Church presented herself to his mind, and displayed all her miseries before him. At other times turning his eye upwards with hope towards heaven, he exclaimed, "How, O Lord, couldst thou have made all men in vain!" (Psalms 89:47) At other times, again abandoning this hope, he was downcast and exclaimed, "Alas, there is no one, in the last day of His wrath, who can stand as a wall before the Lord to save Israel!…"

Then returning to his own destiny, he feared lest he should be accused of having abandoned the field of battle, and the idea afflicted his soul. "I would far rather," said he, "be laid on burning coals than stagnate here half dead."2

Next transporting himself in imagination to Worms and Wittemberg to the midst of his enemies, he regretted that he had yielded to the counsels of his friends, instead of remaining in the world, and offering his breast to the fury of men. "Ah," said he, "there is nothing I desire more than to present myself before my cruel enemies."4

Still some sweet thought arose, and gave a truce to these agonies. All was not torment to Luther; from time to time his agitated spirit found some degree of calmness and consolation. After the assurance of divine aid, his greatest solace in his grief was the remembrance of Melancthon. "If I perish," wrote he to him, "the gospel will lose nothing; you will succeed me as Elisha did, with a double measure of my spirit." But calling to mind Philip's timidity, he cried to him aloud, "Minister of the word, guard the walls and towers of Jerusalem until the adversary strike you. We are still standing alone on the field of battle: after me they will next assail you."6 The thought of this last attack which Rome was going to make on the rising Church threw him into new anxiety. The poor monk, a solitary prisoner, had violent wrestling with himself. But suddenly he obtained a glimpse of his deliverance. It occurred to him that the attacks of the papacy would arouse the nations of Germany, and that the soldiers of the gospel, proving victorious, would surround the Wartburg and give liberty to the prisoner. "If the pope," said he, "lays hands on all who are for me, there will be a commotion in Germany; the more haste he makes to crush us, the more speedy will be the end both of him and his. And I … will be restored to you. God awakening many minds, and stirring up the nations. Let our enemies only seize our cause in their arms and try to strangle it; it will grow under their grasp, and come forth ten times more formidable." But sickness brought him down from those heights to which his courage and his faith had elevated him. He had already suffered much at Worms, and his illness increased in solitude. He could not digest the food of the Wartburg, which was somewhat less homely than that of his convent: it was necessary to return to the poor fare to which he had been accustomed. He passed whole nights without sleep. Anguish of mind was added to bodily suffering. No work is accomplished without pain and self-denial. Luther, alone upon his rock, endured in his powerful nature a passion which the emancipation of humanity rendered necessary. "Seated at night in my chamber," says he, "I sent forth cries like a woman in travail—torn, wounded, and bleeding."2 Then, interrupting his complaints, and impressed with the thought that his sufferings were benefits from God, he gratefully exclaims, "Thanks be rendered unto thee, O Christ, in that thou hast been pleased not to leave me without the precious relics of thy holy cross!" He soon becomes indignant at himself, and exclaims, "Infatuated, hardened creature that I am! How grievous! I pray little, I wrestle little with the Lord, I do not groan for the

church of God.4 Instead of being fervent in spirit, my passions only are inflamed; I remain in sloth, sleep, and indolence." Then, not knowing to what this state should be ascribed, and accustomed to expect every thing from the affection of his brethren, he exclaims, in the desolation of his soul, "O, my friends, is it because you forget to pray for me that God is thus estranged from me!"

Those about him, as well as his friends at Wittemberg and in the Elector's court, were uneasy and alarmed at this state of suffering. They trembled to think, that a life snatched from the scaffold of the pope and the sword of Charles V, should sadly wane and vanish away. Can the Wartburg be destined to be the tomb of Luther? "I fear," said Melancthon, "that the grief which he feels for the church will be his death. A torch has been kindled by him in Israel: if it is extinguished what hope will be left us? Would to God I were able, at the cost of my miserable life, to detain in the world one who is its brightest ornament." "O, what a man!" he exclaims, as if he were on the borders of the tomb, "we have not duly appreciated him."

What Luther called the unbecoming indolence of his prison was labour almost above man's utmost strength. "I am here every day," said he, (14th May,) "in idleness and luxury, (referring, doubtless, to his fare, which at first was not quite so coarse as he had been accustomed to.) I read the Bible in Hebrew and Greek: I am going to write a discourse in German on auricular confession: I will continue the translation of the Psalms, and compose a collection of sermons as soon as I get from Wittemberg what I require. I write without intermission;" and yet these were only a part of Luther's labours. His enemies thought that if he was not dead, at all events, his voice would not again be heard: but their joy was of short duration, and the world was not left long in doubt whether he were alive. A multitude of writings, composed in the Wartburg, appeared in rapid succession, and the cherished voice of the Reformer was every where received with enthusiasm. Luther published at once works fitted to edify the Church and polemical treatises, which interrupted the too hasty joy of his enemies. For nearly a year he instructed, exhorted, rebuked, and thundered from his mountain top, and his adversaries, confounded, asked whether there were not some supernatural mystery in this prodigious activity. "He could not rest," says Cochlœus. The only mystery was, the impudence of the partisans of Rome: They hastened to avail themselves of the Edict of Worms to give a mortal blow to the Reformation, while Luther, condemned, placed under the ban of the empire, and shut up in the Wartburg, stood forth to defend sound doctrine as if he had been still free and victorious. It was in the confessional especially that the priests strove to rivet the chains of their deluded parishioners, and accordingly confession was the object of Luther's first attack. "They found," says he, "on the words of St. James, 'Confess your sins one to another.' Singular confession! He says, 'one to another,' whence it should follow, that confessors ought also to confess to their penitents; that every Christian should, in his turn, be pope, bishop, priest, and that the pope himself should confess to all."

Scarcely had Luther finished this small work, than he began another. Latomus a theologian of Louvain, already celebrated for his opposition to Reuchlin and Erasmus, had attacked the views of the Reformer. In twelve days Luther's refutation was ready, and it is one of his master-pieces. He vindicates himself from the charge of wanting moderation. "The moderation of the age," says he, "is to bend the knee before sacrilegious pontiffs, impious sophists, and address them as gracious lord! excellent master! Then when you have done so, you may put to death whomsoever you please; overturn the world, nay, you will still be a moderate man. Far from me be this moderation. I like better to be frank and deceive nobody. The shell, perhaps, is hard, but the kernel is sweet and

tender."

Luther's health continuing to decline, he thought of quitting the Wartburg. But how was he to do it? To appear in public was to risk his life. The back of the mountain on which the fortress stood was traversed by numerous paths, the sides of which were bordered with tufts of strawberries. The massy gate of the castle was opened, and the prisoner ventured, not without fear, stealthily to gather some of the fruit. He became bolder by degrees, and began to survey the surrounding country in his knight's dress, and attended by a guard of the castle, a blunt but trustworthy man. One day having entered an inn he threw aside his sword, which encumbered him, and ran towards some book which happened to be lying. Nature was stronger than prudence. His attendant trembled fearing that a proceeding so unusual in a warrior would be regarded as a proof that the doctor was not a true knight. On another occasion the two warriors descended into the convent of Reichardsbrunn, where Luther had slept a few months before, on his way to Worms.3 Suddenly a friar allowed a sign of surprise to escape from him. Luther is recognised. His attendant perceives it, and, dragging him off in all haste, they gallop away far from the convent, before the poor friar has time to recover from his astonishment. The chivalric life of the doctor occasionally partook strongly of the theological. One day the nets are prepared, the gates of the fortress are thrown open, and the dogs with long flapping ears rush forth. Luther had wished to taste the pleasures of the chace. The hunters soon become animated, the dogs dart along, and drive the brown hares among the brush-wood. In the midst of the turmoil the chevalier George, standing motionless, had his mind filled with serious thoughts; at the sight of the objects around him his heart is bursting with grief. "Is it not," said he, "an image of the devil who arouses his dogs, in other words, the bishops, those messengers of antichrist, and hounds them on in pursuit of poor souls."5 A young hare had just been caught, and Luther, happy to save it, wraps it carefully in his cloak, and places it under a bush. Before he proceeds many steps the dogs scent out the poor creature and kill it. Luther attracted by the noise, utters a cry of grief,—"O pope!" says he, "and thou Satan! it is thus you strive to destroy even those souls which have been already saved from death"

CHAP. III The Reformation begins—Marriage of Feldkirchen—Marriage of Monks—Theses—Writes against Monachism—Luther ceases to be a Monk.

While the doctor of Wittemberg, dead to the world, was relaxing himself by these sports in the environs of the Wartburg, the work was advancing as of itself; the Reformation had commenced. No longer confining itself to doctrine, it energetically advanced into act. Bernard Feldkirchen, pastor of Kemberg, who, under the direction of Luther, had first attacked the errors of Rome, was also the first to throw off the yoke of her institutions. He married. The German character delights in domestic life and the joys of home; accordingly of all the ordinances of the papacy, that of forced celibacy had produced the worst consequences. The imposition of this law on the heads of the clergy had prevented the fiefs of the Church from becoming hereditary. But when extended by Gregory VII to the lower clergy, it had led to deplorable results. Many priests had evaded the obligations imposed on them by shameful irregularities, and brought hatred and contempt on their order, while those who had submitted to Hildebrand's law felt inwardly indignant against the Church, because at the same time that it gave its high dignitaries so much power, wealth, and worldly enjoyment, it forced humble ministers, who were, however, its most useful supports, to sacrifices altogether contrary to the Gospel.

“Neither popes nor councils,” said Feldkirchen and another pastor named Seidler, who followed his example, “can impose on the Church an ordinance which endangers soul and body. The obligation to maintain the law of God constrains us to violate the traditions of men.” The reestablishment of marriage in the sixteenth century was an act of homage to the moral law. The ecclesiastical authority, taking alarm, immediately launched its decrees against the two priests. Seidler, who was in the territories of duke George, was given up to his superiors, and died in prison. But the elector Frederick refused to give up Feldkirchen to the archbishop of Magdeburg. “His Highness,” said Spalatin, “has no wish to act as a police officer.” Feldkirchen, therefore, though he had become a husband and a father, continued pastor of his flock. The first emotion of the Reformer on learning these things was to give expression to his joy. “I admire this new husband of Kemberg who fears nothing, and hastens into the midst of the tumult.” Luther was convinced that priests ought to marry. But this question led to another—the marriage of monks, and here Luther had to maintain one of those internal combats of which his whole life was composed; for every reformation must be effected by an intellectual struggle. Melancthon and Carlstadt, the one a layman and the other a priest, thought that the liberty of entering into the bonds of marriage ought to belong to monks as well as to priests. Luther, a monk, did not think so at first. One day the governor of the Wartburg having brought him some theses of Carlstadt, on celibacy, “Good God!” exclaimed he, “will our Wittembergers give wives to monks even!” … The idea astonished and confounded him; his mind was troubled. The liberty which he claimed for others he rejected for himself. “Ah!” exclaimed he with indignation, “at all events they will not force me to take a wife.” This saying is doubtless unknown to those who pretend that Luther effected the Reformation in order that he might be able to marry. Seeking the truth honestly, not through passion, he defended whatever presented itself to him as true, though it might be contrary to his system as a whole. He moved in a mixture of truth and error, waiting the time when all error would fall and truth alone remain.

There was in fact a great difference between the two questions. The marriage of the priests did not put an end to the priesthood; on the contrary, it alone could restore the secular clergy to the respect of the people; but the marriage of monks was the destruction of monachism. The question then was to determine whether it was necessary to break up and disband the mighty army which the popes held under their command. “The priests,” wrote Luther to Melancthon, “are appointed of God, and consequently are free in regard to human commandments. But the monks have voluntarily chosen celibacy, and therefore are not free to withdraw themselves from the yoke of their own choice.” The Reformer behoved to advance and carry this new position of the adversary by means of a new struggle. He had already put under his feet many abuses of Rome and Rome itself, but monachism was still standing. Monachism, which of old carried life into so many deserts, and which after traversing many centuries, now filled so many cloisters with indolence and often with luxury, seemed to have personified itself and come to defend its rights in the castle of Thuringia, where was to be decided in the conscience of a single man the question of its life or its death. Luther wrestled with it. Sometimes he was on the point of overcoming it, and sometimes he was on the point of being overcome. At length, unable any longer to maintain the combat, he prostrated himself in prayer at the feet of Jesus Christ, and exclaimed, “Instruct us! deliver us! In thy mercy establish us in the liberty which belongs to us, for certainly we are thy people.”

He had not to wait for deliverance: an important revolution was produced in the Reformer's mind, and it was again the doctrine of justification by faith that gave him the victory. This weapon before which had fallen in the mind of Luther and of Christendom, indulgences, the discipline of Rome, and the pope himself, also effected the downfall of the monks. Luther saw that monachism and the doctrine of salvation by grace were in flagrant opposition, and that monastic life was founded entirely on the pretended merits of man. Thenceforth, convinced that the glory of Jesus Christ was at stake, he heard a voice within incessantly repeating, "Monachism must fall." "So long," said he, "as the doctrine of justification continues in the Church unimpaired, no man will become a monk." This conviction always acquired more strength in his heart, and in the beginning of September he sent "to the bishops and deacons of the Church of Wittemberg" the following theses, which formed his declaration of war against monastic life.

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Romans 14:23)

"Whosoever makes a vow of virginity, chastity, or service to God without faith, makes an impious and idolatrous vow, and makes it to the devil himself.

"To make such vows is to be worse than the priests of Cybele, or the vestals of the heathen; for the monks pronounce their vows in the idea that they are to be faithful and saved by them, and what ought to be ascribed solely to the mercy of God, is thus attributed to the merit of works.

"Such convents should be completely overturned as houses of the devil.

"There is only one order which is holy and produces holiness, and that is Christianity or faith.

"Convents, to be useful, should be schools in which children might be trained to man's estate, whereas they are houses in which full grown men again become children, and so continue ever after."

We see that at this period Luther would still have tolerated convents as houses of education, but his attacks on these establishments soon became more energetic. The immorality of cloisters, and the shameful practices which prevailed in them, were vividly present to his mind. "I am desirous," wrote he to Spalatin on the 11th Nov. "to deliver young people from the infernal flames of celibacy." Then he wrote a treatise against celibacy, and dedicated it to his father. "Are you desirous," said he in his dedication to the old man of Mansfield, "are you still desirous to snatch me from monasticism? You are entitled to do so: for you are still my father, and I am still your son; but it is no longer necessary; God has gone before you, and snatched me from it by his own power. What matters it whether I continue or lay aside the tonsure and monk's hood? Is it the hood, is it the tonsure that makes a monk? All things are yours, says St. Paul, and you are Christ's. I belong not to the hood, but the hood to me. I am a monk, and yet not a monk; I am a new creature, not of the pope but of Jesus Christ. Christ alone, and without any intermediate person, is my bishop, my abbot, my prior, my lord, my father, and I know no other. What matters it to me though the pope should condemn and butcher me? He will not be able to bring me forth from the tomb to do it a second time. The great day is approaching when the kingdom of abominations will be overthrown. Would to God we were worthy of being butchered by the pope. Our blood would cry to Heaven against him, and thus his judgment would be hastened, and his end brought near." The transformation had been produced in Luther himself; he was no longer a monk. This change was not the result of external causes, of human passions, of carnal precipitancy. There had been a

struggle in it. Luther had at first been arrayed on the side of monachism; but truth also had entered the lists, and monachism had been vanquished. The victories which passion gains are ephemeral, whereas those of truth are durable and decisive.

CHAP. IV

Archbishop Albert—The Idol of Halle—Luther appears—Terror at the Court—Luther to the Archbishop—The Archbishop's Reply—Joachim of Brandenburg.

While Luther was thus making preparation for one of the greatest revolutions which was to be effected in the Church, and while the Reformation was beginning to act so powerfully on the state of society in Christendom, the partisans of Rome, blinded as those usually are who have long been in possession of power, imagined that because Luther was in the Wartburg, the Reformation was for ever dead and buried, and that henceforth they would be able in peace to resume their ancient practices after being momentarily disturbed by the monk of Wittemberg. Albert, the Archbishop-Elector of Mentz, was one of those feeble spirits, who, when all things are equal, are in favour of truth, but as soon as their interest is thrown into the balance, are ready to array themselves on the side of error. The great point with him was, that his court should be as brilliant as that of any prince in Germany, his equipage as rich, and his table as well supplied, and to this end the traffic in indulgences contributed admirably. Hence, no sooner had the decree condemning Luther and the Reformation issued from the imperial chancery, than Albert, who was then with his court at Halle, assembled the indulgence merchants who were still in alarm at the preaching of the Reformer, and tried to encourage them by such words as these,—"Fear no more; we have reduced him to silence; let us again begin to clip the flock; the monk is captive; he is under lock and key, and will this time be dexterous indeed if he again comes to disturb us." The market was opened anew, the merchandise exhibited, and the churches of Halle resounded once more with the harangues of the quacks. But Luther was still alive, and his voice was powerful enough to pierce the walls and bars behind which he had been hid. Nothing could inflame his indignation to a higher degree. What! the fiercest battles have been fought, he has faced all dangers, the truth has come off victorious, and yet men dare to trample it under their feet as if it had been vanquished.… The doctrine which has already once overthrown this criminal traffic will again be heard. "I shall have no rest," wrote he to Spalatin, "till I have attacked the idol of Mentz, and its prostitutions at Halle."

Luther forthwith set to work; he gave himself little concern about the mysteriousness with which it was sought to envelope his residence in the Wartburg. Elijah in the desert forges new thunderbolts against impious Ahab. On the 1st November he finished a tract against the new idol of Halle. The archbishop received intelligence of Luther's design. Apprehensive and frightened at the thought, he, about the middle of October, sent two officials of his court, Capito and Auerbach, to Wittemberg to lay the storm. "It is necessary," said they to Melancthon, who most courteously received them, "it is necessary for Luther to moderate his impetuosity." But Melancthon, though mild himself, was not one of those who imagine that wisdom consists in always yielding, always equivocating, always holding one's peace. "It is God himself who calls him," replied he, "and our age stands in need of an acrid and pungent salt." Capito then turned to Jonas and endeavoured through him, to act upon the court at which intelligence of Luther's design had already arrived, and produced the greatest consternation. "What!" said the courtiers, "revive the flames which there has

been so much difficulty in extinguishing! Luther can only be saved by allowing himself to be forgotten, and here he is setting himself in opposition to the first prince of the empire." "I wont allow Luther, said the Elector, "to write against the Archbishop of Mentz, and thereby disturb the public peace."2

Luther felt indignant when these words were reported to him. It is not enough to imprison his body: they must also chain his mind, and truth herself. Do they imagine that he conceals himself from fear, and that his retirement is an acknowledgment of defeat? He, on the contrary, maintains that it is a victory. Who, then, at Worms, dared to rise up against him and to contradict the truth? Accordingly when the prisoner of the Wartburg had read the chaplain's letter, which made him aware of the prince's sentiments, he threw it from him, determined not to reply to it. But he could not long refrain, and he again lifted the letter. "The Elector will not permit!" …—wrote he to Spalatin—"and I will not suffer the Elector not to permit me to write … Sooner ruin you for ever—you, the Elector—the whole world. If I have resisted the pope who is the creature of your cardinal, why should I yield to his creature? It is really good to hear you say, that the public peace must not be disturbed, while you allow others to disturb the eternal peace of God. It will not be so, O prince. I send you a tract which I had already prepared against the cardinal, before I received your letter. Hand it to Melancthon…." The perusal of this manuscript made Spalatin tremble. He again represented to the Reformer how imprudent it would be to publish a work which would compel the imperial government to lay aside its apparent ignorance of Luther's fate, and to punish a prisoner who dared to attack the first prince of the empire and the Church. If Luther persisted in this design, peace was again disturbed, and the Reformation perhaps lost. Luther consented to delay the publication of his treatise; he even allowed Melancthon to erase the strongest passages. But indignant at the timidity of his friend, he wrote to the chaplain, "He lives, he reigns—the Lord in whom you court folks believe not, at least, if he does not so accommodate his works to your reason, that there is no longer occasion to believe any thing." He forthwith resolved on writing directly to the elector cardinal.

It is the whole episcopate that Luther brings to his bar in the person of the primate of Germany. His words are those of an intrepid man, burning with zeal for the truth, and under a consciousness of speaking in the name of God himself.

Writing from the depth of the retreat in which he was concealed, he says, "Your Electoral Highness has again set up in Halle the idol which devours the silver and the souls of poor Christians. You think, perhaps, that I am off the field, and that his imperial majesty will easily stifle the cries of the poor monk.… But know that I will discharge the duty which Christian charity imposes on me, without fearing the gates of hell and a fortiori, without fearing the pope, bishops, and cardinals.

"Wherefore, my most humble prayer is, that your Royal Highness will call to mind the commencement of this affair, and how one small spark produced a fearful conflagration. Then also the whole world felt secure. The thought was—the poor mendicant who is disposed, single-handed, to attack the pope, is too feeble for such a work. But God interposed, and has given the pope more toil and anxiety than he ever had since he seated himself in the temple of God, to domineer over the Church. The same God still lives: let no man doubt it. He knows how to withstand a cardinal of Mentz, were he even supported by four emperors; for he loves above all things, to bow down the lofty cedars and humble proud Pharaohs.

“Wherefore, I hereby give your Highness to wit, that if the idol is not cast down, I must, in obedience to the command of God, publicly attack your Highness, as I have attacked the pope himself. Let your Highness act upon this notice; I expect a prompt and good answer within a fortnight. Given in my desert, Sunday after St. Catherine’s day, 1521, by your Electoral Highness’s humble and devoted, Martin Luther.” This letter was sent to Wittemberg, and from Wittemberg to Halle, where the cardinal elector then resided, no attempt was made to stop it in its course, as it was foreseen what a storm such an audacious proceeding would have called forth. But Melancthon accompanied it with a letter to the prudent Capito, with a view to bring this difficult affair to a good termination.

We cannot say what were the feelings of the young and feeble archbishop on receiving the Reformer’s letter. The tract announced against the idol of Halle was like a sword suspended over his head. At the same time, what rage must have been kindled in his heart by the insolence of this peasant’s son, this excommunicated monk, who dared to hold such language to a prince of the house of Brandenburg, the primate of the German Church? Capito implored the archbishop to satisfy the monk. Terror, pride, conscience whose voice he could not stifle, produced a fearful struggle in Albert’s soul. At length, dread of the tract, and it may be also remorse, carried the day. He humbled himself and gathered together whatever he thought fitted to appease the man of the Wartburg; scarcely had the fortnight elapsed, when Luther received the following letter, which is still more astonishing than his formidable epistle.

“My dear Doctor,—I have received and read your letter, and taken it in good part. But I believe that for a long time the motive which led you to write me such a letter has not existed. I wish, with God’s help, to conduct myself as a pious bishop and a Christian prince, and I acknowledge that I stand in need of the grace of God. I deny not that I am a sinful man, one who may sin and be mistaken, one even who sins and is mistaken every day. I know well that without the grace of God I am useless and filthy mire like other men, if not more so. In reply to your letter, I did not wish to conceal from you this gracious disposition; for, from the love of Christ, I am more than desirous to show you all sorts of kindness and favour. I know how to receive a Christian and fraternal reprimand.

“With my own hand,

Albert.”

Such was the language held to the excommunicated of the Wartburg by the Elector Archbishop of Mentz and Magdeburg, whose office it was to represent and maintain in Germany the constitution of the Church. Had Albert, in writing it, obeyed the generous inspirations of his conscience, or his servile fears? In the former view, this letter is noble; in the latter, it deserves contempt. We prefer supposing that it proceeded from a good emotion in his heart. Be this as it may, it shows the immense superiority of the servant of God over earthly grandeur. While Luther, single, captive, and condemned, found indomitable courage in his faith, the archbishop cardinal elector, surrounded by all the power and favour of the world, trembled in his chair. This contrast is constantly displayed, and it furnishes a key to the strange enigma with which we are presented in the history of the Reformation. The Christian is not called to sum up his forces and make an enumeration of his means of victory. The only thing which ought to give him any concern is, whether the cause which he maintains is indeed that of God, and whether his sole aim is the glory

of his Master. He has doubtless an examination to make, but it is wholly spiritual; the Christian looks to the heart and not to the arm; to the justice of the cause and not to its strength. And when once this question is decided, his path is marked out. He must advance boldly, even should it be against the world and all its hosts, in the unwavering conviction that God himself will fight for him. The enemies of the Reformation thus passed from extreme rigour to extreme feebleness. They had already done so at Worms, and these abrupt transitions are ever appearing in the war which error makes upon truth. Every cause destined to give way is affected with an inward dissatisfaction, which makes it vacillating and dubious, and pushes it by turns from one extreme to the other. Far better were consistency and energy. It might be, that thereby the fall would be precipitated, but at all events when it did come, it would come gloriously. The Elector of Brandenburg, Joachim I, a brother of Albert, gave an example of this decision of character which is so rare, especially in our own age. Immovable in his principles, firm in his actions, knowing when necessary to resist the will of the pope, he opposed an iron hand to the progress of the Reformation. At Worms, he had insisted that Luther should not be heard, and even that he should be punished as a heretic, notwithstanding of his safe conduct. No sooner was the edict of Worms issued than he ordered it to be rigorously executed in all his states. Luther was able to estimate a character thus energetic, and distinguishing Joachim from his other opponents, said, “We can still pray for the Elector of Brandenburg.” The spirit of the prince seemed to have been communicated to his subjects. Berlin and Brandenburg long remained completely closed against the Reformation. But what was received slowly was kept faithfully, while countries which then received the gospel with joy, Belgium, for instance, and Westphalia, were soon to abandon it. Brandenburg, the last of the German states to enter on the paths of faith, was, at a latter period, to take its place in the foremost ranks of the Reformation.

Luther did not receive the letter of the cardinal archbishop without some suspicion of its having been dictated by hypocrisy, or in compliance with the counsels of Capito. He was silent, however, contenting himself with a declaration to the latter, that so long as the archbishop, who was scarcely capable of managing a small parish, would not lay aside the mask of the cardinalate and pomp of the episcopate, and become a simple minister of the word, it was impossible he could be in the way of salvation.

CHAP. V

Translation of the Bible—Wants of the Church—Principles of the Reformation—Alarm at Court—Luther to the Archbishop—Temptations of the Devil—Condemnation of the Sorbonne—Melancthon’s Reply—Visit to Wittemberg.

While Luther was thus combating error as if he had still been upon the field of battle, he was at work in his retreat as if he were a stranger to every thing that was taking place in the world. The moment had arrived when the Reformation was to pass from the speculations of theologians into common life, and yet the great instrument by which this transaction was to be effected was not yet in existence. This wondrous and mighty engine, destined to assail the edifice of Rome from all quarters, with bolts which would demolish its walls, to lift off the enormous weight under which the papacy held down the half-suffocated Church, and give to humanity itself an impulse which it should retain to the latest ages, was to come forth from the old castle of the Wartburg and enter the world with the Reformer the very day when his captivity should terminate. The further the

Church was removed from the period when Jesus Christ, the true light of the world, dwelt in it, the more need she had of the lamp of the Word of God, which was to transmit the brightness of Jesus Christ unimpaired to the latest ages. But this divine Word was then unknown to the people. Attempts at translation, from the vulgate in 1477, 1490, and 1518, had succeeded ill, were almost unintelligible, and, from their high price, beyond the reach of the people. It had even been prohibited to give the Bible to the Germanic Church in the vulgar tongue. Besides, the number of those able to read was inconsiderable, so long as there was no work in the German tongue of deep and universal interest.

Luther was called to give the Scriptures to his country, Italy. The same God who withdrew St. John to Patmos there to write his Revelation, had shut up Luther in the Wartburg to translate his Word. This great work, which it would have been difficult for him to undertake amid the distractions and occupations of Wittemberg, was destined to establish the new edifice on the primitive rock, and bring back Christians, after so many ages of scholastic subtleties to the pure and primary source of redemption and salvation. The wants of the Church pleaded strongly; they demanded this great work, and Luther was to be trained by his own deep experience for the performance of it. In fact, he had found in faith that spiritual repose which his agitated conscience and monastic ideas had long made him seek in his own merit and holiness. The doctrine of the Church, viz. scholastic theology, knew nothing of the consolations which faith gives, but these were forcibly announced in Scripture, and there he found them. Faith in the Word of God had made him free. By means of it, he felt himself emancipated from the dogmatical authority of the Church, its hierarchy, its traditions, scholastic opinions, powerful prejudices, and all tyranny of man. The numerous and powerful links which had for ages chained and bound Christendom, were broken, destroyed, and scattered in fragments around him, and he nobly raised his head, free of every thing save the Word. This independence of men, this submission to God, which he had learned in the Holy Scriptures, he wished the Church to possess. But in order to accomplish this, it was necessary to give her back the revelation of God. It was necessary that a mighty hand should throw back the ponderous gates of that arsenal of the Word of God, in which Luther himself had found his armour, and that those vaults and ancient halls which no foot had traversed for ages, should be again opened wide to the Christian people for the day of battle.

Luther had already translated different portions of the Holy Scriptures: the seven penitential Psalms had been his first labour. Jesus Christ, John Baptist, and the Reformation, alike began with the doctrine of repentance, which is the first beginning of renovation in the individual and in the race. These essays had been received with avidity: all wished for more, and this call from the people was to Luther a call from God himself. He formed the design of responding to it. He was a captive behind high walls. True! He will employ his leisure in transferring the Word of God into the language of his people. This Word will shortly descend with him from the Wartburg; it will circulate among the population of Germany, and put them in possession of spiritual treasures—treasures like them, shut up within the hearts of a few pious men. “Let this single book,” exclaims he, “be in all tongues, in all hands, before all eyes, in all cars, and in all hearts.” Admirable words! which a distinguished society2 for translating the Bible into the languages of all nations is now, after three centuries, engaged in carrying into effect. “The Scripture, without any commentary,” says he on another ocasion, “is the sun from which all teachers receive light.”

Such are the principles of Christianity and of the Reformation. According to those venerable words, we are not to take the Fathers in order to throw light on Scripture, but Scripture to throw light on the Fathers. The Reformers and the Apostles held up the Word of God alone for light, just as they hold up the sacrifice of Christ alone for righteousness. To attempt to mix up human authority with this absolute authority of God, or human righteousness with this perfect righteousness of Christ, is to corrupt Christianity in its two foundations. Such are the two fundamental heresies of Rome, heresies moreover which some teachers would fain introduce, though, doubtless, in a modified form, into the bosom of the Reformation.

Luther opened the Greek text of the Evangelists and Apostles, and undertook the difficult task of making these inspired teachers speak his mother tongue—an important epoch in the history of the Reformation which was thenceforth no longer in the hand of the Reformer. The Bible came forward; Luther drew back: God showed himself, and man disappeared. The Reformer has placed the book in the hands of his contemporaries. Every one can now listen to God himself. As for Luther, he from this time mingles in the crowd, and takes his place among those who come to draw at the common fountain of light and life. In the translation of the Holy Scriptures Luther found in abundance that consolation and strength which were most necessary to him. Sick, isolated, saddened by the efforts of his enemies and the errors of some of his partisans, seeing his life wasting away in the gloom of this old castle, he had many fearful combats to maintain. In those times there was an inclination to transfer to the visible world the struggles which the soul maintains with its spiritual foes. The lively imagination of Luther easily gave a bodily shape to the emotions of his heart, while the superstition of the middle ages had still some hold upon his intellect, so that in this respect it may be said of him as has been said of Calvin in the punishment of heretics—he had a remnant of popery. In Luther's idea Satan was not merely an invisible though real being: he thought that this enemy of God appeared to man as he had appeared to Jesus Christ. Although the authenticity of several of the accounts given on this subject in the 'Table Talk,' and elsewhere, is more than doubtful, the historian is bound to point out this foible in the reformer. Never did these dark ideas assail him more than in the solitude of the Wartburg. He had defied the devil at Worms in the days of his strength; but now all the power of the Reformer seemed broken and his glory tarnished. He was thrown aside. Satan was victorious in his turn, and Luther, in the anguish of his spirit thought he saw him raising his gigantic figure before him, pointing his threatening finger, triumphing with bitter and infernal leer, and gnashing his teeth in frightful rage. One day among others it is said, when Luther was working at his translation of the New Testament, he thought he saw Satan, who, dreadfully terrified at this work, kept teazing him, and turning round and round him like a lion about to pounce upon his prey. Luther, frightened and irritated, seized his inkstand and threw it at the head of his enemy. The figure vanished and the inkstand struck against the wall.2

Luther's residence in the Wartburg began to be insupportable. He felt indignant at the pusillanimity of his protectors. Sometimes he remained a whole day absorbed in silent and profound meditation, and came out of it only to exclaim, "Oh that I were at Wittemberg!" At length he could hold out no longer: there has been enough of political management: he must see his friends again,—hear them and speak to them. True! he runs the risk of falling into the hands of his enemies, but nothing can stop him. Towards the end of November he secretly quits the Wartburg and sets out for Wittemberg. A new storm had just burst upon him. The Sorbonne had at length broken silence.

This celebrated school of Paris, the first authority in the Church after the pope, the ancient and venerable fountain, whence theological dogmas had sprung, had just issued its verdict against the Reformation. The following are some of the propositions which it condemned: Luther had said, “God always pardons and remits sins gratuitously, and asks nothing of us in return but only to live in future according to his will.” He had added, “Of all mortal sins the most mortal is this,—for any one to believe that he is not guilty before God of mortal and damnable sin.” He had further said, “To burn heretics is contrary to the will of the Holy Spirit.” To all these propositions, and many others which were quoted, the faculty of theology replied, “Heresy, anathema!” But a young man of twenty-four, of small stature, modest, and unostentatious, dared to take up the gauntlet which had been thrown down by the first school in the world. It was well known at Wittemberg what view ought to be taken of these pompous condemnations: it was known that Rome had yielded to the suggestion of the Dominicans, and that the Sorbonne was dragged along by two or three fanatical doctors, who were designated at Paris by derisive nicknames. Accordingly, Melancthon, in his apology, did not confine himself to the defence of Luther, but with the boldness which characterises his writings, carried the assault into the camp of his adversaries. “You say he is a manichean, a montanist! let fire and flame repress his folly! Which, pray, is montanist? Luther who wishes men to believe in the Holy Scriptures, or yourselves who will have them to believe the views of men rather than the Word of God.”3 To attribute more to man’s word than to the Word of God was in fact the heresy of Montanus, as it is still that of the pope, and of all those who set the hierarchical authority of the Church, or the internal inspiration of mysticism above the positive declaration of the Sacred Writings. Accordingly, the young master of arts who had said, “I will lose my life sooner than my faith,” did not stop there He accused the Sorbonne of having obscured the gospel, extinguished faith, and substituted a vain philosophy for Christianity.5 After the work of Melancthon the position of the question was changed; he proved to demonstration that heresy was at Paris and Rome, and catholic truth at Wittemberg.

Meanwhile, Luther giving himself little concern with the condemnation of the Sorbonne, repaired in his knight’s dress to the university seat. On the way different reports reached him, that a spirit of impatience and independence was manifesting itself among his adherents, and he was grieved to the heart. At length he arrived at Wittemberg without having been recognised, and stopped at the house of Amsdorff. Forthwith all his friends were secretly summoned,2 Melancthon especially, who had often said, “If I must be deprived of him I prefer death. On their arrival, what a meeting! what joy! The captive of the Wartburg seated amidst them enjoys all the sweets of Christian friendship. He learns the progress of the Reformation, and the hopes of his brethren; and, overjoyed at what he sees and hears,4 prays, gives thanks, and then, after a short delay, returns to the Wartburg.

CHAP. VI

New Reforms—Gabriel Zwilling on the Mass—The University—The Elector—Monachism attacked—Emancipation of the Monks—Disturbances—Chapter of the Augustins—The Mass and Carlstadt—First Supper—Importance of the Mass in the Roman System.

Luther’s joy was well founded—the Reformation was then advancing at an immense pace. Feldkirchen, always in the advanced guard, had first mounted to the assault: the main body was now shaken, and the power which carried the Reformation from doctrine which it had purified, into

worship, common life, and the constitution of the Church now manifested itself by a new explosion still more formidable to the papacy than the former had been.

Rome, disencumbered of the Reformer, thought she had done with heresy. But in a short time all was changed. Death precipitated the man who had laid Luther under interdict from the pontifical throne. Disturbances arising in Spain, obliged Charles V to repair beyond the Pyrenees. War broke out between this prince and Francis I, and, as if this had not been enough to occupy the Emperor, Solyman advanced into Hungary. Charles, attacked on all sides, saw himself constrained to forget the monk at Worms, and his religious innovations.

About the same time the vessel of the Reformation which, driven in all directions by contrary winds, had well nigh foundered, righted and floated firmly on the waves.

It was in the Augustin Convent of Wittemberg that the Reformation broke out. We must not be surprised at this: the Reformer was no longer there, but no power could banish the spirit which had animated him. For some time the church in which Luther so often preached had resounded with strange doctrines. Gabriel Zwilling, the preacher of the convent, a monk full of zeal, preached with ardour in favour of the Reformation. As if Luther, whose name was everywhere proclaimed, had become too powerful and too illustrious, God selected feeble and obscure individuals to commence the Reformation which Luther had prepared. “Jesus Christ,” said the preacher, “instituted the sacrament of the altar as a memorial of his death, not to make it an object of adoration. To adore it is real idolatry. The priest who communicates alone commits a sin. No prior is entitled to compel a monk to say mass alone. Let one, two, or three officiate and let all the others receive the sacrament in both kinds.”

Such was the demand of friar Gabriel, and these bold words were listened to with approbation by the other friars, especially by those who came from the Low Countries. Being disciples of the gospel why should they not in everything conform themselves to its commands? Had not Luther himself, in the month of August, written to Melancthon, “Never more from this time will I say a private mass.”3 Thus the monks, those soldiers of the hierarchy, set free by the Word of God, boldly took part against Rome. At Wittemberg they experienced an obstinate resistance on the part of the prior. Recollecting that all things ought to be done in order, they yielded, still declaring that to maintain the mass was to oppose the Gospel of God. The prior had carried the day: one had proved stronger than all. It might therefore be supposed that the movement of the Augustins had only been one of those freaks of insubordination of which convents were so often the theatre. But it was in reality the Spirit of God that was then agitating Christendom. An isolated cry sent forth from the recess of a monastery found a thousand echoing voices, and that which it was wished to keep confined within the walls of a convent, came forth and assumed a distinct shape in the very heart of the city. A rumour of the dissensions of the monks was soon noised in the town. The citizens and students of the University took part either for or against the mass. The electoral court was alarmed. Frederick, in astonishment, sent his chancellor Pontanus to Wittemberg, with orders, to tame the monks, by putting them, if necessary, on bread and water; and on the 12th October, at seven in the morning, a deputation of professors, of whom Melancthon was one, repaired to the convent to exhort the monks not to make any innovation, or at least to wait. On this all their zeal revived: unanimous in their belief, with the exception of the prior who combated them, they appealed to the Holy Scriptures, to the intelligence of the faithful, and the consciences of

theologians, and two days after returned a written declaration. The teachers now examined the question more closely, and perceived that truth was on the side of the monks. They went to convince, but were themselves convinced. What were they to do? Their conscience spake aloud; their distress continually increased: at last, after long hesitation, they adopted a bold resolution. On the 20th October, the University gave in their report to the Elector. “Let your Electoral Highness,” said they to him, after exposing the errors of the mass, “Let your Electoral Highness abolish all abuses, lest Christ, on the day of judgment, upbraid us as he once did Capernaum.”

It is no longer some obscure monks who speak, but that University which all sober men have hailed for years as the national school. The very means employed to stifle the Reformation are going to contribute to its extension.

Melancthon, with the boldness which he showed in speculation, published fifty-five propositions with a view to enlighten the public mind:

“Just,” says he, “as to look at a crucifix is not to do a good work, but simply to contemplate a sign which reminds us of the death of Christ.

“As to look at the sun is not to do a good work, but simply to contemplate a sign which reminds us of Christ and his gospel.

“So to partake of the table of the Lord is not to do a good work, but simply to make use of a sign which reminds of the grace given us by Christ.

“But herein is the difference. The symbols invented by men simply recall what they signify, whereas the signs given by God not only recall the things, but also make the heart sure of the will of God.

“As the sight of a cross does not justify, so the mass does not justify.

“As the sight of a cross is not a sacrifice for our own sins or for those of others, so the mass is not a sacrifice.

“There is only one sacrifice, only one satisfaction—Jesus Christ. Out of him there is none.

“Let the bishops who do not oppose the impiety of the mass be anathema.”

Thus spake the pious and gentle Philip. The Elector was in consternation. His wish had been to repress some young monks, and lo! all the University, with Melancthon himself, rise up in their defence. To wait appeared to him to be in all things the surest means of success. He had no taste for sudden reforms, and wished every opinion to have full opportunity of showing itself. “Time,” thought he, “throws light on all things, and brings them to maturity.” And yet the Reformation advances in spite of him with rapid steps, and threatens to carry every thing along with it. Frederick used all his efforts to arrest it. His authority, the weight of his character, the arguments which appeared to him most decisive—every thing was put in requisition. He sent a message to the theologians, “Dont be in a haste; you are too few in number to carry out such a reformation. If it is founded on the holy Gospel, others will perceive it, and the whole Church will concur with you in abolishing these abuses. Speak, debate, preach as much on these subjects as you please; but preserve ancient customs.”

Such was the struggle which took place on the subject of the mass. The monks had gone up courageously to the assault; the theologians, for a moment undecided, had soon supported them. The prince and his ministers alone defended the place. It has been said that the Reformation was effected by the power and authority of the Elector; but so far from this, the assailants were obliged to retire at the venerated voice of Frederick, and the mass was saved for some days.

Moreover, the hottest of the assault had already been directed to another point. Friar Gabriel continued his fervid harangues in the church of the Augustins. It was against monachism itself that he now directed those redoubled blows. If the mass constituted the strength of the Romish doctrine, monachism constituted the strength of the hierarchy. These, therefore, were the two first positions which required to be carried.

“Nobody,” exclaimed Gabriel, according to the prior’s account, “nobody in convents observes the commandments of God; nobody can be saved under the monk’s cowl; every man in a cloister must have entered it in the name of the devil. Vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience are contrary to the Gospel.”

These strange addresses were reported to the prior, who took good care to keep away from the church, that he might not hear them.

“Gabriel,” it was also said, “wishes every means to be taken to empty cloisters.” If monks are met in the street, it is proper, according to him, to pull them by the frock, and point the finger at them; and if mockery does not succeed in making them quit the convent, they must be violently hunted out of it. “Break open, destroy, throw down the monasteries,” said he, “so that not a vestige of them may remain, and on the site which they have so long occupied let it be impossible to find any one of the stones which served to shelter so much idleness and superstition.” The monks were astonished; their conscience told them that what Gabriel said was only too true—that the life of a monk was not conformable to the will of God, and that none was enabled to dispose of them but themselves.

Thirteen Augustins left the convent at once, and, laying aside the dress of their order, assumed common clothes. Those of them who had some education attended the lectures in the University, that they might one day become useful to the Church, and those whose minds were little cultivated sought to gain their living by working with their own hands, according to the injunction of the apostle and the example of the worthy burghers of Wittemberg. One of them, who was acquainted with the trade of carpenter, entered with the corporation, and resolved to marry.

If Luther’s entrance into the convent of the Augustins of Erfurth was the first germ of the Reformation, the departure of these thirteen monks from the convent of the Augustins of Wittemberg was a sign that it was beginning to take possession of Christendom. For thirty years Erasmus had been exposing the uselessness, the follies, and vices of the monks, and with him all Europe had laughed or felt indignant. But it was no longer an affair of sarcasm. Thirteen spirited and brave men again appeared in the midst of their fellow-men to render themselves useful to society, and fulfil the orders of God. The marriage of Feldkirchen had been the first defeat of the hierarchy—the emancipation of these thirteen Augustins was the second. Monachism, which had been formed the moment the Church commenced her period of bondage and error, behoved to fall the moment she recovered liberty and truth. This bold proceeding caused a general fermentation

in Wittemberg. Admiration was felt for the men who came to share in the common toils, and they were received as brethren. At the same time, cries were heard against those who persisted in remaining idly hid behind the walls of a monastery. The monks who adhered to the prior trembled in their cells, and he, carried away by the universal movement, discontinued the celebration of low mass. The smallest concession at so critical a moment could not but hasten the progress of events. This order by the prior caused a very lively sensation in the town and the University, and produced a sudden explosion. Among the students and citizens of Wittemberg were some turbulent men, whom the least excitement stirs up and hurries into culpable disorders. They were indignant at the idea that low mass, which was suspended even by the superstitious prior, should still be said in the parish church, and on Tuesday, the 3rd Dec., when mass was about to be chanted, they made a sudden rush towards the altar, carried off the books, and drove away the priests. The Council and the University were indignant, and met to punish the authors of these misdeeds. But the passions, when once roused, are not easily calmed. The Cordeliers had not taken part in the reform movement of the Augustins. The next day some students put up a threatening placard on the door of their monastery: thereafter forty students entered their church, and, without proceeding to actual violence, mocked the monks, who, in consequence, did not venture to say mass except in the choir. Towards evening, the fathers received intimation to be upon their guard. “The students,” it was said, “intended to attack the monastery!…” The monks in alarm, not knowing how to defend themselves against these real or supposed attacks, hastily petitioned the Council to defend them. Some soldiers were sent, but the enemy did not appear. The University caused the students who had taken part in these disturbances to be arrested. They were discovered to be students from Erfurth, already marked for insubordination. University penalties were inflicted on them.

Still it was felt necessary carefully to examine the lawfulness of monastic vows. A chapter, consisting of the Augustins of Thuringia and Misnia, met at Wittemberg in the month of December. Their views coincided with Luther’s. They declared on the one hand that monastic vows were not sinful, but, on the other, that they were not obligatory. “In Christ,” said they, “there is neither laic nor monk: every one is free to quit the monastery or to remain in it. Let him who departs, not abuse his liberty—let him who remains, obey his superiors and that from love.” Then they abolished mendicancy and masses said for money: they also decreed that the most learned among them should apply themselves to the teaching of the Word of God, and that the others should support their brethren by the work of their hands. The question of vows thus seemed determined, but that of the mass remained undecided. The Elector continued to oppose the torrent, and protected an institution which was still standing in every part of Christendom. The orders of an indulgent prince were unable, however, long to restrain men’s minds. The brain of Carlstadt especially, fermented amid the general fermentation. Full of zeal, honesty and intrepidity, and ready, like Luther, to sacrifice every thing for the truth, he had less wisdom and moderation than the Reformer. He was not free from a love of vain-glory, and, with a decided inclination to go to the bottom of every question, he had little judgment and little clearness in his ideas. Luther had drawn him from the midst of the schoolmen, and turned him towards the study of Scripture, but Carlstadt had not patience to study the original tongues, and had not perceived, like his friend, the full sufficiency of the Word of God. Accordingly he was often seen to fasten on the most singular interpretations. So long as Luther was at his side, the superiority of the master kept the scholar within due bounds. But Carlstadt was now at liberty, and this little man, of sallow tint, who had never been

conspicuous for eloquence, was heard at the university and the church, especially in Wittemberg, giving eager expression to ideas which, though sometimes profound, were often enthusiastic and extravagant. “What folly,” exclaimed he, “to think that the Reformation should be left to the agency of God alone! A new order of things begins. The hand of man must interpose. Wo to him who stays behind, and will not mount the breach in the cause of the mighty God …” The words of the archdeacon communicated to others the impatience which animated himself. Following his example, individuals who were sincere and straightforward exclaimed, “All that the popes have ordained is impious. Let us not become accomplices in these abominations by allowing them to subsist. What is condemned by the word of God must be abolished in Christendom, whatever be the ordinances of men. If the heads of the State and Church will not do their duty, let us do ours. Let us renounce negotiations, conferences, theses, and debates, and have recourse to the true remedy for all these evils. There must be a second Elijah to destroy the altars of Baal.” The re-establishment of the Last Supper at this moment of fermentation and enthusiasm doubtless could not exhibit the solemnity and sacredness of its institution by the Son of God the evening before his death, and almost at the foot of his cross. But if God now made use of feeble, and perhaps passionate men, it was still his hand which re-established the feast of his love in the bosom of his Church. As early as the month of October, Carlstadt, with twelve of his friends, had secretly celebrated the Lord’s Supper, agreeably to its original institution. The Sunday before Christmas he intimated from the pulpit that, on the feast of the Circumcision, being new New-year’s-day, he would dispense the Supper under the two kinds of bread and wine to all who should present themselves at the altar, that he would omit all useless ceremonies, and in celebrating this mass would not put on either cope or chasuble. The Council, in alarm, requested Counsellor Beyer to prevent so great an irregularity. On this Carlstadt resolved not to wait for the time he had appointed. On Christmas, 1521, he preaches in the parish church, on the necessity of abandoning the mass, and receiving the sacrament under the two kinds. After sermon he descends to the altar, pronounces the words of consecration in German, then turning to the people, who were all attention, he says in a solemn tone, “Whosoever feels the burden of his sins, and is hungering and thirsting for divine grace, let him come and receive the body and blood of the Lord.” Afterwards, without raising the host, he distributes the bread and wine to all, saying, “This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant.”

Different sentiments pervaded the audience. Some feeling that new grace from God was given to the church, came to the altar under deep emotion and in silence. Others, attracted particularly by the novelty, approached with agitation and a certain degree of impatience. Only five communicants presented themselves at the confessional. The others simply took part in the public confession of sins. Carlstadt gave general absolution to all, enjoining no other penitence than this, “Sin no more.” At the close they sang the hymn, Lamb of God. No opposition was made to Carlstadt: these reforms had already obtained the public consent. The archdeacon dispensed the Supper again on New-year’s-day; then, on the following Sunday, and thereafter, the ordinance was regularly observed. Einsidlen, one of the Elector’s counsellors, having upbraided Carlstadt with seeking his own glory rather than the salvation of his hearers, “Mighty Sir,” replied he, “there is no death that can make me abandon Scripture. The word has come to me so readily…. Wo to me if I preach not.” Carlstadt married soon after. In the month of January the town council of Wittemberg and the university regulated the celebration of the Supper in accordance with the new form. At the same time the means were taken into consideration of restoring the moral influence of

religion; for the Reformation behoved to re-establish simultaneously faith, worship, and manners. It was decreed that mendicants, whether lay or not, should no longer be tolerated, and that in each street a pious man should be charged to take care of the poor, and cite scandalous offenders before the university or the council.

Thus fell the mass, the principal bulwark of Rome; thus the Reformation passed from doctrine to worship. Three ages before, the mass and transubstantiation had been definitively established, and thereafter every thing in the Church had taken a new direction—the general tendency being to give glory to man and reverence to the priest. The holy sacrament had been worshipped; feasts had been instituted in honour of the greatest miracles; the adoration of Mary had obtained an important place; the priest who, in his consecration, received the strange power of “making the body of Christ,” had been separated from the laity, and had become, according to Thomas Aquinas, a mediator between God and man;5 celibacy had been proclaimed as an inviolable law; auricular confession had been imposed on the people, and the cup taken from them: for how could humble laity be placed on the same level with priests entrusted with the most august ministry? The mass was an insult to the Son of God; it was opposed to the perfect grace of his cross and the spotless glory of his eternal kingdom. But if it degraded our Lord, it exalted the priest whom it invested with the extraordinary power of reproducing in his hands, at will, his sovereign Creator. The Church appeared henceforth to exist, not in order to preach the gospel, but simply to reproduce Christ corporeally in the midst of her. The pontiff of Rome, whose most humble servants at pleasure created the body of God himself, sat as God in the temple of God, and ascribed to himself a spiritual treasure out of which he drew unlimited indulgences for the pardon of sins.

Such were the gross errors which, together with the mass, had for three centuries been imposed on the Church. The Reformation, in abolishing this human institution, abolished all these abuses. The act of the Archdeacon of Wittemberg was therefore one of high consequence. The sumptuous festivals which amused the people, the worship of Mary, the pride of the priesthood, the power of the pope, all tottered with the mass. Glory was withdrawn from the priests and restored to Jesus Christ. The Reformation thus took an immense step in advance.

CHAP. VII

Spurious Reform—The new Prophets—The Prophets at Wittemberg—Melancthon—The Elector—Luther, Carlstadt, and Images—Disorders—Luther sent for—He hesitates not—Dangers.

Still men under the influence of prejudice might have been unable to see in the work which was being accomplished more than the effect of vain enthusiasm. Facts themselves behoved to prove the contrary and demonstrate that there is a wide space between a reformation founded on the word of God and a giddy fanaticism. When a great religious fermentation takes place in the Church, some impure elements always mingle with the manifestation of the truth. One or more false reforms proceeding from man rise to the surface, and serve as a testimony or countersign to true reform. Thus, in the days of Christ, several false Messiahs attested that the true Messiah had appeared. The Reformation of the sixteenth century could not be accomplished without exhibiting a similar phenomenon. The place where it appeared was the little town of Zwickau.

There were some men who, excited by the great events which then agitated Christendom, aspired to direct revelations from the Deity, instead of simply seeking sanctification of heart, and who

pretended they had a call to complete the reformation which had been feebly sketched by Luther. “What use is there,” said they, “in attaching oneself so strictly to the Bible? The Bible; always the Bible! Can the Bible speak to us? Is it not insufficient to instruct us? Had God designed to teach us by a book, would he not have sent a Bible from heaven? It is by the Spirit only that we can be illumined. God himself speaks to us. God himself reveals to us what we ought to do and what we ought to say.” Thus, like the partisans of Rome, these fanatics attacked the fundamental principle on which the whole Reformation rests—the sufficiency of the Word of God. A simple weaver, named Nicholas Storck, announced that the angel Gabriel had appeared to him during the night, and after having communicated to him things which he could not yet reveal, had said to him, “Thou, thou shalt sit upon my throne.” An old student of Wittemberg, named Mark Stubner, joined Storck, and forthwith abandoned his studies, having, as he said, received the gift of interpreting the Holy Scriptures immediately from God. Mark Thomas, also a weaver, added to their number and a new adept, Thomas Munzer, a man of a fanatical spirit, gave a regular organisation to this new sect. Storck, wishing to follow the example of Christ, chose among his adherents twelve apostles and seventy-two disciples. All of these openly announced, as a sect in our days has done, that apostles and prophets are at length restored to the Church of God.2

Shortly after the new prophets, pretending to walk in the footsteps of those of ancient times, delivered their message. “Woe! Woe!” said they. “A church governed by men so corrupt as the bishops cannot be the church of Christ. The wicked rulers of Christendom will ere long be overthrown. In five, six, or seven years, universal desolation will burst forth. The Turk will seize upon Germany: all the priests, even those who are married, will be put to death. No wicked man, no sinner will be left alive; and after the earth shall have been purified by blood, God will set up his kingdom in it: Storck will be put in possession of supreme authority, and will commit the government of the nations to saints. Henceforth there will be only one faith and one baptism. The day of the Lord is at hand, and we are touching on the end of the world. Woe! Woe! Woe!” Then declaring that the baptism received in infancy was of no value, the new prophets invited all men to come and receive the true baptism at their hands, as a sign of introduction into the new Church of God.

These discourses made a strong impression on the people. Some pious souls were moved at the idea that prophets were restored to the Church, and all who loved the marvellous threw themselves into the arms of the eccentric men of Zwickau. But scarcely had this old heresy which had formerly existed in the times of Montanism, and in the middle ages, again found followers than it encountered a powerful opponent in the Reformation. Nicolas Haussman, to whom Luther bore this fine testimony, “What we teach, he practises,” was pastor of Zwickau. This good man did not allow himself to be led astray by the pretensions of the false prophets. He laid an arrest on the innovations which Storck and his adherents wished to introduce, and in this his two deacons concurred with him. The fanatics, repulsed by the ministers of the Church, plunged into another excess. They formed assemblies, in which revolutionary doctrines were professed. The people were excited, and disturbances broke out; a priest, who was carrying the holy sacrament, was assailed with volleys of stones.2 The civil authority interposed, and threw the most violent into prison. Indignant at this proceeding, and impatient to justify themselves and state their complaint, Storck, Mark Thomas, and Stubner, repaired to Wittemberg.4

They arrived on the 27th December, 1521. Storck walked in front with the bearing and mien of a trooper. Mark Thomas and Stubner followed him. The disquiet which prevailed in Wittemberg favoured their designs. The students and burghers deeply moved, and already in a state of fermentation, were a soil well fitted for the new prophets.

Thinking themselves sure of their support, they immediately repaired to the professors of the university, in order to obtain a testimony in their favour. “We,” said they, “are sent by God to instruct the people. We hold familiar converse with the Lord; we know things to come—in a word, we are apostles and prophets, and we appeal for the fact to Doctor Luther.” This strange language astonished the professors.

“Who ordained you to preach?” asked Melancthon of Stubner, his old student, who had lodged in his house, “Our Lord God.” “Have you written any books?—“Our Lord God has forbidden me.” Melancthon is moved, astonished, and alarmed.

“There are extraordinary spirits in these men,” says he, “but what kind of spirits? Luther alone can determine. On the one hand, let us beware of extinguishing the Spirit of God, and on the other, of being seduced by the spirit of the devil.” Storck, who was of a restless temper, soon quitted Wittemberg. Stubner remained. Animated with an ardent spirit of proselytism, he went up and down the town, speaking sometimes to one, and sometimes to another. Several acknowledged him as a prophet of God. He applied particularly to a Suabian, named Cellarius, a friend of Melancthon, who kept a school, in which he instructed a great number of young people in literature, and who soon became a firm believer in the mission of the new apostles.

Melancthon became the more uncertain and perplexed. The visions of the new prophets did not disturb him so much as their new doctrine on baptism. It seemed to him agreeable to reason, and he considered it a subject worthy of examination; “for,” said he, “it is not right either to admit or reject any thing lightly.”

Such is the spirit of the Reformation. Melancthon’s hesitancy and anxiety are proofs of the uprightness of his heart, and perhaps do him more honour than a systematic opposition could have done. The Elector, whom Melancthon named “the lamp of Israel,” was also hesitating. Prophets and apostles in the electorate of Saxony, as formerly at Jerusalem! “This is an important affair,” said he, “and as a layman I cannot comprehend it. But sooner than act against God, I will take my staff in my hand and quit my throne.” At last he desired his counsellors to say to the professors that they had enough of trouble on their hands at Wittemberg, that in all probability the pretensions of the men of Zwickau were only a delusion of the devil, and that the wisest course seemed to be to let the whole affair go off; that nevertheless, in every case where his Electoral Highness saw the will of God clearly, he would not take counsel, either of brother or mother, but would be ready to suffer every thing for the cause of truth.

Luther in the Wartburg was apprised of the agitation which prevailed at the court and at Wittemberg. Strange men had appeared, and it was difficult to say whence their message came. He instantly perceived that God had permitted these sad events to humble his servants, and urge them by trials to make greater endeavours after sanctification.

“Your Electoral Highness,” wrote he to Frederick, “for many years made search for relics in all countries. God has listened to your desires, and sent you a cross quite entire, with nails, spears,

and scourges … Grace and prosperity to the new relic!… Only let your Highness extend your arms without fear, and allow the nails to sink into your flesh!… I always expected that Satan would send us this sore plague …" But at the same time nothing appeared to him more urgent than to secure others in the liberty which he claimed for himself. He had not two weights and two measures." "Beware," wrote he to Spalatin, "of throwing them into prison; let not the prince embrue his hands in the blood of these new prophets." Luther was far before his age, and even before several other Reformers, on the subject of religious liberty.

Circumstances continued to become more serious at Wittemberg.

Carlstadt rejected several of the doctrines of the new prophets, and in particular their anabaptism; but there is in religious enthusiasm something contagions, from which a head like his could not easily defend itself. No sooner had the men of Zwickau arrived at Wittemberg than Carlstadt quickened his pace in the prosecution of violent reforms. "It is necessary," said he, "to make an assault on all impious customs, and overturn them in one day. Calling to mind all the passages of Scripture against images, he declaimed with increasing energy against the idolatry of Rome. They bow and crouch before these idols," exclaimed he, "they kindle tapers to them, and present offerings to them.… Let us arise and pluck them from their altars!"

These words did not sound in vain in the ears of the people. They entered the churches, carried off the images, broke them in pieces, and burnt them. It would have been better to wait till their abolition had been legally determined; but it was thought that the tardiness of the leaders was compromising the Reformation itself.

Shortly, to hear these enthusiasts, there were no longer any true Christians in Wittemberg save those who did not confess, who assailed the priests, and ate flesh on forbidden days. Any one suspected of not rejecting all the observances of Rome as inventions of the devil was a worshipper of Baal. "It is necessary," exclaimed they, "to form a church composed only of saints." The citizens of Wittemberg presented certain articles to the Council for their adoption. Several of these articles were conformable to evangelical morality. In particular, they asked that all places of public amusement should be shut. But Carlstadt soon went still farther; he began to despise learning; and the old professor was heard from his chair counselling his students to return to their homes, resume the hoe, hold the plough, and quietly cultivate the ground, since it was by the sweat of his brow that man was to eat bread. George Mohr, master of the school-boys at Wittemberg, led astray by the same crotchet, called from his school window to the assembled citizens, to come and take away their children. What was the use of making them study? Storck and Stubner had never been at the university, and yet they were prophets. In preaching the gospel, therefore, a citizen was worth as much, perhaps worth more than all the teachers of the world.

Thus arose doctrines in direct opposition to the Reformation, which the revival of letters had prepared. It was with the armour of theological science that Luther had attacked Rome; and yet the enthusiasts of Wittemberg, like the fanatical monks, whom Erasmus and Reuchlin had combated, pretended to trample all human knowledge under their feet. Should Vandalism come to be established, the hope of the world was lost. A new invasion of barbarism would quench the light which God had again kindled in Christendom. The effects of these strange harangues were soon seen. Men's minds were prejudiced, agitated, turned aside from the gospel; the university was disorganised, and the students becoming demoralised were dispersed—the governments of

Germany recalling such as belonged to them. Thus the men who wished to reform, and give life to every thing, were proceeding in a course of destruction. “One last effort more,” exclaimed the friends of Rome, who were every where resuming courage—“one last effort more, and all will be gained.”2 The only means of saving the Reformation was a prompt suppression of the excesses of the fanatics; but who could do it? Melancthon? He was too young, too feeble, too much agitated himself by these strange apparitions. The Elector? He was the most pacific man of his age. To build the castles of Altenburg, Weimar, and Coburg, to adorn the churches with the fine paintings of Lucas Cranach, to perfect the music of his chapels, to promote the prosperity of his university, to render his people happy; to stop in the midst of the children whom he met playing on the road, and distribute little presents among them,—such were the sweetest occupations of his life. And now, as he advanced in life, would he come to close quarters with fanatics, and oppose violence to violence! How could the good, the pious Frederick resolve to do so?

Accordingly the evil continued, and none appeared to arrest it. Luther was away from Wittemberg. Trouble and ruin had invaded the city. The Reformation had seen an enemy arise in its bosom, more formidable than popes and emperors, and now stood on the brink of the precipice.

“Luther! Luther!” was the universal cry at Wittemberg. The burghers urgently called for him, the professors longed for his counsels; the prophets themselves appealed to him. All implored him to return.

We can conceive what was passing in the mind of the Reformer. All the severities of Rome were nothing in comparison of the distress which now afflicted his soul. The enemies of the Reformation were coming forth from her own bosom. She was tearing her own vitals; and the doctrine, which alone gave peace to his agitated heart, was becoming an occasion of fatal disaster to the Church.

He had said, “If I knew that my doctrine was hurtful to man, to any one simple obscure man—(this it cannot be, since it is the gospel itself)—I would sooner die ten times than not retract it.” And now a whole town, and this town Wittemberg, was falling into error. The doctrine was no way to blame; but from all quarters of Germany voices were raised to accuse him. Sorrows keener than any he had ever felt now assailed, and new temptations agitated him. “Can this, then,” he asked himself, “be the end to which the work of the Reformation was to lead?” But he repels these doubts. God began, and God will accomplish. “I creep and keep dragging on towards the grace of the Eternal,” exclaims he, “and entreat that His name may remain attached to this work, that if any thing impure has mingled with it, He would remember that I am but a sinful man.” The account sent to Luther of the inspiration of the new prophets and their sublime converse with God did not shake him for one moment. He knew the depths, the agonies, and humiliations of the spiritual life. At Erfurth and Wittemberg he had had experience of the power of God—experience which did not allow him to believe so easily that God should appear to the creature, and hold converse with him. “Ask them,” wrote he to Melancthon, “if they have experienced those spiritual tortures, those creations of God, those deaths and hells which accompany a true regeneration. And if they tell you only of enjoyment of what they call tranquil impressions of devotion and piety, believe them not, even should they pretend to have been carried to the third heaven. Christ, in order that he might arrive at his glory, behoved to pass through death; so must the believer pass through the anguish of sin before he arrive at peace. Would you know the time, the place, the manner in which God speaks with men? Listen: He has broken all my bones like a lion; I am rejected before his face, and my

soul is humbled to the lowest hell. No! the divine majesty (as they term it) does not speak to man so directly, that man can visibly behold it; for no man, says He, can see me and live." But the conviction that the prophets were deluded only served to augment Luther's grief. Is it true, then, that the great doctrine of salvation by grace has so soon lost its attractions that men turn aside from it to attach themselves to fables? He begins to experience that the work is not so easy as he had at first supposed. He stumbles over this first stone which the wanderings of the human mind have placed in his path. Distressed and in anguish, he is willing, at the cost of his life, to take it out of the way of his people, and determines on returning to Wittemberg.

Many were the dangers which then threatened him. The enemies of the Reformation were confident of destroying it. George of Saxony, whose wish was neither for Rome nor Wittemberg, had written, 16th October, 1521, to Duke John the Elector's brother, advising him to join the ranks of the enemies of reform. "Some," said he, "deny the immortality of the soul. Others (and they are monks) drag the relics of St. Anthony with tinkling bells and swine, and cast them into the mire. And all this comes of Luther's doctrine! Entreat your brother the Elector either to punish the impious authors of these innovations, or publicly to declare what his ultimate intentions are. The whitening of our locks warns us that we are drawing near the last stage of life, and urge us to put an end to all these evils."

After this, George departed to take his seat in the imperial government established at Nuremberg, and immediately on his arrival used every means he could to induce the adoption of severe measures. In fact, this body on the 21st January issued an edict, complaining bitterly that the priests said mass without being clothed in the sacerdotal dress, consecrated the holy sacrament in German, dispensed it without receiving the necessary confessions, placed it in the hands of laics, and did not even trouble themselves to inquire whether or not those who came forward to take it had broken their fast. The imperial government accordingly called upon the bishops to search out and rigorously punish all the innovators who might be found within their respective dioceses. The bishops hastened to comply with these orders.

Such was the moment which Luther chose to re-appear upon the scene. He saw the danger; he foresaw immense disasters. "In the empire," said he, "there will soon be a tumult, which will drag, pell mell, princes, magistrates, and bishops. The people have eyes: they neither will nor can be led by force. Germany will swim in blood. Let us place ourselves in the breach, and save our country in this great and terrible day of the Lord."

CHAPTER VIII

Departure from the Wartburg—New Position—Luther and Primitive Catholicism—Meeting at the Black Bear—Luther to the Elector—Return to Wittemberg—Discourses at Wittemberg—Charity—the Word—How the Reformation was effected—Faith in Christ—Effect—Didymus—Carlstadt—The Prophets—Conference with Luther—End of the Struggle.

Such was Luther's thought, but he saw a still more pressing danger. At Wittemberg the fire, far from being extinguished, was becoming more violent from day to day. From the heights of the Wartburg, Luther could discover in the horizon the signs of devastation—frightful blazes darting up suddenly into the air. Is not he the only one who can bring assistance in this extremity? Will he not

throw himself into the midst of the flames, to extinguish the conflagration? In vain do his enemies prepare to strike the last blow; in vain does the Elector implore him to continue in the Wartburg, and prepare his defence for the next Diet. He has something more important to do, he has to defend the gospel itself. “More serious news reach me from day to day,” writes he. “I am preparing to depart; circumstances demand it.” In fact, on the morning of the 3rd of March he rises with the determination to quit the Wartburg for ever. He bids adieu to its old towers and gloomy forests,—crosses the walls where the excommunication of Leo X and the sword of Charles V were unable to reach him, and descends the mountain. The world which extends at his feet, and in which he is going to re-appear, will perhaps raise a death-cry against him. But no matter: he advances joyfully, for it is in the name of the Lord that he is rejoining the society of his fellow-men.

Time had moved onward. Luther came out of the Wartburg for a different cause from that for which he had entered it. He had entered as the assailant of ancient tradition and ancient doctors; he left it as a defender of the doctrine of the apostles against new adversaries. He had entered as an innovator and assailant of the ancient hierarchy: he came out as its preserver, and for the defence of the Christian faith. Till now, Luther had only one aim in his work, viz., the triumph of justification by faith; with this weapon, he had struck down powerful superstitions. But if there had been a time to pull down, there behoved also to be a time to build up. Behind those ruins with which his arm had strewed the ground—behind those tattered letters of indulgences—those broken tiaras and torn cowls—behind all the abuses and errors of Rome, which lay in confused heaps on the field of battle, he discerned and exhibited the primitive Catholic Church, re-appearing always the same, and coming forth, after a long trial, with its immutable doctrines and heavenly accents. He knew how to distinguish between it and Rome: he hailed it and embraced it with joy. Luther did not, as he has been falsely accused, bring a novelty into the world. He did not build up an edifice for the future that had no connection with the past. He discovered and brought to light the old foundation, overgrown with thorns and brambles, and merely continuing the structure of the temple, built on the foundation which the apostles had laid. Luther understood that the ancient and primitive Church of the apostles required on the one hand to be re-built in opposition to the papacy, which had so long oppressed it, and on the other, to be defended against enthusiasts and unbelievers, who pretended not to see it, and who, making no account of all that God had done in times past, wished to begin a work entirely new. Luther was no longer exclusively the apostle of a single doctrine, that of justification, though he always reserved the first place for it;—he became the apostle of the whole Christian system, and while believing that the Church consists essentially of the whole body of the saints, he by no means despised the visible Church, but recognised the assembly of all who are called, as the kingdom of God. Thus a great change now took place in Luther’s soul, in his theology, and in the work of renovation which God was accomplishing in the world. The hierarchy of Rome might perhaps have urged the Reformer into an extreme: the sects which then raised their heads so boldly helped to bring him to the proper medium. His residence in the Wartburg divides the history of the Reformation into two periods.

Luther was trotting along the road to Wittemberg on the second day of his journey, which was Shrove Tuesday. Towards evening a dreadful storm arose and inundated the roads. Two young Swiss, who were proceeding in the same direction, hastened on in order to take shelter in the town of Jena. They had studied at Bale, but were on their way to Wittemberg, attracted by the great celebrity of its University. Travelling on foot, fatigued, and drenched, John Kessler of St. Gall, and

his companion, quickened their pace. The town was in the full gayety of the carnival: dances, masquerades, and noisy feasts occupied all the inhabitants of Jena, and when the two travellers arrived, every inn was occupied. At last the Black Bear, in front of the town gate, was mentioned to them. Jaded and out of spirits, they sadly repaired to it. The host received them kindly, and they sat down near the door opening into the public room, without presuming to enter, being ashamed of the state into which the storm had put them. At one of the tables sat a solitary individual in the dress of a knight; his head was covered with a red cap, and his underdress was covered by the skirts of his doublet; his right hand rested on the pommel of his sword, while his left held it by the hilt. A book was open before him, and he seemed to be reading with great attention.2 At the noise made by the two youths, he raised his head, saluted them courteously, and invited them to come forward and take a seat at table with him; then offering them a glass of beer, and referring to their accent, he said to them, “You are Swiss, I see, but of what Canton?” “St. Gall.”—“If you are going to Wittemberg you will find a countryman there, Dr. Schurff.” Encouraged by this kind reception, they asked, “Sir, are you not able to tell us where Martin Luther now is?” “I know for certain,” replied the knight, “that Luther is not at Wittemberg, but is to be soon. Philip Melancthon is there. Study Greek and Hebrew, that you may have a good understanding of the Holy Scriptures.” “If God spares our lives,” replied one of the youths of St. Gall, “we shall not return home till we have seen and heard doctor Luther, for it is on account of him we have undertaken this long journey. We know that he wishes to overthrow the priesthood and the mass, and as our parents have, from our infancy, intended us for priests, we would fain know on what he bottoms his enterprise.” The knight was silent for a moment, and then said, “where have you studied hitherto?” “At Bale.” “Is Erasmus of Rotterdam still there?—what is he about?” They answered these questions, and there was a new pause. The two Swiss knew not what to think. “Is it not a strange thing,” said they, “that this knight talks to us of Schurff, Melancthon, and Erasmus, and of the necessity of studying Greek and Hebrew.” “Dear friends,” said the stranger abruptly, “what is thought of Luther in Switzerland?” “Sir,” replied Kessler, “opinions differ, as every where else; some cannot extol him sufficiently; others condemn him as an abominable heretic.” “Ah, the priests, no doubt,” said the stranger. The knight’s affability had put the two students at their ease. They longed eagerly to know what book he was reading at the moment of their arrival. The knight had closed it and laid it down near him. Kessler’s companion was at length emboldened to take it up. What was the astonishment of the two youths! The Psalms in Hebrew. The student immediately laid down the book, and wishing to make his indiscretion be forgotten, said, “I would willingly give one of my fingers to know this language.” “This you will certainly do,” replied the stranger, “if you take the trouble to learn it.”

Some moments after Kessler heard himself called by the host. The poor young Swiss feared something was wrong, but the host whispered to him, “I perceive you have a great desire to see and hear Luther; very well, he is sitting beside you.” Kessler taking it for a joke said, “Ah, host, you want to hoax me.” “It is he, certainly,” replied the host, “only don’t let it be seen that you know who he is.” Kessler gave no answer, and returned to the table, burning with eagerness to repeat what he had heard to his companion. But how was he to do it? At last it occurred to him to lean forward as if he were looking to the door, when, being close to his friend’s ear, he whispered to him, “the host assures me that this is Luther.” “He perhaps said Hütten,” replied his companion, “you may have misunderstood him.” “It is quite possible,” replied Kessler, “the host may have said Hütten: the two sounds are not unlike, I may have mistaken the one for the other.” At this moment the trampling of horses was heard in front of the hotel; and two merchants, who wished to pass the

night there, entered the room. After taking off their spurs, and laying aside their cloaks, one of them put down on the table beside him an unbound volume, which immediately caught the eye of the knight. “What book is that?” said he. “An exposition of some gospels and epistles by Dr. Luther,” replied the merchant: “it has just appeared.” “I shall soon have it,” replied the knight. The host at this moment announced supper. The two students, fearing the expence of a repast in company with the chevalier, Ulric Von Hütten and the rich merchants, took the host aside, and begged him to give them something by themselves. “Stay, my friends,” replied the host of the Black Bear, “take your seat at table beside this gentleman; I will charge moderately.” “Come,” said the knight, “I will settle the charge.”

During the repast the stranger knight made many simple and edifying observations. The merchants and students were riveted, and paid more attention to his conversation than to the dishes that were served up. “Luther must either be an angel from heaven or a devil of hell,” said one of the merchants in the course of the conversation, and then added, “I would willingly give ten florins to meet Luther and be able to confess to him.” When the supper was ended the merchants rose up, and the two Swiss remained alone with the knight, who, taking a large glass of beer, lifted it and said gravely, according to the custom of the country, “Swiss, one glass more for thanks.” As Kessler was going to take the glass, the stranger put it down and presented him with one filled with wine: “You are not accustomed to beer,” said he.

He then rose up, threw a military cloak on his shoulders, shook hands with the students, and said to them, “When you arrive at Wittemberg, give my compliments to Doctor Jerôme Schurff.”—“Willingly,” replied they; “but from whom shall we say?” “Say simply,” replied he, “He who is coming salutes you.” On this he walked out, leaving them in admiration at his courtesy and meekness.

Luther, for it was indeed he, continued his journey. Be it remembered he had been put under the ban of the empire; whosoever met him and recognised him might lay hands upon him. But at the moment when he was executing an enterprise which exposed him to every risk, he discoursed gaily with those whom he met on his way.

It was not because he was under any illusion. He saw the future big with storms. “Satan,” said he, “is transported with rage, and all around me meditate death and hell. I advance, nevertheless, and throw myself in the way of the emperor and the pope, having none to defend me save God in heaven. On the part of man power has been given to every one to slay me wheresoever I am found. But Christ is the Lord of all: if it is his will that I be slain, so be it!” The same day, being Ash Wednesday, Luther arrived at Borne, a small town near Leipsic. Feeling that he ought to give notice to his prince of the bold step which he was going to take, he wrote him the following letter from the Conductor Tavern where he had alighted:—

“Grace and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Most serene Elector! gracious lord! what has happened at Wittemberg to the great shame of the gospel has filled me with such grief that if I were not certain of the truth of our cause I would have despaired of it.

“Your Highness knows, or if not, please to be informed. I received the gospel not from men but from heaven, by our Lord Jesus Christ. If I have asked for conferences, it was not because I had

doubts of the truth, but from humility, and for the purpose of winning others. But since my humility is turned against the gospel, my conscience now impels me to act in a different manner. I have yielded enough to your highness in exiling myself during this year. The devil knows it was not from fear I did it. I would have entered Worms though there had been as many devils in the town as there were tiles on the roofs. Now Duke George with whom your Highness tries so much to frighten me, is far less to be feared than a single devil. Had that which has taken place at Wittemberg taken place at Leipsic (the duke's residence), I would instantly have mounted my horse and gone thither, even though (let your Highness pardon the expression,) for nine days it should have done nothing but rain Duke Georges, and every one of them been nine times more furious than he is. What is he thinking of in attacking me? Does he take Christ, my Lord, for a man of straw? The Lord be pleased to avert the dreadful judgment which is impending over him!

"It is necessary for your Highness to know that I am on my way to Wittemberg under a more powerful protection than that of an elector. I have no thought of soliciting the assistance of your Highness: so far from desiring your protection, I would rather give you mine. If I knew that your Highness could or would protect me, I would not come to Wittemberg. No sword can give any aid to this cause. God alone must do all without human aid or co-operation. He who has most faith is the best protector. Now I observe that your Highness is still very weak in the faith.

"But since your Highness desires to know what to do, I will answer with all humility. Your electoral Highness has already done too much, and ought to do nothing at all. God does not wish and cannot tolerate either your cares and labours, or mine. Let your Highness, therefore, act accordingly.

"In regard to what concerns myself, your Highness must act as elector. You must allow the orders of his imperial Majesty to be executed in your towns and rural districts. You must not throw any difficulty in the way, should it be wished to apprehend or slay me; for none must oppose the powers that be save He who established them.

"Let your Highness then leave the gates open, and respect safe-conducts, should my enemies themselves, or their envoys, enter the states of your Highness in search of me. In this way you will avoid all embarrassment and danger.

"I have written this letter in haste that you may not be disconcerted on learning my arrival. He with whom I have to deal is a different person from Duke George. He knows me well, and I know something of him.

"Borne, the Conductor Hotel, Ash Wednesday, 1522.

"Your Electoral Highness's most humble Servant, "Martin Luther."

Thus Luther was drawing near to Wittemberg. He wrote to the prince, but not to apologise. Immovable confidence filled his heart. He saw the hand of God in the cause, and this sufficed him. Never, perhaps, was the heroism of faith more conspicuously displayed. One of the editions of Luther's works has on the margin these words, "This is a marvellous production of the third and last Elias." On Friday, the 7th March, Luther again entered Wittemberg, having been five days in coming from Eisenach. Professors, students, citizens, all gave full utterance to their joy. They had recovered the pilot who alone could bring off the ship from the shallows on which it had been cast.

The elector, who was with his court at Lockau, was much affected on reading Luther's letter. He felt desirous to defend him before the Diet, and wrote to Schurff, "Let him send me a letter explaining his motives for returning to Wittemberg, and let him say also in it that he returned without my permission." Luther agreed to do so.

"I am ready," wrote he to the prince, "to endure the displeasure of your Highness and the anger of the whole world. Are not the inhabitants of Wittemberg my brood? Has not God entrusted them to me? And am not I bound to expose myself to death for them? I fear, moreover, the breaking out in Germany of some great revolution by which God will punish our country. Let your Highness be well assured that the decision in heaven has been very different from that at Nuremberg." This letter was written the very day of Luther's arrival. The next day being the eve of the first Sunday of Lent, Luther repaired to the house of Jerôme Schurff, where Melancthon, Jonas, Amsdorff, and Augustin Schurff were met. Luther eagerly asked them many questions, and they were informing him of all that had taken place, when it was announced that two foreign students wished to speak to Doctor Jerôme. On appearing in the midst of this meeting of doctors, the two youths of St. Gall were at first abashed, but they soon recovered on perceiving among them the knight of the Black Bear, who immediately went up to them, accosted them as old acquaintances, smiled to them, and pointing with his finger to one of the doctors, said, "That is Philip Melancthon of whom I spoke to you." In hononr of the meeting at Jena, the two Swiss spent the whole day with the doctors of Wittemberg.

One great thought occupied the Reformer, and made him forget the joy he felt at being again in the midst of his friends. No doubt the theatre on which he now appeared was obscure: it was in a small town of Saxony that he was going to raise his voice, and yet his undertaking had all the importance of an event which was to influence the destinies of the world. Many nations and many ages were to feel its effects. The point to be determined was, whether this doctrine which he had drawn from the word of God, and which was destined to exert so powerful an influence on the future progress of humanity, would be stronger than the principles of destruction which threatened its existence—whether it was possible to reform without destroying, and to pave the way for further progress, without destroying that already made. To silence fanatics in the first heat of enthusiasm, to master a whole multitude broken loose, to calm them down, and bring them back to order, peace, and truth; to break the force of this impetuous torrent which was threatening to throw down the rising edifice of the Reformation, and scatter its wrecks around;—such was the work for which Luther had returned to Wittemberg. But would his influence be sufficient? This events only could determine. The soul of the Reformer shuddered at the thought of the combat which awaited him. He stood up like a lion goaded on to battle, and shaking his bushy mane, "Now is the time," said he, "to trample Satan under foot, and combat the angel of darkness. If our adversaries retire not of their own accord, Christ will constrain them. We are the masters of life and death, we who believe in the Master of life and death." But at the same time, the impetuous Reformer, as if subdued by a higher power, refused to make use of the anathemas and thunders of the Word, and became a humble pastor, a meek shepherd of souls. "It is by the Word," said he, "that we must fight, by the Word overturn and destroy what has been established by violence. I am unwilling to employ force against the superstitious or the unbelieving. Let him who believes approach; let him who believes not stand aloof. None ought to be constrained. Liberty is of the essence of faith." The next day was Sabbath, and on that day, in the Church, in the pulpit, the people were again to behold the teacher

whom for nearly a year the Wartburg had concealed from every eye. The news spread in Wittemberg—Luther is returned—Luther is going to preach. These news passing from mouth to mouth were in themselves a powerful diversion to the notions by which the people had been led astray. The hero of Worms is going again to appear Crowds press forward from all directions, and on Sabbath morning the church was filled with an attentive and excited audience.

Luther divines the feeling of his hearers: he mounts the pulpit, and there stands in presence of the flock whom he was wont to lead like one gentle sheep, but who had now broken loose and assumed the appearance of an untamed bull. His discourse is simple, yet dignified, replete at once with force and mildness. He might have been described as a tender parent just returned to his children, enquiring how they have behaved, and telling them kindly of what he had heard respecting them. He candidly acknowledges the progress which they had made in the faith. Having thus prepared and gained their minds, he continues in the following terms:—

“But there must be more than faith: there must be charity. When a man with a sword in his hand is by himself, it is of no consequence whether or not he keeps it in the scabbard, but if he is in the midst of a crowd, he must act in such a manner as not to hurt any one.

“How does a mother do with her child? At first she gives it milk, and thereafter the most easily digested food. Were she to begin, by giving it flesh and wine, what would the result be?…

“So ought we to do with our brethren. Have you had enough of the breast, my friend? very well; allow your brother to have it as long as you have had it yourself.

“Behold the sun.… There are two things he gives us—light and heat. There is no king so powerful as to be able to interrupt his rays: they come to us in a straight line; but the heat radiates and transfuses itself in all directions. Thus faith ought to be like light, straight and inflexible; but charity should, like heat, radiate in all directions, and bend to meet all the wants of our brethren.”

Luther having thus prepared his hearers, comes to still closer quarters.

“The abolition of the mass, you say, is conformable to Scripture. Agreed. But what order, what decorum have you observed? You ought to have presented fervent prayers to the Lord: you ought to have applied to constituted authority, which, in that case, might have been able to perceive that the work was of God …”

Thus spake Luther. The bold man who had at Worms withstood the princes of the earth, produced a powerful impression by these words of wisdom and peace. Carlstadt and the prophets of Zwickau, who for some weeks had been so high and mighty, and who had agitated and lorded it over Wittemberg, became dwarfs when placed beside the prisoner of the Wartburg.

“The mass,” he continues, “is a bad thing: God is inimical to it: it must be abolished, and I could wish that over the whole world it were supplanted by the supper of the Gospel. But let nobody be driven from it by violence. The affair must be committed to God. His Word must act, not we. And why? you will say. Because I do not hold the hearts of men in my hand as the potter does the clay. We have a right to speak, but not to act. Let us preach—the rest belongs to God. If I employ force, what shall I obtain? Grimace, appearances, apishness, human ordinances, hypocrisy.… But there will be no sincerity of heart, no faith, no charity. Any work in which these three things are wanting wants every thing, and I would not give a pin for it.

“The first thing to be gained from people is their heart, and for this it is necessary to preach the gospel. Then the Word will descend on one heart to-day, and on another to-morrow, and operate in such a way that each will withdraw from the mass, and abandon it. God does more by his mere Word than you and I, and all the world could do by uniting our utmost strength. God takes possession of the heart, and when the heart is taken every thing is taken.

“I do not say this in order to re-establish the mass. Since it is down, let it, in God’s name, so remain. But was the matter gone about as it ought to have been? Paul, having one day arrived at Athens, a great city, found altars erected to false gods. He went from one to another, viewed them all, and touched none. But he quietly repaired to the market-place, and declared to the people that all their Gods were only idols. His words took possession of their hearts, and the idols fell without being touched by Paul.

“I wish to speak, to preach, to write, but I wish not to constrain any one, for faith is a voluntary matter. See what I have done! I have withstood the pope, indulgences, and the papists, but without tumult and violence. I have put forward the Word of God—have preached—have written, but this is all I have done. And while I was asleep, or seated in a friendly way at table with Amsdorff and Melancthon, conversing with them over a pot of Wittemberg beer, the Word which I had preached overthrew the papacy, assailing it more effectually than was ever done by prince or emperor. I have done nothing: the Word alone has done all. Had I chosen to appeal to force, perhaps Germany might have been bathed in blood. But what would have been the consequence? Ruin and desolation to soul and body. I therefore remained quiet, and allowed the Word itself to have free course in the world. Do you know what the Devil thinks when he sees recourse had to force in order to spread the gospel among men? Seated, with his arms across, behind the flames of hell, Satan, with malignant leer, and frightful smile, says—‘Ah, how sagely these fools are playing my game.’ But when he sees the Word running and wrestling alone on the field of battle, then it is he feels uneasy, and his knees tremble: he mutters, and swoons with terror.”

Luther again appeared in the pulpit on Tuesday: his powerful eloquence again resounded in the midst of a deeply impressed audience. He preached successively on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sabbath. He passed in review the destruction of images, the distinction of meats, the observances at the supper, the restoration of the cup, and the abolition of confession. He showed that those points were still more indifferent than the mass, and that the authors of the disorders, which had taken place at Wittemberg, had grossly abused their liberty. He gave utterance alternately to accents of Christian charity and to bursts of holy indignation. In particular, he inveighed forcibly against these who communicated thoughtlessly at the Lord’s Supper. “What makes the Christian,” said he, “is not the external eating, but the internal and spiritual eating which is produced by faith, and without which, all forms whatsoever are only show and vain grimace. Now this faith consists in firmly believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; that being ladened with our sins and iniquities, and having borne them upon the cross, he is himself the sole, the all powerful expiation: that he is now continually in the presence of God, that he reconciles us with the Father, and has given us the sacrament of his body in order to confirm our faith in this ineffable mercy. If I believe these things, God is my defender: with him I defy sin, death, hell, devils—they cannot do me any harm, nor even ruffle a hair of my head. This spiritual bread is the consolation of the afflicted, the cure of the sick, the life of the dying, the food of the hungry, and the treasure of the poor. He, then, who is not sorry for his sins, ought not to come to this altar: what would he do

there? Ah! let our conscience accuse us, let our hearts be torn at the thought of our faults, and we will not approach the holy sacrament with so much rashness."

Crowds ceased not to fill the temple: numbers even flocked from the neighbouring towns to hear the new Elias. Capito, among others, came and spent two days at Wittemberg, and heard two of the doctor's sermons. Never had Luther and the chaplain of cardinal Albert been so much of one mind. Melancthon, the magistrates, the professors, and all the people, were overjoyed. Schurff, delighted at this issue of an affair which promised to be so serious, hastened to acquaint the Elector, to whom he wrote, Friday, 15th March, (the day on which Luther had delivered his sixth discourse.) "What joy the return of doctor Martin diffuses among us! His discourses, by the help of divine grace, are daily bringing back our poor erring souls into the way of truth. It is clear as the sun that the Spirit of God is in him, and that by his special appointment he has returned to Wittemberg." In fact these discourses are models of popular eloquence, though not of the sort which aroused men's minds in the days of Demosthenes or even Savonarola. The task which the orator of Wittemberg had to perform was more difficult. It is easier to rouse a wild beast than to calm its fury. The thing required was to appease a fanatical multitude; to tame passions which had been let loose and this Luther did. In his eight discourses the Reformer did not allow a single painful allusion to escape, a single word calculated to offend the authors of the disturbances. But the more moderate, the stronger he was; the greater the delicacy towards those who had gone astray, the more he avenged insulted truth. How could the people of Wittemberg resist his powerful eloquence? The discourses which recommend moderation are usually attributed to moderation, policy, or fear. Here there was nothing of the kind. Luther appeared before the people of Wittemberg braving the excommunication of the pope, and the proscription of the emperor. He returned, though forbidden by the Elector, who declared his inability to defend him. Even at Worms, Luther had not shown more courage. He was confronting the most threatening dangers, and accordingly his voice was not disregarded. This man who braved the scaffold was entitled to exhort others to submission. He may boldly preach obedience to God, who, in doing so, exposes himself to every kind of persecution from man. At Luther's preaching, objections vanished, tumult was appeased, sedition ceased its clamour, and the citizens of Wittemberg returned to their quiet homes.

Gabriel Didymus, an Augustin monk, and the one who had been most enthusiastic, had not lost a word spoken by the Reformer. "Dont you think Luther an admirable teacher?" asked a hearer, under deep emotion. "Ah!" replied Gabriel, "methinks I hear the voice not of a man, but an angel." Shortly after, he openly acknowledged his error. "He is become another man," said Luther.2 The same effect was not at first produced on Carlstadt. Despising study, and affectedly visiting the workshops of mechanics, that he might there get a knowledge of the Scriptures, he felt hurt, when he saw his work crumbling to pieces before the appearance of Luther. In his eyes this was equivalent to an arrest laid on the Reformation itself. Accordingly he had always a depressed, gloomy, and discontented look. He, however, sacrificed his self-love to peace, suppressed his vindictive feelings, was reconciled, apparently at least, with his colleague, and shortly after resumed his course at the University.4 The principal prophets happened not to be at Wittemberg when Luther arrived. Nicholas Storck had been scouring the country, and Mark Stubner had quitted the hospitable roof of Melancthon. It may be their prophetical spirit had vanished and they had neither "voice" nor "answer," from the moment they learned that this new Elias was bending

his steps towards this new Carmel. The old schoolmaster Cellarius had been left alone. Meanwhile, Stubner having been informed that the sheep of his flock were dispersed, returned in all haste. Those who had remained faithful to the “heavenly prophecy” gathered round their master, relating Luther’s discourses to him, and asking with uneasiness what they were to think. Stubner exhorted them to remain firm in their faith. “Let him show himself,” exclaimed Cellarius, “let him grant us a conference, let him allow us to explain our doctrine, and we shall see….”

Luther had little inclination to meet with these men; he knew that there was in them a violent, impatient, haughty spirit, which could not endure warnings, however charitably given, and who claimed submission to their every word as a sovereign authority. Such are the enthusiasts of all times. Still, as an interview was asked, the doctor could not refuse it. Besides, it might be useful to the simple ones of the flock to unmask the imposture of the prophets. The conference took place. Stubner spoke first, and explained how he proposed to renew the Church and change the world. Luther listened with great calmness.3 “Nothing that you have said,” replied he, at length, gravely, “rests on the Holy Scriptures. It is all fable.” At these words Cellarius loses all self-possession; he raises his voice, gesticulates like a madman, stamps and strikes the table that was before him; gets into a passion, and exclaims that it is an insult to presume to speak thus to a man of God. Then Luther resumes, “St. Paul declares that the proofs of his apostleship were manifested by miracles: prove yours by miracles.” “We shall,” replied the prophets.5 “The God whom I worship,” replied Luther, “will keep a bridle hand on your gods.” Stubner, who had remained more calm, fixing his eyes on the Reformer, said to him with an air of inspiration, “Martin Luther, I am going to declare to you what is now passing in your soul. You are beginning to think that my doctrine is true.” Luther, after a few moments’ silence, replied. “The Lord rebuke thee, Satan.” At these words all the prophets are transported. “The Spirit! the Spirit!” they exclaim. Luther, with that cool disdain, and that cutting, yet familiar language, which was one of his characteristics, says, “I care not a fig for your spirit.” The clamour is redoubled. Cellarius was especially violent. He raged, roared, and foamed. Not a word more could be heard. At length the prophets withdrew, and the same day quitted Wittemberg.

Thus Luther had accomplished the work for which he had left his retreat. He had withstood fanaticism, and chased from the bosom of the renovated church the enthusiasm and disorder which were trying to invade it. If with one hand the Reformation overthrew the musty decretals of Rome, with the other it repelled the pretensions of the mystics, and secured the living and immutable Word of God in possession of the territory which it had conquered. The character of the Reformation was thus well established. It behoved constantly to move between these two extremes, equally distant from the convulsive throes of fanatics and the lifeless state of the papacy. A population aroused, misled, and broken loose from all restraint, is appeased, becomes calm and submissive, and the most perfect tranquillity is restored to a city which, a few days before, was like a raging sea.

Complete liberty was moreover established at Wittemberg. Luther continued to reside in the convent, and to wear the monastic dress; but every one was free to do otherwise. Communicants, in taking the supper, might content themselves with a general, or ask a particular absolution. One established principle was to reject nothing but what was opposed to a clear and formal declaration of the Holy Scriptures. This was not indifference. On the contrary, religion was thus brought back to what constitutes its essence. Religious sentiment was drawn away from accessory forms when

it had been well nigh lost, and again placed on its true basis. Thus the Reformation was saved, and doctrine could continue to be developed in the Church in accordance with charity and truth.

CHAPTER IX

Translation of the New Testament—Faith and Scripture—Opposition—Importance of Luther's Publication—Need of a Systematic Exposition—Melancthon's Common Places—Original Sin—Salvation—Free-will—Effect of the Common places. No sooner was the calm re-established than the Reformer turned towards his dear Melancthon, and asks his assistance in putting the finishing hand to the version of the New Testament, which he had brought from the Wartburg. Melancthon, as early as 1519, had laid down the grand principle, that the fathers ought to be explained according to Scripture, and not Scripture according to the fathers. Continuing thoroughly to investigate the writings of the New Testament, he felt at once enraptured with their simplicity, and struck with their profundity. "Here only," was the open declaration of one so familiar with all the philosophers of antiquity—"Here only is found the true food of the soul." Hence he gladly responded to Luther's invitation, and thereafter the two friends spent many long hours together, in studying and translating the inspired Word. Often did they interrupt their laborious researches to give vent to their admiration. "Reason thinks," said Luther, "Oh, if I could only once hear God; to hear Him I would run to the end of the world.… Listen, then, O man, my brother!… God, the creator of heaven and earth is speaking to you.…" The printing of the New Testament was begun and carried on with unexampled zeal. It seemed as if the workmen themselves felt the importance of the work which they were preparing. Three presses were employed, and ten thousand sheets were printed daily.3 At length, on the 21st September, appeared the complete edition of three thousand copies, in two volumes, folio, with this simple title: The New Testament—German—Wittemberg. It bore no human name. Every German could thenceforth procure the Word of God for a moderate sum. The new translation, written in the very spirit of the sacred books, in a language still recent, and displaying its many beauties for the first time, seized, enraptured, and deeply impressed the humblest of the people, as well as the most elevated classes. It was a national work; it was the people's book: it was more, it was truly the book of God. Even enemies could not withhold their approbation of this admirable work, while some indiscreet friends of the Reformation, struck with the beauty of the work, imagined that they beheld in it a second inspiration. This translation did more to propagate Christian piety than all the other writings of Luther. The work of the sixteenth century was thus placed on a basis which could not be shaken. The Bible given to the people brought back the human mind which for ages had been wandering in the tortuous labyrinth of scholastics, to the divine source of salvation. Accordingly the success of the work was prodigious. In a short time all the copies were disposed of. A second edition appeared in December, and, in 1533, seventeen editions of Luther's New Testament had been printed at Wittemberg; thirteen at Augsburg; twelve at Bale; one at Erfurth; one at Grimma; one at Leipsic; thirteen at Strasburg. … Such were the mighty engines which lifted and transformed the Church and the world. The first edition of the New Testament was still at press when Luther engaged in the translation of the Old Testament. This work, begun in 1522, was prosecuted without interruption. It was published in parts as it was finished, in order more rapidly to satisfy the impatience which was manifested in all quarters, and make it more easy for the poor to purchase it. From Scripture and faith, two sources, which, in substance, are only one, evangelical life flowed, and is still diffused in the world. These two principles combated two

fundamental errors; faith was opposed to the Pelagian tendency of Catholicism; Scripture, to the tradition and authority of Rome. Scripture led to faith and faith led back to Scripture. “Man cannot do any meritorious work: the free grace of God, which he receives by faith in Christ, alone saves him.” Such was the doctrine proclaimed in Christendom; and the tendency of this doctrine was to urge Christians to the study of Scripture. In fact, if faith in Christ is every thing in Christianity—if the practices and ordinances of the Church are nothing—what we ought to adhere to is not the word of the Church but the word of Jesus Christ. The tie which unites to Christ will become all in all to the believer. What cares he for the external tie which unites him to an external Church enslaved to human opinions?… Thus, as the doctrine of the Bible had urged Luther’s contemporaries towards Jesus Christ, so the love which they had for Jesus Christ in its turn urged them towards the Bible. They returned to Scripture, not as is imagined in our day, from a philosophical principle, from a feeling of doubt or a longing for investigation, but because they found in it the word of Him whom they loved. “You have preached Christ to us,” said they to the Reformer, “enable us now to hear his own voice.” And they eagerly laid hold of the sheets which were delivered to them as they would a letter come from heaven. But if the Bible was thus joyfully received by those who loved Christ, it was repulsed with hatred by those who preferred the traditions and practices of men. Violent persecution awaited this work of the Reformer. On hearing of Luther’s publication, Rome trembled. The pen which transcribed the sacred oracles was the realisation of that which the Elector Frederick had seen in his dream, and which, reaching as far as the seven hills, had caused the tiara of the papacy to totter. The monk in his cell and the prince on his throne sent forth a cry of rage. Ignorant priests shuddered at the thought that every citizen, every peasant even, would now be in a condition to debate with them on sacred subjects. The King of England denounced the work to the Elector Frederick, and Duke George of Saxony. But, previous to this, as early as November, the duke had enjoined all his subjects to deliver every copy of Luther’s New Testament into the hands of the magistrates. Bavaria, Brandenburg, Austria, all the states devoted to Rome, issued similar decrees. In some towns a sacrilegious pile was erected, and the books were burnt in the market-place. Thus, in the sixteenth century, Rome renewed the attempts by which Paganism had tried to destroy the religion of Jesus Christ at the moment when the empire was escaping from priests and their idols. But who can arrest the triumphant progress of the gospel? “Even since my prohibition,” wrote Duke George, “several thousand copies have been sold and read in my States.”

God, in diffusing his Word, made use of the very hands which were endeavouring to destroy it. The Catholic theologians, seeing it impossible to suppress the Reformer’s work, published the New Testament in a translation of their own. It was Luther’s translation, with occasional corrections by the editors. No objection was made to the reading of it. Rome knew not as yet that, wherever the Word of God is established, her power is in danger. Joachim of Brandenburg gave full permission to his subjects to read any translation of the Bible, Latin or German, provided it came not from Wittemberg. The inhabitants of Germany, those of Brandenburg in particular, thus made a rapid advance in the knowledge of the truth. The publication of the New Testament constitutes an important epoch in the Reformation. If the marriage of Feldkirchen was the first step in passing from doctrine to practice, if the abolition of monastic vows was the second, if the establishment of the Lord’s Supper was the third, the publication of the New Testament was perhaps the most important of all. It effected a complete change in society—not only in the presbytery of the priest, the cell of the monk, and the service of the Church, but also in the

mansions of the great, and the dwellings both of the citizens in towns, and of the rural population. When the Bible began to be read in the households of Christendom, Christendom was changed. There were thenceforth new customs, new manners, new conversations, a new life. With the publication of the New Testament the Reformation came forth from the school and the Church, and took possession of the firesides of the people. The effect produced was immense. The Christianity of the primitive Church, brought forth by the publication of the Holy Scriptures from the oblivion into which it had fallen for ages, was thus presented to the eyes of the nation, and this fact is sufficient to justify the attacks which had been made upon Rome. The humblest individuals, provided they knew the German alphabet, women, and mechanics, (this is the account given by a contemporary, a great enemy of the Reformation,) read the New Testament with avidity. Carrying it about with them, they soon knew it by heart, while its pages gave full demonstration of the perfect accordance between the Reformation of Luther and the Revelation of God.

Still it was only by piecemeal that the doctrine of the Bible and of the Reformation had till then been established. Some one truth had been established in this writing, and some one error attacked in that. The remains of the ancient edifice and the materials of the new lay scattered in confusion over a large space of ground; but the new edifice itself was still wanting. The publication of the New Testament was fitted to supply this want. The Reformation, on receiving this work, could say,—There is my system! But as every person is ready to maintain that the system he holds is that of the Bible, the Reformation behoved to give a systematic form to what she had found in Scripture: This Melancthon did in her name.

He had advanced with cautious but sure steps in his theological career, and had always boldly published the results of his enquiries. So early as 1520, he had declared that in several of the seven sacraments he saw only an imitation of Jewish ceremonies; and, in the infallibility of the pope, only an arrogant pretence, equally at variance with Scripture and common sense. “To combat these dogmas,” said he, “we have need of more than one Hercules.” Thus Melancthon had arrived at the same point with Luther, though by a calmer and more scientific path. The moment had arrived when it behoved him in his turn to make a confession of his faith. In 1521, during Luther’s captivity, his celebrated work ‘On the Common Places of Theology,’ had presented Christian Europe with a body of doctrine solidly based, and admirably proportioned. A simple and majestic system was exhibited to the astonished view of the new generation. The translation of the New Testament vindicated the Reformation to the common people: the Common Places of Melancthon vindicated it to the learned. The Christian Church was fifteen centuries old, and no similar work had yet appeared. Abandoning the ordinary methods of scholastic theology, Luther’s friend at length presented Christendom with a theological system derived solely from Scripture, and exhibiting a spirit of life and intellect, a force of truth and simplicity of expression in striking contrast with the subtle and pedantic systems of the schools. The most philosophical minds and the strictest theologians alike agreed in admiring it.

Erasmus described the work as a host set in admirable array against the pharisaical tyranny of false teachers; and, while declaring that he did not agree with the author on all points, he added, that, though he had always loved him, he never loved him so much as after reading this work. “So true is it,” says Calvin, at a later period, in introducing the work to France, “that, in treating Christian doctrine, the greatest simplicity is the greatest virtue.”2 But none was so much overjoyed as Luther. This work was, through life, the object of his admiration. Those isolated sounds which,

in the deep emotion of his soul, his quivering hand had drawn from the harp of the prophets and apostles, were here arranged in enrapturing harmony. Those scattered stones, which he had laboriously quarried out of the Sacred volume, were now formed into a majestic building. Hence he invariably recommended the reading of this work to the youths who came to prosecute their studies at Wittemberg, saying to them, “If you would be theologians, read Melancthon.”

According to Melancthon, a deep conviction of the misery to which man has been reduced by sin, is the basis on which the structure of Christian theology must be reared. This incalculable calamity is the primary fact, the generating idea in theological science, the characteristic which distinguishes it from all sciences which have reason only for their instrument. The Christian theologian, probing to the very bottom of man’s heart, explained its laws and mysterious attractions, as the philosopher of a later period explained the laws and attractions of bodies. “Original sin,” said he, “is an inclination born with us, a kind of impulse which is pleasing to us, a kind of force which draws us into sin, and which has been transmitted by Adam to all his posterity. As there is in fire a native force which carries it upward, as there is in the magnet a natural power to attract steel, so there is in man a primary force disposing him to evil. I acknowledge that Socrates, Xenocrates, and Zeno, displayed constancy, temperance, and chastity: these shadows of virtue existed in impure minds, they proceeded from the love of self, and hence they must be regarded not as genuine virtues, but as vices.” These words may seem harsh; but they are so only when we misapprehend Melancthon’s meaning. None was more disposed than he to recognise in the heathen virtues deserving of human esteem; but he laid down this great truth, that the sovereign law given by God to all his creatures is, to love him above all things. Now if man, in doing what God commands, does it, not from love to God, but from love to self, will God approve of his presuming to prefer himself to his infinite majesty, and will there be nothing vicious in an act containing indirect rebellion against his supremacy? The theologian of Wittemberg afterwards shows how man is saved from this wretchedness. “The apostle,” says he, “calls you to contemplate the Son of God on the right hand of his Father, as a powerful Mediator who intercedes for us; and he asks you to be assured that your sins are forgiven, and that you are accounted righteous, and received by the Father for the sake of his Son, offered as a victim on the cross.”

What makes this first edition of the Common Places particularly remarkable, is the manner in which the theologian of Germany speaks of free will. He perceives, perhaps, still more clearly than Luther had done, being more of a theologian than he, that this doctrine could not be separated from that which constituted the essence of the Reformation. The justification of man, before God, proceeds only from faith: this is the first point. This faith is produced in man’s heart only by the grace of God: this is the second point. Melancthon is well aware that, by conceding to man any natural ability to believe, the great doctrine of grace established in the first point, will be destroyed in the second. He had too much discrimination and knowledge of the Scriptures to be mistaken in so weighty a matter. But he went too far. Instead of confining himself within the limits of the religious question, he takes up the metaphysical question, maintaining a fatalism which might cause God to be regarded as the author of evil, and which, consequently, has no foundation in Scripture. “All that happens,” said he, “happening necessarily according to divine predestination, it is evident that our will has no liberty.” But the object Which Melancthon had especially in view, was to present theology as a system of godliness. The schoolmen had frittered doctrine away until they

deprived it of life. The Reformer's task, therefore, was to bring it back to life. In subsequent editions, Melancthon saw the necessity of giving a clear exposition of doctrine. But the case was somewhat different in 1521. "To know Christ," said he, "is to know his benefits. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, when wishing to give a summary of Christian doctrine, does not philosophise on the mystery of the Trinity, on the mode of the incarnation, on creation, action, and passion, etc. Of what, then, does he speak? Of the law—of sin—of grace. On these the knowledge of Christ depends." The publication of this system of doctrine was of inestimable service to the cause of the gospel. Calumny was refuted, and prejudice subdued. In churches, courts, and universities, Melancthon was admired for his genius, and loved for the beauties of his character. Even those who did not know the author were won to his creed by his work. Several had been repulsed by the harshness and occasional violence of Luther's language; but here was a man who, with great elegance of style, exquisite taste, admirable clearness, and the most exact method, expounded the powerful truths which had suddenly burst forth and shaken the world. The work was in general request, was read with avidity, and studied with ardour. So much meekness and modesty won all hearts. So much nobleness and force subdued them; while the upper classes of society, till then undecided, were gained by a wisdom which expressed itself in such beautiful language. On the other hand, the enemies of the truth, whom Luther's formidable blows had not struck down, remained for some time mute and disconcerted after the appearance of Melancthon's Treatise. It told them that there was another man as worthy of their hatred as Luther. "Alas!" they exclaimed, "unhappy Germany! to what extremities must this new birth reduce you?" From 1521 to 1595, seventy-seven editions of the Common Places appeared, without counting translations. After the Bible, it is, perhaps, the book which contributed most powerfully to the establishment of evangelical doctrine.

CHAPTER X

Opposition—Henry VIII.—Wolsey—The Queen—Fisher—Thomas More—Luther's Books burnt—Henry attacks Luther—Presentation to the Pope—Effect on Luther—Force and violence—His book—Reply of the Bishop of Rochester—Reply by More—Step by the King.

While the "grammarian," Melancthon, was by his mild accents giving such effectual aid to Luther, men in power, hostile to the Reformer, were turning with violence against him. Escaped from the Wartburg, he had again appeared on the stage of the world, and at the news his old enemies had resumed all their rage.

Luther had been three months and a half at Wittemberg, when rumour, with all its exaggerations, brought him the news that one of the greatest kings of Christendom had risen up against him. The head of the house of the Tudors, a prince, uniting in his person the houses both of York and Lancaster, and on whose head, after torrents of blood had been shed, the red rose and the white rose were at length combined,—Henry VIII, the powerful king of England, who aspired to re-establish the ancient influence of his crown on the continent, and especially in France, had just composed a book against the poor monk of Wittemberg. In a letter to Lange, 26th June, 1522, Luther writes, "A great boast is made of a little book by the king of England."

Henry VIII was then thirty-one years of age: "he was tall, strong-built, and proportioned, and had an air of authority and empire;" his features expressing the vigour of his intellect. Of a vehement temper, determined to make every thing bend to the violence of his passions, and thirsting for

glory, he at first concealed his faults under a kind of boisterousness common to youth, and was surrounded by flatterers who encouraged them. He often repaired with his band of favourites to the house of his chaplain, Thomas Wolsey, son of a butcher of Ipswich. This man, gifted with great abilities, of an excessive ambition, and an arrogance which knew no bounds, being patronised by the bishop of Winchester, chancellor of the kingdom, had rapidly advanced in the favour of his master, whom he attracted to his house by the seduction of pleasures and irregularities, in which the young prince would not have ventured to indulge in his own palace. Such is the account given by Polydore Virgil, at that time the pope's sub-collector in England. At these licentious meetings the chaplain outstripped the young courtiers who accompanied Henry VIII. He was seen forgetting the gravity of a minister of the altar, singing, dancing, laughing, frolicking, using obscene language, and fencing.2 In this way he soon obtained the first place in the king's council, and governing the kingdom with absolute sway, was courted by all the princes of Christendom.

Henry, living in a round of balls, festivities, and jousts, foolishly squandered the treasures which had been slowly amassed by the avarice of his father. Magnificent tournaments succeeded each other without interruption. The king, who, in manly beauty, surpassed all the combatants, invariably took the lead. If, for an instant, the contest appeared doubtful, the dexterity and strength of the prince, or the adroit policy of those opposed to him, assured him the victory, and the arena resounded with shouts of applause. The vanity of the young prince was inflated by these easy triumphs; and there was no species of success to which he did not think himself entitled to aspire. The queen was occasionally present among the spectators. Her grave figure, her downcast look, her sedate and melancholy air, contrasted with the boisterous sounds of these festivities. Henry VIII, shortly after his accession to the throne, had, for reasons of state, married Catherine of Arragon, who was five years older than himself, the widow of his brother, Arthur, and aunt to Charles V. While her husband was giving himself up to pleasure, the virtuous Catherine, with a piety truly Spanish, rose at midnight to take silent part in the prayers of the monks.4 She threw herself upon her knees, without cushion or carpet. At five o'clock in the morning, after a short repose, she was again up: she was clad in the habit of St. Francis, for she had entered the tertiary order of this saint; then, hastily covering it with royal vestments, she repaired to the church at six, to the holy offices.

Two beings, living in two such different worlds, could not remain long united.

Romish piety, however, had other representatives besides Catherine, at the court of Henry VIII. John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, on the borders of seventy, equally distinguished by his learning and the purity of his morals, was the object of general veneration. He had been the oldest counsellor of Henry VII, and the Duchess of Richmond, the grandmother of Henry VIII, when on her death-bed, had sent for Fisher and recommended to his care the youth and inexperience of her grandson. Amidst his irregularities the king long venerated the bishop as a father. A man much younger than Fisher, a layman and lawyer, had begun to attract general attention by his genius and the nobleness of his character. He was named Thomas More, and was the son of a judge of the King's Bench. Poor, austere, indefatigable in exertion, he had endeavoured at twenty to extinguish the passions of youth, by wearing a hair shirt and subjecting himself to discipline. One day, when attending mass, being sent for by the king, he replied, that the service of God must take precedence of that of his majesty. Wolsey brought him under the notice of Henry VIII, who employed him on different embassies, and vowed to have a great affection for him. He often sent

for him and conversed with him about the planets, Wolsey, and theology. In fact, the king himself was no stranger to the Romish doctrines. It would even appear that, if Arthur had lived, Henry would have been destined to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventura; tournays, festivals; Elizabeth Blunt, and other mistresses besides, all mingled in the thoughts and actions of this prince, who caused masses of his own composition to be chanted in his chapel. As soon as Henry VIII heard of Luther, his wrath was kindled against him; and scarcely was the decree of the Diet of Worms known in England, when he ordered the papal bull to be executed against the Reformer's books. On the 12th May, 1521, Thomas Wolsey, who, to the office of Chancellor of England, united those of Cardinal and Roman legate, repaired to St. Paul's in solemn procession. This man, whose pride knew no bounds, thought himself the equal of kings. His chair was of gold, his bed of gold, and cloth of gold covered the table at which he dined. On this occasion he displayed great pomp. The haughty prelate walked, surrounded by his household, consisting of eight hundred individuals, among whom were barons, knights, and cadets of the most distinguished families, who hoped by serving him to obtain public appointments, Gold and silk were not only conspicuous on his dress, (he was the first ecclesiastic who had ventured to clothe so sumptuously,2) but also on the trappings and harness of his horses. Before him a priest of a stately figure carried a rod, surrounded by a crucifix; behind him another, no less stately, carried the archiepiscopal cross of York: a nobleman walking at his side carried his cardinal's hat. He was attended by nobles, prelates, ambassadors of the pope and the emperor, and these were followed by a long train of mules, carrying trunks with the richest and most splendid coverings. At London, amidst this magnificent procession, the writings of the poor monk of Wittemberg were carried to the flames. On arriving at the cathedral, the proud priest made even his cardinal's hat be placed upon the altar. The virtuous Bishop of Rochester took his station at the foot of the cross, and there, in an animated tone, inveighed against heresy. The impious writings of the heresiarch were then brought forward and devoutly burned in presence of an immense crowd. Such was the first news which England received of the Reformation.

Henry did not choose to stop here. This prince, whose sword was ever raised against his enemies, his wives, and his favourites, in a letter to the Elector Palatine thus expresses himself, "It is the devil who, by Luther as his organ, has kindled this immense conflagration. If Luther will not be converted, let the flames consume him and his writings."

Even this was not enough. Henry, convinced that the progress of heresy was owing to the ignorance of the German princes, thought that the moment was come for displaying all his learning. The conquests of his battle-axe allowed him not to doubt of the conquests reserved for his pen. But another passion still—one which is always strong in little minds—vanity, spurred on the king. He felt humbled at having no title to oppose those of "Catholic" and "Most Christian," borne by the kings of Spain and France, and he was long a suppliant at the Romish court for a similar distinction. What better fitted to procure such a title than an attack upon heresy? Henry, therefore, threw aside the royal purple, and descended from his lofty throne into the arena of theologians. He made a compilation from Thomas Aquinas, Peter Lombard, Alexander Hales, and Bonaventure, and the world beheld the publication of the Defence of the Seven Sacraments against Martin Luther, by the most invincible King of England, France, and Ireland, Henry, Eighth of the name.

“I will throw myself before the Church,” said the King of England in this writing, “I will receive in my breast the poisoned darts of the enemy who is assailing her. To this the present state of affairs calls me. Every servant of Jesus Christ, whatever be his age, rank, or sex, must bestir himself against the common enemy of Christendom.2

“Let us arm ourselves with double armour—with heavenly weapons, that by the arms of truth we may vanquish him who combats with the arms of error. But let us also arm ourselves with terrestrial armour, in order that, if he proves obstinate in his wickedness, the hand of the executioner may constrain him to silence; and he may thus, for once at least, be useful to the world by his exemplary punishment.”

Henry VIII could not conceal the contempt which he felt for his able opponent. “This man,” said the crowned theologian, “seems as if he were in labour: he makes incredible efforts, but only brings forth wind. Pluck off the dress of arrogant expression in which his absurdities are clothed, just as an ape is clothed in purple, and what will remain?… Miserable, empty sophistry!” The king defends, in succession, the mass, penance, confirmation, orders, and extreme unction. He spares no insulting epithets, calling his opponent by turns an infernal wolf, a venomous viper, a limb of the devil. Even Luther’s honesty is assailed. Henry VIII crushes the mendicant monk with his royal anger, and, in the words of a historian, “writes as ’twere with his sceptre.”

Still, however, it must be admitted, the work was not bad for the author and his age. The style is not without vigour. But the public could not content themselves with merely doing it justice. A burst of applause received the theological treatise of the powerful king of England. “The most learned work that ever the sun saw,” exclaimed some. “It deserves,” rejoined others, “to be compared with the works of St. Augustin. He is a Constantine, a Charlemagne.” “He is more,” exclaimed a third party, “he is a second Solomon!”

These exclamations were soon heard beyond the limits of England. Henry desired the Dean of Windsor, John Clarke, his ambassador to the pope, to deliver his book to the sovereign pontiff. Leo X received the ambassador in full consistory. Clarke, in presenting the royal work, said, “The king, my master, assures you that, after refuting the errors of Luther with his pen, he is ready to combat his adherents with the sword.” Leo X, deeply gratified with this promise, replied that the book of the king of England could only have been composed with the aid of the Holy Spirit, and named Henry “Defender of the Faith,” a title which the kings of England still bear. The reception given to the king’s work at Rome contributed greatly to its circulation. In a few months several thousands of copies issued from different presses. “The whole Christian world,” says Cochlœus, “was filled with admiration and joy.”2

These extravagant praises increased the vanity of the Chief of the Tudors. He was brought to fancy he had written with some degree of inspiration. Afterwards he would not submit to the least contradiction. To him the papacy was no longer at Rome but at Greenwich, and infallibility rested on his own head. At a later period this contributed greatly to the Reformation of England.

Luther read Henry’s book with mingled disdain, impatience, and indignation. The falsehood and insults which it contained, but especially the air of contempt and pity affected by the king, irritated the doctor of Wittemberg in the highest degree. The thought that the pope had crowned the writing, and that the enemies of the Gospel were everywhere trampling on the Reformation and

the Reformer, as already overthrown and vanquished, increased his indignation. Besides, what occasion had he for delicacy? Was he not fighting for a king greater than all the kings of the earth? Evangelical mildness seemed to him out of season: eye for eye, tooth for tooth. He kept no measure. Pursued, goaded, tracked, and wounded, the raging lion turned round and prepared to tear his enemy. The Elector, Spalatin, Melancthon, and Bugenhagen, tried in vain to appease him. They would have prevented him from replying, but he was not to be stopped. “I will not deal mildly with the King of England;” said he, “it is in vain, (I know it is,) to humble myself, to yield, beseech, and try the ways of peace. I will at length show myself more terrible than the ferocious beasts who are constantly butting me with their horns. I will let them feel mine: I will preach and irritate Satan until he wears himself out, and falls down exhausted.” If this heretic retracts not, says the new Thomas, Henry VIII, he must be burnt. Such are the weapons now employed against me: first, the fury of stupid asses and Thomastical swine, and then the fire.2 Very well! Let these swine come forward, if they dare, and burn me! Here I am, waiting for them. My wish is, that my ashes, thrown after my death into a thousand seas, may arise, pursue, and engulph this abominable crew. Living, I will be the enemy of the papacy: burnt, I will be its destruction! Go, swine of St. Thomas, do what seemeth to you good. You shall ever find Luther as a bear in your way, and a lion in your path. He will thunder upon you from all quarters, and leave you no peace until he has brayed your brains of iron, and ground to powder your foreheads of brass.” At the outset Luther upbraids Henry VIII with having based his doctrines only on the decrees and sentences of men. “For me,” says he, “I cease not to cry, the Gospel! the Gospel!—Christ! Christ! while my opponents cease not to reply—Customs! Customs!—Ordinances! Ordinances!—Fathers! Fathers! “Let your faith,” says St. Paul, “stand not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” And the apostle, by this thunderbolt from heaven, overthrows and scatters, like the dust before the wind, all the silly crotchets of this Henry. In confusion and consternation the Thomists, the papists, and the Henrys fell to the ground, before the thunder of these words.”

He afterwards refutes the king’s production in detail, overthrowing his arguments, one by one, with clearness, ability, and a thorough knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and the history of the Church, but also with a confidence, disdain, and occasionally a violence at which we must not be surprised. On arriving at the conclusion, Luther again expresses indignation at his opponent for drawing arguments only from the fathers: this was the essence of the whole controversy. “To all the sayings of fathers, men, angels, devils,” says he, “I oppose not the antiquity of custom, not the multitude, but the Word of the Eternal Majesty, the Gospel, which they themselves are constrained to approve. By it I hold; on it I rest; in it I glory, triumph, and exult over papists, Thomists, Henrys, and all the hellish stye. The King of Heaven is with me, and therefore I fear nothing even should a thousand Augustins, a thousand Cyprians, and a thousand churches, of which Henry is the defender, rise up against me. It is a small matter for me to despise and lash an earthly king who himself has not feared, in his writing, to blaspheme the King of Heaven and profane his holiness by the most audacious falsehood.2

“Papists,” exclaims he, in concluding, “will you not desist from your vain pursuits? Do as you please: the result, however, must be, that before the Gospel which I, Martin Luther, have preached, popes, bishops, priests, monks, princes, devils, death, sin, and whatever is not Jesus Christ, or in Jesus Christ, shall fall and perish.”

Thus spoke the poor monk. His violence, certainly, cannot be excused, if it is judged by the rule to which he himself appeals, viz., the Word of God. We cannot even justify it by alleging either the coarseness of the age—for Melancthon was able to discover his courtesy in his writings—or the energy of his disposition, for, if this energy had some effect on his language, passion had still more. The best course, therefore, is not to attempt to defend it. However, to be just, let it be observed, that in the sixteenth century this violence did not seem so strange as it appears in the present day. The learned were then one of the existing powers as well as princes. Henry had attacked Luther by becoming an author. Luther replied conformably to the law received in the Republic of Letters, viz., that the thing to be considered is the truth of what is said, and not the quality of him who says it. Let us also add, that when this very king turned against the pope, the insults which he received from the Romish writers, and the pope himself, far exceeded anything that had been said by Luther.

Besides, if Luther called doctor Eck an ass, and Henry VIII a hog, he indignantly rejected the intervention of the secular arm, whereas Dr. Eck wrote a dissertation to prove that heretics ought to be burned: and Henry erected scaffolds agreeably to the precepts of the doctor of Ingolstadt. A deep sensation was produced at the king's court. Surrey, Wolsey, and the tribe of courtiers broke off the pomps and festivities of Greenwich, to vent their indignation in contumely and sarcasm. The venerable bishop of Rochester, who had been delighted when he saw the young prince, who had been early committed to his charge, breaking a lance for the Church, was deeply wounded by the monk's attack, and immediately replied to it. His words are very characteristic of his time and his Church. "Catch for us the small foxes that spoil the vines, says Christ in the Song of Songs. This shows," says Fisher, "that we must lay hands on heretics before they grow up. Now Luther has become a great fox,—a fox so old, and cunning, and malicious, that it is very difficult to catch him. What do I say? a fox!… he is a mad dog, a ravening wolf, a cruel bear, or rather all these animals at once; for the monster has several beasts in his bosom."

Thomas More also descended into the arena to encounter the monk of Wittemberg. Although a layman, he pushed his zeal against the Reformation the length of fanaticism, if he did not push it the length of blood. When young noblemen undertake the defence of the papacy, their violence often outstrips that of ecclesiastics themselves. "Reverend brother, father, drunkard, deserter of the Augustin order, mi shapen bacchanalian as to both kinds of law, untaught teacher of sacred theology." Such are the terms addressed to the Reformer by one of the most illustrious men of his time. Then explaining the mode in which Luther has composed his book against Henry, he says, "He called together his companions, and asked each to go his way, and rummage for buffoonery and insult. One went to waggoners and boatmen, another to baths and gambling houses, a third to barbers' shops and taverns, a fourth to mills and brothels. Every thing they heard most insolent, filthy, and infamous, they noted down, and bringing it back, threw it into that impure sink called the mind of Luther." "If he retracts his lies and calumnies," he continues, "if he lays aside his folly and fury, if he again swallows his abominations,3 he will find some one to debate gravely with him. But if he continues as he has begun, jesting, raging, playing the mountebank, slandering, vomiting nothing but filth, … then let others do as they will; for us, we prefer leaving the little friar alone with his fury and his filth."5 Thomas More had better have reserved his own. Luther had never stooped so low in his style. He made no reply. This production increased Henry's attachment to More. He once paid him a visit in his modest dwelling at Chelsea. After dinner, the king walked with him in

his garden, with his arm resting on the shoulder of his favourite, while Lady More and her children, concealed behind the lattice, could not withdraw then astonished eyes. After one of these walks, More, who knew Henry's character, said to his wife, "If my head could gain him a single castle in France, he would never hesitate." The king, thus defended by the Bishop of Rochester and his future chancellor, had no occasion to resume his pen. Confounded at seeing himself treated in the face of Europe as a mere author, Henry abandoned the dangerous position he had taken up, and throwing away his theological pen, had recourse to the more efficacious methods of diplomacy. An ambassador set off from the court at Greenwich with a letter from the king to the Elector and the Dukes of Saxony. Henry thus expressed himself: "Luther, the true dragon fallen from heaven, is pouring out his venomous floods on the earth. He is stirring up revolt in the Church of Jesus Christ, abolishing the laws, insulting the powers, exciting laymen against priests, laymen and priests against the pope, and subjects against kings, his only wish being to see Christians fighting together and destroying each other, and the enemies of our faith grinning with delight over the scene of carnage.

"What is this doctrine which he terms evangelical but the doctrine of Wickliffe? Now, most honoured uncles, I know what your ancestors did to destroy it. They pursued it in Bohemia as if it had been a wild beast, and causing it to fall into a trap, there enclosed and barricaded it. You will not allow it to escape by your negligence, steal into Saxony, and take possession of all Germany, sending forth from its fuming nostrils the fire of hell, and spreading far and wide the conflagration which your country so often desired to extinguish in its blood.

"Wherefore, most excellent friends, I feel myself called to exhort you, and even to implore you by all that is most sacred, speedily to strangle the cursed sect of Luther. Put no one to death if it can possibly be avoided; but if heretical obstinacy continues, shed blood without fear in order that this abominable sect may cease from under heaven." The Elector and his brother referred the king to the future Council. Thus Henry was far from succeeding in his object. "So great a man mingling in the dispute," says Paul Sarpi, "served to excite more curiosity and procure universal favour for Luther, as usually happens in combats and tournays, where the spectators always incline to the weakest party, and take pleasure in giving a higher place to his humble exploits.

CHAP. XI

General Movement—The Monks—How the Reformation is Accomplished—Ordinary Believers—The Old and the New Teachers—Printing and Literature—Booksellers and Hawkers. In fact, an immense movement was taking place. The Reformation which, after the Diet of Worms was supposed to be shut up with its first teacher within the narrow chamber of a strong castle, burst forth, spreading throughout the empire, and even throughout Christendom. The two parties, till then confounded, began to stand apart from each other, and the partisans of a monk who had nothing on his side but his eloquence, fearlessly took up their position confronting the servants of Charles V, and Leo X. Luther had just quitted the walls of the Wartburg, the pope had excommunicated all who had adhered to him, the imperial diet had condemned his doctrine, princes were hastening to crush it in the greater part of the Germanic States, the ministers of Rome were tearing it to pieces before the people by their violent invectives, the other states of Christendom were calling upon Germany to sacrifice an enemy, whose attacks they dreaded even at a distance; and yet this new and not numerous party, without organisation, without connecting

ties, with nothing, in short, to concentrate the common strength, had already, by the energy of their faith and the rapidity of their conquests, spread terror over the vast, ancient, and mighty domain of Rome. Every where, as in the first breathings of Spring, the seed was seen bursting forth from the ground without effort, and, as it were, spontaneously. Every day gave evidence of new progress. Individuals, villages, burghs, whole towns, united in the new confession of the name of Jesus Christ. There was stern resistance and dreadful persecution; but the mysterious power which urged forward the people was irresistible, and the persecuted hastening on and advancing, amid exile, imprisonment, and scaffolds, were every where succeeding against the persecutors. The monastic orders, which Rome had stretched over Christendom, like a net destined to take souls and hold them captive, were the first to break these bonds, and rapidly propagate the new doctrine throughout the Western Church. The Augustins of Saxony had advanced with Luther, having, like him, that intimate experience of the divine Word which gives an interest in God himself, and so dispenses with Rome and her arrogant pretensions. But in the other convents of the order, evangelical light had also arisen. Sometimes it was old men who, like Staupitz, had preserved the sound doctrines of truth in the bosom of ill-used Christendom, and were now asking God to let them depart in peace because their eyes had seen his salvation. At other times, it was young men who, with all the eagerness of early life, had received the lessons of Luther. At Nuremberg, Osnabruck, Dettingen, Ratisbon, Hesse, Wurtemberg, Strasburg, Antwerp, the Augustin convents turned towards Christ, and by their courage provoked the wrath of Rome. But the movement was not confined to the Augustins. They were imitated in the monasteries of the other orders by bold individuals, who, in spite of the clamour of such monks as were unwilling to abandon their carnal observances, in spite of wrath, contempt, and sentences of condemnation, in spite of discipline and cloistral prisons, fearlessly raised their voice for this holy and precious truth, which, after so many painful searches, so many distressing doubts, so many internal struggles, they had found at last. In the greater part of the cloisters, the most spiritually minded, the most pious and best informed of the inmates declared in favour of Reform. In the Franciscan convent at Ulm, Eberlin and Kettenbach attacked the servile works of monachism, and the superstitious practices of the Church, with an eloquence which might have carried a nation, calling, in one breath, for the suppression of the abodes of monks and the abodes of debauchery. Stephen Kemp, another Franciscan, standing alone, preached the gospel at Hamburg, and with undaunted breast, withstood the hatred, envy, menaces, snares, and attacks of priests, irritated when they saw the people forsaking their altars and crowding with enthusiasm to his sermons.

Often even the heads of convents were the first to move in the direction of Reform. At Halberstadt, Neuenwerk, Halle, and Sagan, the priors set their monks the example, or at least declared that if any monk felt his conscience burdened by monastic vows, so far from detaining him in the convent, they would take him on their shoulders to carry him out. In fact, throughout Germany, monks were seen depositing their frocks and cowls at the door of their monastery. Some were expelled by the violence of the friars or abbots; others of a mild and pacific character could not endure the disputes which were perpetually springing up, the insult, clamour, and hatred which pursued them even in their sleep. The majority were convinced that the monastic life was opposed to the will of God and the Christian life. Some had arrived gradually at this conviction, and others all at once while reading some passage of the Bible. Idleness, coarseness, ignorance, and meanness, the essential characteristics of the mendicant orders, produced ineffable disgust in men of an exalted spirit, who felt it impossible any longer to endure the company of their vulgar

associates. A Franciscan begging his round presented himself one day, with his box in his hand, at a smithy in Nuremberg, “Why,” said the smith to him, “do you not rather gain your bread by working with your own hands? At these words the sturdy monk threw away his dress, and seizing the hammer with a vigorous hand, made it fall with force on the anvil. The useless mendicant had become an honest mechanic. His box and frock were sent back to the monastery. Nor were monks the only persons who ranged themselves under the standard of the gospel; priests in still greater numbers preached the new doctrine. But it did not even need preachers to diffuse it: it often acted on the minds of men, and awoke them from their deep sleep before any one had addressed them. In towns, burghs, and even villages, Luther’s writings were read in the evening at the fireside, or in the house of the schoolmaster. Some of the inhabitants were struck by this reading; they applied to the Bible to clear up their doubts, and were astonished when they saw the strange contrast between their Christianity and the Christianity of the Bible. Hesitating for a time between Rome and the Holy Scriptures, they took refuge in that living word which shed a sudden and delightful light on their souls. Meanwhile, some evangelical preacher appeared, perhaps a priest, perhaps a monk. He spoke with eloquence and conviction; he declared that Christ had satisfied fully for the sins of the people, proving from Scripture the vanity of human works and penances. A formidable opposition burst forth. The clergy and frequently the magistrates used every effort to bring back those souls which they would have destroyed; but there was in the new preaching an accordance with Scripture, and a hidden energy which won men’s hearts, subduing the most rebellious. At the risk of their goods, or, if need were, at the risk of their lives, they embraced the cause of the gospel, and abandoned the barren, fanatical orators of the papacy.3 Sometimes the people irritated at being so long imposed upon compelled the priests to withdraw, but more frequently the priests, abandoned by their flocks, without tithes, without offerings, went off in sadness, of their own accord, to go and seek a living elsewhere. And while the props of the ancient hierarchy withdrew sullen and downcast, sometimes taking leave of their old flocks in words of malediction, the people overjoyed at having found truth and liberty, gathered round the new preachers with acclamation, and eager to hear the word, carried them, as it were, in triumph into the church and the pulpit. A powerful doctrine which came from God was then renovating society. The people or their leaders frequently wrote for some man of known faith to come and enlighten them, and he, for the love of the gospel, forthwith abandoned all—family, friends, and country. Persecution often forced the friends of the Reformation to quit their homes. Arriving in some place where it was not yet known, finding some house which offered an asylum to poor travellers, they spoke of the gospel, read some pages of it to the attentive burghers, and obtained leave, perhaps at the request of their new friends, to preach one sermon in the church. Then a vast conflagration burst forth in the town, and the utmost efforts were unable to extinguish it.4 If permission to preach in the church was denied, they preached elsewhere. Every place became a church. At Husum in Holstein, Herman Tast, who was on his way from Wittemberg, and against whom the parish clergy had shut the church, preached to an immense crowd in the burying-ground, under the shade of two large trees, not far from the spot where, seven centuries before, Anschar had proclaimed the gospel to the pagans. At Arnstadt, the Augustin, Gaspard Güttel, preached in the market place. At Dantzig, the gospel was preached on a hill in the neighbourhood of the town. At Gosslar, a student of Wittemberg preached the new doctrine in a grove of linden trees, a circumstance which procured for the evangelical Christians the name of Linden Brothers.

While the priests were exhibiting in the eyes of the people a sordid avidity, the new preachers thus addressed them—“We received it freely, and we give it to you freely.” An idea often proclaimed from the pulpit by the new preachers, viz., that Rome had, of old, sent the Germans a corrupted gospel, and that Germany was now, for the first time, hearing the Word of Jesus Christ in its divine and primitive beauty, produced a profound impression.1 The great idea of the equality of all men, and of an universal brotherhood in Jesus Christ, enraptured those who had long been weighed down under the yoke of feudalism and the papacy of the middle ages.

Often unlettered Christians, with the New Testament in their hands, offered to defend the Reformed doctrine. The Catholics, adhering to Rome, withdrew in alarm; for the business of studying the Holy Scriptures was committed to priests and monks only. These accordingly saw themselves obliged to come forward. A discussion commenced, but the priests and monks, overwhelmed by laymen with quotations from the Holy Scriptures, soon knew not what to oppose to them. … “Unfortunately,” says Cochlœus, “Luther had persuaded his followers that faith was to be given only to the oracle of the sacred books.” A shout arose in the assembly, and proclaimed the shameful ignorance of these old theologians, who, till then, had passed with their party for men of learning.4 The humblest individuals, even the weaker sex, with the help of the Word, persuaded and gained converts. Extraordinary acts are done in extraordinary times. At Ingolstadt, under the very eyes of Doctor Eck, a young weaver read the writings of Luther to the assembled multitude. In the same place, the university having resolved to force a retractation from a pupil of Melancthon, a female, named Argula of Staufen, undertook his defence, and challenged the professors to a public disputation. Women and children, artisans and soldiers, were more learned in the Bible than teachers in schools, and priests at altars.

Christendom was divided into two camps, whose appearance presented a striking contrast. Confronting the old supporters of the hierarchy, who had neglected the acquisition of languages and the cultivation of letters (this is the account given by one of themselves), stood a generous youth, accustomed to study, deeply read in the Scriptures, and familiar with the masterpieces of antiquity. Gifted with a ready understanding, an elevated mind, and an intrepid heart, these youths soon acquired such knowledge, that for a long time none could compete with them. Their superiority to their contemporaries consisted, not merely in their living faith, but also in an elegance of style, a savour of antiquity, a true philosophy, a knowledge of the world, completely unknown to the theologians, veteris farinæ, (of the old stock) as Cochlœus himself designates them. Accordingly, when these young defenders of the Reformation happened to come in contact, at some public meeting, with the Roman doctors, they attacked them with so much ease and confidence, that the illiterate doctors hesitated, became confused, and fell, deservedly, into universal contempt. The ancient edifice gave way under the weight of superstition and ignorance, and the new edifice was reared up on the basis of faith and knowledge. New elements were introduced into common life. Lethargy and stupidity were every where succeeded by a spirit of inquiry and thirst for instruction. An active, enlightened, and living faith took the place of superstitious observances and ascetic contemplation. Devout works succeeded devotee practices and penances. The pulpit was preferred to the ceremonies of the altar, and the ancient and sovereign authority of the Word of God was again established in the Church.

Printing, that mighty engine which the fifteenth century had invented, seconded all these efforts, and by means of its powerful projectiles, was continually making breaches in the walls of the

enemy. In Germany an immense impulse was given to popular literature. Up to 1517, only thirty-five publications had appeared; but the number increased with astonishing rapidity after the publication of Luther's theses. In 1518, we find seventy-one different works; in 1519, a hundred and eleven; in 1520, two hundred and eight; in 1521, two hundred and eleven; in 1522, three hundred and forty-seven; in 1523, four hundred and ninety-eight.… And where were all these published? Almost invariably at Wittemberg. And who was their author? Most frequently, Luther. In 1522, two hundred and thirty writings of the Reformer appeared; and, in the following year, one hundred and eighty-three. This same year, the whole of the Catholic publications amounted only to twenty. The literature of Germany was thus formed at the same time as its religion, amidst contention; and already gave promise of being learned, profound, bold, and active, as it has since appeared. The national mind was thus displayed, for the first time, in an unsophisticated form, and at the very moment of its birth was baptised with the fire of Christian enthusiasm.

What Luther and his friends composed, others disseminated Monks, convinced of the unlawfulness of monastic ties, desirous to substitute a life of activity for long idleness, but too ignorant to be themselves preachers of the Word, traversed the provinces, and visited the hamlets and huts, selling the works of Luther and his friends. Germany was soon covered with these bold colporteurs. Printers and booksellers eagerly received all the writings in defence of the Reformation, but declined those of the opposite party, which were usually a mere compound of ignorance and barbarism.2 When any one of them ventured to sell a book in favour of the papacy, and to expose it at fairs, at Frankfort, or elsewhere, dealers, purchasers, or literary men, assailed him with a shower of derision and sarcasm. In vain had the emperor and the princes issued severe edicts against the writings of the Reformers. Whenever an inquisitorial visit was to be made, the merchants, who had secret notice of it, concealed the books which were proscribed; and the people, always eager for what is sought to be kept from them, afterwards got possession of these writings, and read them more greedily than before. These things were not confined to Germany. Luther's writings were translated into French, Spanish, English, and Italian, and disseminated among these nations.

CHAP. XII

Luther at Zwickau—The Castle of Freyberg—Worms—Frankfort—Universal movement—Wittemberg, the centre of the Reformation—Luther's sentiments.

If the humblest individuals inflicted such heavy blows on Rome, what must it have been, when the monk of Wittemberg made his own voice be heard? Shortly after the defeat of the new prophets, Luther, dressed as a layman, crossed the territory of Duke George in a car. His frock was concealed, and his appearance was that of an ordinary citizen of the country. Had he been recognised, or had he fallen into the hands of the angry duke, perhaps it would have been all over with him. He was going to preach at Zwickau, the cradle of the new prophets. No sooner was this known at Schneeberg, Annaberg, and the neighbourhood, than crowds began to flock to it. Fourteen thousand persons arrived in the town, and as there was no church capable of containing such a multitude, Luther got up on the balcony of the town-house, and preached to an audience of twenty-five thousand, who covered the public square, some of them seated on a heap of building materials, which happened to have been laid down. The servant of Christ was speaking with fervour on the election of grace, when suddenly some cries were heard from the middle of the

audience. An old woman, with haggard looks, was stretching out her bony arms from the top of the stone on which she stood, and seemed desirous, by her earnest gesture, to keep back the crowd, who were going to throw themselves at the feet of Jesus Christ. Her wild cries interrupted the preacher. Seckendorff says, “It was the devil in the shape of an old woman, trying to excite a disturbance.”2 But it was in vain: the voice of the Reformer having silenced the evil spirit, thousands of hearers were seized with a feeling of enthusiasm, exchanging looks, and shaking hands with each other. The monks, struck dumb, could not quell the storm, and shortly saw themselves obliged to quit Zwickau.

Duke Henry, the brother of Duke George, was residing in the castle of Freyberg. He was married to a princess of Mecklenburg, who, the year before, had given him a son, named Maurice. To a love of the table and pleasure, Henry joined the bluntness and rudeness of a soldier. He was, moreover, pious, after the fashion of the times, and had made one pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and another to St. James of Compostella. “At Compostella,” he was wont to say, “I placed a hundred gold florins on the altar of the saint, saying to him, O! St. James, it was to please you I came hither; I make you a present of this money: but if those rogues (the priests) take it from you, I cannot help it: look then to yourself.”1 A Franciscan and a Dominican, disciples of Luther, had for some time been preaching the gospel at Freyberg. The duchess, whose piety had inspired her with a horror at heresy, listened to their discourses, wondering how that sweet doctrine of a Saviour could be the doctrine which she had been made to dread so much. Her eyes were gradually opened, and she found peace in Jesus Christ. No sooner did it reach the ears of Duke George, that the gospel was preached at Freyberg, than he prayed his brother to set his face against these novelties. Chancellor Strehlin and the canons seconded him with their fanaticism. There was a great explosion at the court of Freyberg. Duke Henry harshly reprimanded and upbraided the pious duchess, who, on more than one occasion, shed tears over the cradle of her child. Her prayers and gentleness gradually won the duke’s heart; the harshness of his nature was softened; and complete harmony was established between the spouses, who could now pray together beside their son. A great destiny was reserved for this child; from this cradle, over which a Christian mother had so often poured forth her griefs, God was one day to bring forth the defender of the Reformation. The inhabitants of Worms had been deeply moved by Luther’s intrepidity. The magistrates durst not contravene the imperial decree, and all the churches were shut; but in an open space, covered with an immense assemblage, a preacher from a pulpit of rude construction preached the gospel with power. If the authorities made their appearance, the crowd dispersed in a moment, secretly carrying off the pulpit; but, when the storm blew over, it was immediately erected in some more distant spot, whither the crowd again flocked to hear the Word of Christ. This temporary pulpit was daily carried from place to place, and served to confirm the people in the impression which they had received from the grand scene at the Diet. In one of the free towns of the empire, Frankfort on the Maine, the greatest agitation prevailed. Ibach, a courageous evangelist, was there preaching salvation by Jesus Christ. The clergy, of whom Cochlœus, so well known by his writings and his hatred, was one, enraged at this audacious colleague, denounced him to the Archbishop of Mentz. The council, though timid, tried to defend him, but in vain: he was deposed by the clergy and banished. Rome triumphed, and all seemed lost. The faithful in humble life thought themselves for ever deprived of the Word. But at the moment when the citizens seemed disposed to yield to those tyrannical priests, several of the nobility declared in favour of the gospel. Max of Molnheim, Harmuth of Cronberg, George of Stockheim, Emerick of

Reiffenstein, whose estates were in the neighbourhood of Frankfort, wrote to the council, “We are constrained to oppose these wolves.” In an address to the clergy, they say, “Embrace the evangelical doctrine, recal Ibach, or we will withhold our tithes …” The people who relished the Reformed doctrine were emboldened by this language of the nobles; and, one day, when Peter Mayer, the priest most opposed to the Reformation and the perseenter of Ibach, was going to preach against the heretics, a great tumult suddenly arose. Mayer took fright, and rushed out of the church. This commotion decided the Council, who issued an order enjoining all preachers simply to preach the Word of God, or quit the town. The light which had radiated from Wittemberg as its centre, was thus diffused over the whole empire. In the west,—the districts of Berg, Cleves, Lippstadt, Munster, Wesel, Miltenberg, Mentz, Deux-Ponts, and Strasburgh, heard the gospel. In the south,—Hof, Schlesstadt, Bamberg, Esslingen, Hall in Suabia, Heilbronn, Augsburg, Ulm, and may other places hailed it with joy. In the east,—the duchy of Liegnitz, Prussia, and Pomerania opened their gates to it. In the north,—Brunswick, Halberstadt, Gosslar, Zell, Friesland, Bremen, Hamburgh, Holstein, and even Denmark and other neighbouring countries were moved at the sound of the new doctrine. The Elector had declared that he would give the bishops full liberty to preach in his States, but that he would not deliver any person up to them. Accordingly the evangelical preachers, persecuted in other countries, soon began to take refuge in Saxony. Ibach of Frankfort, Eberlin of Ulm, Kauxdorf of Magdeburg, Valentine Musteus, whom the canons of Halberstadt had horribly mutilated, and other faithful ministers from all parts of Germany, flocked to Wittemberg as the only asylum in which they could feel secure. There, by intercourse with the Reformers, they had their own faith strengthened, and communicated the results of their experience and of the light which they had received; just as the water of rivers is brought back by the clouds from the boundless ocean, to feed the glaciers from which it formerly flowed into the plain. The work, which was in course of development at Wittemberg thus composed of many different elements, was constantly becoming more and more the work of the nation—of Europe—of Christendom. This school, founded by Frederick, and animated by Luther, was the centre of the vast revolution which was renewing the Church, and imprinted on it a real and living unity, far superior to the apparent unity of Rome, The Bible reigned at Wittemberg, and its oracles were every where heard. This university, the most recent of all, had acquired, in Christendom, the rank and influence which had hitherto belonged to the ancient university of Paris. The crowds who flocked to it from every part of Europe, told the wants of the Church and the nations, and, on quitting its walls, now become sacred in their eyes, carried back to the Church and to the people the word of grace, destined to cure and save the nations.

Luther, at the sight of this success, felt his courage strengthened. He saw a feeble enterprise, begun amid numerous fears and agonies, changing the face of the Christian world, and he was astonished. He had foreseen nothing of the kind when he first rose up against Tezel. Prostrating himself before the God whom he adored, he acknowledged that this work was His work, and he triumphed in the conviction of having gained a victory which could not again be wrested from him. “Our enemies threaten us with death,” said he to the Chevalier Harmuth of Cronberg, “had they as much wisdom as they have folly, it would, on the contrary, be life that they would threaten us with. It is not mere jest or insult to threaten Christ and Christians with death, in other words, those who are the masters and the conquerors of death. It is as if I were to try to frighten a man by saddling his steed and helping him to mount it. Do they not know, then, that Christ is risen from the dead? As to them, he is still lying in the sepulchre. Where do I say? In hell. But we, we know that he

lives!" He was indignant at the idea of being regarded as the author of a work, in the minutest details of which, he recognised the hand of God. "Several," said he, "believe on my account; but those only are in the truth who would remain faithful, though they were to believe (which God forbid) that I had denied Jesus Christ. The true disciples believe not in Luther, but in Jesus Christ. For my own part, I care not for Luther.2 Be he saint, or be he rogue, what is it to me? It is not him I preach, it is Christ. If the devil can take him, let him take him. But let Christ remain with us, and we shall remain also." In fact it were vain to attempt to explain this movement by natural means. The literati, it is true, whetted their pens, and threw sharp darts at the monks and the pope: the cry of freedom, which Germany had so often raised against the tyranny of the Italians, again resounded in castles and provinces: the people rejoiced when they heard the notes of the "nightingale of Wittemberg," a pressage of the spring which was every where beginning to bud. But the movement which was then taking place was not similar to that which a longing for earthly freedom produces. Those who say that the Reformation was produced by offering the property of convents to princes, marriage to priests, and liberty to the people, strangely misapprehend its nature. No doubt, a useful employment of the funds which had till then fostered the idleness of monks, no doubt marriage and liberty, both of them gifts from God, might favour the development of the Reformation, but the moving force was not there. An internal revolution was then produced in the depths of the human heart. The Christian people again learned to love, forgive, pray, suffer, and even die for a truth which promised repose only in heaven. The Church was transformed. Christianity burst the swathes which had so long enwrapt it, and again returned full of life to a world which had forgotten its ancient power. The hand which made the world was again at work upon it, and the gospel re-appearing amidst the nations, pursued its course in spite of the powerful and reiterated efforts of kings and priests, in the same way as the ocean, when the hand of God presses on its waves, rises calmly and majestically along the shore, while no human power is capable of arresting its progress.

BOOK TENTH Agitation, Reverses, and Progress (1522–1526.)

CHAP. I

Political element—Want of Enthusiasm at Rome—Siege of Pampeluna—Courage of Inigo—Transformation—Luther and Loyola—Visions—The two principles. The Reformation, which at first had existed only in the heart of some pious individuals, had entered the worship and life of the Church. It was natural for it to take a new step—to penetrate into civil relations and the movements of nations. Its progress was invariable from within to without. We shall now see this great revolution taking its place in the political world. For nearly eight centuries Europe formed a vast sacerdotal state. Emperors and kings were under the patronage of popes. Though there had been in France and especially in Germany energetic resistance to audacious claims, Rome had finally succeeded, and princes had been seen acting as the docile executioners of her horrible judgments, fighting in order to secure her empire against private Christians subject to their sway, and on her account profusely shedding the blood of their people. No assault could be made on this vast ecclesiastical state, of which the pope was the head, without powerfully affecting political relations. At this time two great ideas agitated Germany: on the one hand, a renovation of faith was desired; on the other, a national government, in which the Germanic states should be represented, and a counterpoise thereby formed to the power of the emperors. The Elector Frederick had insisted on this at the election which had given a successor to Maximilian, and

young Charles had acceded to it. A national government, consisting of the emperor and the representatives of the electors, and circles had in consequence been formed.

Thus Luther reformed the Church, and Frederick of Saxony reformed the state. But while in correspondence to the religious reform, important political modifications were introduced by the heads of the nation, there was a danger that “the commonalty” might also begin to move, and, by religious and political excesses, compromise both reformations. This violent and fanatical intrusion of the populace and certain of their leaders, which seems inevitable whenever society is shaken and transformed, failed not to be manifested in Germany at the time of which we now treat.

There were other causes besides which gave rise to these agitations. The emperor and the pope had leagued against the Reformation, which seemed destined to fall under the blows of such mighty adversaries. Policy, interest, and ambition, prompted Charles V and Leo X to attempt its destruction. But these are poor champions against the truth. Devotedness to a cause, which is regarded as sacred, can only be overcome by counter devotedness. Now Rome, docile to the impulse of Leo X, was enthusiastic for a sonnet or a melody, but insensible to the religion of Jesus Christ. Even when visited with some less frivolous thought, instead of purifying herself and returning to the Christianity of the Apostles, she became engrossed with alliances, wars, conquests, treaties, under which she might save her provinces, while with cool disdain she left the Reformation to revive religious enthusiasm, and move forward in triumph to still nobler conquests. The enemy, whose destruction had been vowed in the cathedral of Worms, presented himself, full of courage and might: the struggle behoved to be keen; blood must flow.

Meanwhile, some of the most pressing dangers with which the Reformation was threatened seemed to diminish. One day, before the publication of the edict of Worms, young Charles, when standing at a window with his confessor, had said, putting his right hand upon his heart, “I swear that I will cause the first person, who, after the publication of my edict, will declare himself a Lutheran, to be hung at this window.” But ere long his zeal had become greatly cooled. His project of re-establishing the ancient glory of the holy empire had been received with coldness.2 Dissatisfied with Germany, he quitted the banks of the Rhine, proceeded to the Low Countries, and took advantage of the period of his residence there to give the monks some gratifications, which he found himself unable to grant them within the empire. Luther’s works were burnt at Ghent by the hands of the executioner with all possible solemnity. More than fifty thousand spectators were present at this auto-da-fe, and the emperor himself countenanced it with an approving smile. He next proceeded to Spain, when wars and troubles compelled him, for some time at least, to let Germany alone. Since the power which he claims in the empire is refused, let others pursue the heretic of Wittemberg. He is engrossed by graver cares. In fact, Francis I, impatient to come to blows with his rival, had thrown down the gauntlet. Under the pretext of reinstating the children of John of Albert, king of Navarre, in their patrimony, he had begun a long and bloody struggle, which was to last as long as his life, by sending into that kingdom, under the command of Lesparre, an army, whose rapid conquests were not arrested till they arrived before the fortress of Pampeluna. On these strong fortifications an enthusiasm was to be kindled, which should one day oppose the enthusiasm of the Reformer, and breathe into the papacy a new spirit of energy, devotedness, and power. Pampeluna was to be the cradle of the rival of the monk of Wittemberg. The chivalric spirit which had so long animated the Christian world now existed only in Spain. The wars against the Moors scarcely ended in the Peninsula and still constantly renewed in Africa, distant and

adventurous expeditions in foreign lands, kept alive in the Castilian youth that enthusiastic and spirited valour of which Amadis had been the beau ideal.

Among the defenders of Pampeluna was a young gentleman named Don Inigo Lopez of Recalde, the cadet of a family of thirteen children. Brought up at the court of Ferdinand the Catholic, Recalde, richly endowed with personal graces, skilful in the use of the sword and the lance, was ardent in the pursuit of chivalric renown. To deck himself in glittering armour, to mount a noble steed,3 to expose himself to the brilliant dangers of a tournay, to run hazardous adventures, to take part in the impassioned debates of factions, and display as much devotion to St. Peter as to his mistress—such was the life of this young knight. The governor of Navarre having gone into Spain to ask assistance, had left Pampeluna in the charge of Inigo and a few nobles. The latter, seeing the superiority of the French troops, resolved to withdraw. Inigo conjured them to make head against Lesparre. Finding that their purpose could not be shaken, he turned upon them with looks of indignation, accused them of cowardice and perfidy, and then threw himself single handed into the fortress, determined to defend it at the cost of his life. The French, who had met with an enthusiastic reception in Fampeluna, having summoned the governor of the citadel to capitulate, “Let us,” said the fiery Inigo to his companions, “bear any thing sooner than surrender.” The French began to batter the walls with their powerful engines, and soon after attempted an assault. The Spaniards, animated by the courage and words of Inigo, repulsed the assailants with their arrows, swords, and halberts. Inigo fought at their head. Standing on the wall with blazing eye, the young knight brandishing his sword, dealt blows on the enemy. All at once a bullet struck the wall at the place where he was defending; a shivered stone severely wounded the knight in his right leg, and the shot, in rebounding, broke his left. Inigo fell insensible.3 The garrison immediately surrendered, and the French, filled with admiration at the courage of their young opponent, caused him to be carried in a litter to his friends and parents in the Castle of Loyola. In this seignorial mansion, from which he afterwards took his name, Inigo was born, eight years after Luther, of one of the most distinguished families in the kingdom. A painful operation had become necessary. Amidst the most acute sufferings, Inigo clenched his hands, but did not utter a single cry.

Constrained to a painful repose, he behoved somehow to employ his lively fancy. In the absence of romances of chivalry, which he had hitherto been accustomed to devour, he was furnished with the Life of Christ, and the Flowers of the Saints. This reading, in his solitary and sickly condition, produced an extraordinary impression on his mind. He thought he saw the noisy life of tournaments and battles, which till then had completely engrossed his youth, withdrawn, effaced, and extinguished, and, at the same time, a more glorious career opened on his astonished sight. The humble actions of the saints and their heroic sufferings suddenly appeared to him more deserving of praise than all the feats of chivalry. Stretched on his feverish bed, he gave himself up to the most contradictory thoughts. The world which he was abandoning, and the other whose holy macerations he was welcoming, appeared to him at the same moment, the one with its pleasures, the other with its severities. These two worlds carried on a fierce combat in his soul. “What,” said he, “if I were to do what St. Francis or St. Dominic have done?” Then the image of the mistress to whom he had devoted his heart presenting itself to his imagination, he exclaimed with natural vanity, “She is not a countess, she is not a duchess; but she is more.”2 But these thoughts left a feeling of bitterness and weariness, whereas his plan of imitating the saints filled him with peace and joy. From that time his choice was fixed. When scarcely recovered, he resolved to bid adieu to

the world. After having, like Luther, partaken of an entertainment with his companions in arms, he set out alone, in the greatest secrecy, for the solitary abodes which the hermits of St. Benedict had hewn out in the rock in the mountains of Montserrat. Urged on, not by a conviction of his sins or the need of divine grace, but by a longing to become the “knight of Mary,” and gain renown by mortifications and pious works, like all the army of the saints, he confessed during three days, gave his rich clothing to a beggar, put on sackcloth, and girded himself with a cord.4 Then calling to mind the celebrated vigil of Amadis of Gaul, he hung up his sword before an image of Mary, and passed the night watching in his new and strange costume. Sometimes on his knees, sometimes standing, but always in prayer, and with the pilgrim’s staff in his hand, he employed himself in all the devout exercises which Amadis of Gaul had of old performed. “Thus,” observes the jesuit, Maffei, one of the biographers of the saint, “while Satan was arming Martin Luther against all laws, human and divine, and while this infamous heresiarch was appearing at Worms, and there declaring impious war on the apostolic see, Christ, in the exercise of his divine providence, was raising up this new champion, and binding him—him, and at a later period, all his followers,—to the service of the Roman pontiff, opposing him to the licentiousness and fury of heretical perverseness.”

Loyola, still lame in one leg, dragged along through winding and desert paths to Manresa, and there entered a convent of Dominicans, that he might devote himself, in this obscure spot, to the severest penances. Like Luther, he daily begged his bread from door to door. He remained seven hours on his knees, and flagellated himself thrice every day; at midnight he was again at prayer. He allowed his hair and nails to grow, and it would have been impossible to recognise the young and brilliant knight of Pampeluna in the pale wan monk of Manresa.

Meanwhile, the moment had arrived, when the religious ideas which had hitherto been to Inigo merely a sport of chivalry, were to reveal themselves to him with greater seriousness, and make him feel a power of which he was still ignorant. Suddenly, without any presentiment of what was to happen, the joy which he had hitherto experienced disappeared. In vain did he apply to prayer and the singing of hymns—he could find no rest.3 His imagination had ceased to surround him with amiable illusions: he was left alone with his conscience. He could not comprehend a state which was so novel to him; and he asked, in alarm, whether God, for whom he had made so many sacrifices, was still angry with him. Night and day terrors agitated his soul: he shed bitter tears, and with loud cries called for the peace which he had lost … but all in vain. He then resumed the long confession which he had made at Montserrat. “It may be,” thought he, “I have forgotten something.” But the confession only increased his agony, by reminding him of all his faults. He wandered gloomy and depressed: his conscience cried aloud, that during his whole life he had done nothing but heaped sin upon sin; and the unhappy man, overwhelmed with terror, made the cloister echo with his groans.

Strange thoughts then found admission into his heart. Experiencing no comfort in confession and the various ordinances of the Church, he began, like Luther, to doubt their efficacy. But, instead of turning aside from human works and applying to the all-sufficient work of Christ, he asked if he ought not again to pursue worldly glory. His soul darted impetuously towards the world from which he had fled;6 but he immediately drew back in alarm. Was there, then, some difference between the monk of Manresa and the monk of Erfurth? In secondary features, doubtless, there was, but the state of their souls was the same. Both had a deep conviction of the magnitude of their sins.

Both sought reconciliation with God, and wished to have the assurance of it in their hearts. Had a Staupitz, with the Bible in his hand, presented himself at the convent of Manresa, Inigo might, perhaps, have become the Luther of the Peninsula. These two great men of the sixteenth century—these two founders of the two spiritual powers, which, for three hundred years, have been warring with each other, were at this time brethren; and, perhaps, had they met, Luther and Loyola would have fallen into each other's arms, and mingled their tears and their vows. But these two monks were, from this moment, to follow very different paths.

Inigo, instead of perceiving that his remorse was sent to urge him to the foot of the cross, persuaded himself that these internal upbraidings came not from God, but from the devil; and adopted the resolution of thinking no more of his sins, of effacing them, and consigning them to eternal oblivion. Luther turned toward Christ, Loyola only fell back upon himself.

Inigo was shortly after confirmed in the conclusion at which he had arrived, by visions. His own resolutions had been substituted for the grace of Christ, and his own imagination for the Word of Christ. The voice of God, in his conscience, he had regarded as the voice of a demon; and, accordingly, his future history exhibits him as given up to the inspirations of the spirit of darkness.

One day Loyola met an old woman, just as Luther, in the time of his agony, had been visited by an old man. But the Spanish female, instead of telling the penitent of Manresa of the remission of sins, foretold him of apparitions of Jesus. Such was the Christianity to which Loyola, like the prophets of Zwickau, had recourse. Inigo did not seek the truth in the Holy Scriptures, but in their stead imagined immediate communications from the kingdom of spirits. His life soon consisted only of extacies and contemplations.

One day, while going to the church of St. Paul, which is situated outside the town, plunged in meditation, he followed the banks of the Llobregat. At last he sat down. His eyes were fixed on the river, which was slowly rolling its deep waters at his feet, and he became completely absorbed in meditation. Suddenly he was seized with extacy: he saw, with his eyes, what men scarcely comprehend, after much reading, watching, and labour. He rose up, stood on the brink of the river, and seemed to himself to become a new man: he afterwards put himself upon his knees before a cross, which happened to be in the neighbourhood, disposed to sacrifice his life in the cause, the mysteries of which had just been revealed to him. From that time his visions became more frequent. One day, while seated on the stair of St. Dominic, at Manresa, he was singing hymns to the Holy Virgin. Suddenly his soul was seized with extacy; he remained motionless, absorbed in contemplation; the mystery of the Holy Trinity was revealed to his eyes under magnificent symbols. He shed tears, sobbed aloud; and during the whole day ceased not to speak of the ineffable vision.

These numerous apparitions had dissipated all his doubts. Unlike Luther, he believed, not because the things of faith were written in the Word of God, but in consequence of the visions which he had seen. "Even though there had been no Bible," say his apologists, "even had these mysteries never been revealed in Scripture, he would have believed them, for God had been unveiled to him."4 Luther, on receiving his degree of doctor, had taken an oath to the Holy Scriptures, and the authority of the Word of God, the only infallible authority, had become the fundamental principle of the Reformation. Loyola took his oath to dreams and visions; and fantastical apparitions became the principle of his life and of his faith. The residence of Luther in

the convent of Erfurth, and that of Loyola in the convent of Manresa, explain to us respectively the Reformation and the modern papacy. We shall not follow the monk who was to re-animate the exhausted powers of Rome to Jerusalem, whither he repaired on quitting the cloister. We shall meet with him again in the course of this history.

CHAP. II

Victory of the Pope—Death of Leo X—Oratory of Divine Love—Adrian VI—Sch of Reform—Opposition.

While these things were passing in Spain, Rome herself seemed to assume a more serious character. The great patron of music, hunting, and festivity disappeared from the pontifical throne to give place to a grave and pious monk.

Leo X had felt great delight on hearing of the edict of Worms, and the captivity of Luther, and forthwith, as a token of his victory, had caused the effigy and writings of the Reformer to be given to the flames. This was the second or third time that the papacy had enjoyed this pleasure. At this time, Leo, wishing to testify his gratitude to Charles V, united his army to that of the emperor. The French were obliged to quit Parma, Placenza, and Milan, which latter town was entered by a cousin of the pope, Cardinal Giulio de Medici. The pope was thus mounting to the pinnacle of power. This was at the beginning of the winter of 1521. Leo X was accustomed to pass the autumn in the country, and at this time left Rome without his surplice, and, what, says his master of the ceremonies, was still more scandalous, in boots. He had hawking at Viterbo, and stag-hunting at Corneto, enjoyed the sport of fishing in the lake of Bolsena, and then went to pass some time in the midst of festivities at Malliana, his favourite residence. Musicians, improvisatori, all artists whose talents could enliven this delicious villa surrounded the sovereign pontiff. He was here at the time when news reached him of the taking of Milan. The whole villa was immediately astir. The courtiers and officials could not restrain their joy. The Swiss fired feux de joie, and Leo, in transport, walked up and down his room the whole night, often looking out of his window at the rejoicings of the Swiss and the people. He returned to Rome, fatigued, but intoxicated with delight. Scarcely had he returned to the Vatican when he was suddenly taken ill. “Pray for me,” said he to his servants. He had not even time to receive the holy sacrament, and died in the vigour of life (forty-seven), in the hour of triumph, and amid the noise of festivity. The people, while accompanying the hearse of the sovereign pontiff, gave utterance to invectives. They could not forgive his having died without the sacraments, and left debts consequent on his great expenditure. “Thou didst rise to the pontificate as a fox,” said the Romans, “there thou playedst the lion, and now thou art gone like a dog.”

Such was the mourning with which Rome honoured the pope who excommunicated the Reformation, and whose name serves to mark one of the great epochs in history.

Meanwhile a feeble re-action against the spirit of Leo and Rome had already begun in Rome herself. Some pious individuals had there founded an oratory for their common edification, near the place where tradition bears that the meetings of the primitive Christians were held. Contarini, who had heard Luther at Worms, took the lead among these priests. In this way a species of Reformation began at Rome almost at the same time as at Wittemberg. It has been truly said that wherever there are germs of piety, there are also germs of reform. But these good intentions were

soon to be dissipated. At other times the choice of a successor to Leo X would have fallen on a Gregory VII, or an Innocent III, if they could have been found, but the interest of the empire now took precedence of that of the Church, and Charles V behoved to have a pope who was devoted to himself. The Cardinal de Medici, afterwards pope under the name of Clement VII, seeing that he could not yet obtain the tiara, exclaimed, “Take the Cardinal of Tortosa, who is old and universally regarded as a saint.” This prelate, born at Utrecht, of burgher parentage, was, in fact, elected, and reigned under the name of Adrian VI. He had formerly been a professor at Louvain, and afterwards became preceptor to Charles, by whose influence, as emperor, he was, in 1517, invested with the Roman purple. The Cardinal de Vio seconded the proposal. “Adrian,” said he, “had, through the doctors of Louvain, a great share in Luther’s condemnation.” The cardinals, worn out and off their guard, appointed this stranger; but shortly on recovering themselves, “they were,” says a chronicler, “as it were dead with amazement.” The idea that the rigid Netherlander would not accept the tiara, at first, somewhat solaced them; but this was of short duration. Pasquin caricatured the pontiff elect under the figure of a schoolmaster, and the cardinals under that of boys whom he was chastising. The populace were so enraged that the members of the conclave were happy to escape without being thrown into the river.3 In Holland, on the contrary, there were great rejoicings at having given a pope to the Church. “Utrecht planted—Louvain watered—the emperor has given the increase,” was displayed on tapestry hung in front of the houses. Some one wrote beneath, “And God did nothing at all in the matter!”

Notwithstanding the dissatisfaction originally expressed by the people of Rome, Adrian VI repaired thither in August, 1522, and was well received. It was said, that he had more than five thousand benefices at his disposal, and every one counted on obtaining a share. For long the papal throne had not been occupied by such a pontiff. Just, active, learned, pious, simple, of irreproachable manners, he did not allow himself to be blinded either by favour or anger. He arrived at the Vatican with his old housekeeper, whom he charged to continue to provide for his modest wants in the magnificent palace which Leo had filled with luxury and dissipation. He had none of the tastes of his predecessor. When shown the magnificent statue of the Laocoon, which had been discovered a few years before, and purchased, for a large sum, by Julius II, he turned away coldly, saying, “these are pagan idols.” “I would far rather,” he wrote, “serve God as provost of Louvain, than as pope of Rome.”

Adrian, struck with the danger with which the Reformation menaced the religion of the middle ages, and not, like the Italians, with those to which it exposed Rome and its hierarchy, was sincerely desirous to combat and arrest it; and it seemed to him that the best method of succeeding was, a reform of the Church produced by the Church herself. “The Church,” said he, “is in need of a reform, but we must proceed in it step by step.” “The opinion of the pope,” says Luther, “is that between two steps there must be an interval of several ages.” In fact, there were ages when the Church was moving towards a Reformation. It was no longer time to temporise, it was necessary to act.

Adrian, faithful to his plan, was engaged in clearing the city of the profane, of forgers, and usurers. The task was not easy; for they formed a considerable part of the population. At first the Romans jeered at him, but shortly they hated him. Sacerdotal ascendancy, and the immense profits which it produced—the might of Rome—the sports, luxury, and festivities which abounded in it, would all be irrecoverably lost by a return to apostolic manners. In particular, the restoration of discipline

encountered energetic opposition. “To succeed in it,” said the grand penitentiary, (a cardinal,) “it would first be necessary to bring back Christian fervour. The cure is too much for the strength of the patient, and will be his death. Have a care that, in trying to preserve Germany, you do not lose Italy.” In fact, Adrian had soon much more to dread from Romanism than from Lutheranism.

Attempts were made to bring him back to the path which he was desirous to quit. The old and wily Cardinal Soderino de Volterra, an intimate friend of Alexander VI, Julius II, and Leo X, often expressed himself to honest Adrian in terms fitted to acquaint him with the part, to him so novel, which he was called to perform. “The heretics,” said he to him one day, “have at all times spoken of the corrupt manners of the court of Rome; notwithstanding, the popes have never changed them.” On another occasion he said, “Hitherto it has not been by reforms that heresies have been extinguished, but by crusades.” “Ah,” replied the pontiff, with a deep sigh, “how unfortunate the condition of the popes, since they have not even the liberty of doing good.”2

CHAP. III

Diet of Nuremberg—Invasion of Solyman—The Nuncio demands the Death of Luther—The Preachers of Nuremberg—Promise of Reform—National Grievances—Decree of the Diet—Thundering Letter of the Pope—Luther’s Advice. On the 23rd March, 1522, before Adrian’s arrival at Rome, the Diet had assembled at Nuremberg. Previous to this, the Bishops of Mersburg and Misnia had asked permission from the Elector of Saxony to make a visitation of the convents and churches in his states. Frederick, thinking that the truth should be strong enough to resist error, had given a favourable answer. The visitation took place. The bishops and their doctors preached fiercely against reform. They exhorted, threatened, supplicated: but their arguments seemed without force, and, when wishing to recur to more efficacious weapons, they asked the secular arm to execute their decrees, the Elector’s ministers replied, that the affair required to be examined by the Bible, and that the Elector could not, at his advanced age, sit down to the study of theology. These efforts of the bishops did not bring back a single soul to the fold of Rome; and Luther who, a short time after, travelled over these countries and made his powerful eloquence be heard, effaced any feeble impressions which they had produced.

There was reason to fear that Archduke Ferdinand, the emperor’s brother, would do what Frederick had refused. This young prince, who presided at part of the sittings of the Diet, gradually assuming more resolution, might, in his zeal, rashly draw the sword which his more prudent and politic brother wisely left in its sheath. In fact, Ferdinand had commenced a cruel persecution of the partisans of the Reformation in his hereditary states of Austria. But for the deliverance of reviving Christianity, God repeatedly employed the same instrument which he had used in destroying corrupted Christianity. The crescent appeared in the terrified provinces of Hungary. On the 9th of August, after a siege of six weeks, Belgrade, the bulwark of that kingdom and of the empire, yielded to the assaults of Solyman. The followers of Mahomet, after their evacuation of Spain, seemed desirous to re-enter Europe by the East. The Diet of Nuremberg forgot the monk of Worms to think only of the Luther of Constantinople. But Charles V kept both adversaries in his view. Writing the pope from Valladolid on the 31st October, he said, “It is necessary to arrest the Turks and punish the partisans of the poisonous doctrines of Luther with the sword.” The storm which seemed to have turned away from the Reformation, and proceeded toward the East, gathered anew over the head of the Reformer. His return to Wittemberg, and the zeal which he

then displayed, had awakened the old hatred. “Now that we know where to take him,” said Duke George, “let the decree of Worms be carried into execution!” It was even confidently affirmed in Germany that both the emperor and Adrian would appear together at Nuremberg to advise this. “Satan feels the wound which he has received,” said Luther, “and, therefore, puts himself into all this rage. But Christ has already stretched forth his hand, and will trample him under his feet in spite of the gates of hell.”3 In December, 1522, the Diet again assembled at Nuremberg. Every thing appeared to announce that, if Solyman was the great enemy who engrossed the attention of the Spring Session, Luther would be the engrossing one of the Winter Session. Adrian VI, being of German origin, flattered himself his countrymen would give him a more favourable reception than a pope of Italian origin could hope for. He accordingly charged Chieregati, whom he had known in Spain, to repair to Nuremberg. No sooner was the Diet met than several princes made violent speeches against Luther. The Cardinal Archbishop of Salzburg, who was in the full confidence of the emperor, was desirous that prompt and decisive measures should be taken before the arrival of the Elector of Saxony. The Elector Joachim of Brandenburg, always resolute in his course, and the Chancellor of Treves, were equally pressing for the execution of the edict of Worms. The other princes were in a great measure undecided and divided in opinion. The state of turmoil in which the Church was placed, filled her most faithful servants with anguish. The Bishop of Strasburg broke out in full Diet with the exclamation, “I would give one of my ten fingers not to be a priest.”

Chieregati, in unison with the Archbishop of Salzburg, demanded the death of Luther. “It is necessary,” said he, on the part of the pope, and with a papal brief in his hands, “it is necessary to amputate this gangrened limb from the body. Your fathers at Constance put to death John Huss and Jerome of Prague; but they revive in Luther. Follow the glorious example of your ancestors, and, with the assistance of God and St. Peter, carry off a magnificent victory over the infernal dragon.” On hearing the brief of the pious and moderate Adrian, the most of the princes were seized with terror. Several were beginning to have a better understanding of the arguments of Luther, and had hoped other things of the pope. So then, Rome, under an Adrian, refuses to acknowledge her faults: she is still preparing her thunder, and the Germanic provinces are to be covered with desolation and blood. While the princes kept a mournful silence, the prelates and the members of the Diet were in an uproar. “Let him be put to death,” exclaimed they, within hearing of the envoy of Saxony, who was present at the sitting.

Very different expressions were heard in the churches of Nuremberg. Crowds flocked into the chapel of the Hospital and the churches of the Augustins, St. Sibbald and St. Laurence, to the preaching of the gospel. Andrew Osiander preached powerfully in the latter church. Several princes, and, in particular, Albert, Margrave of Brandenburg, who, in his quality of Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, took rank immediately after the archbishop, was a frequent attendant. Monks quitting the convents of the town, learned trades, in order to gain a livelihood by their own hands.

Chieregati could not tolerate this boldness. He demanded that the rebellious priests and monks should be cast into prison. The Diet, notwithstanding strong opposition from the envoys of the Elector of Saxony and the Margrave Casimir, resolved to order the apprehension of the monks, but agreed previously to communicate the nuncio’s complaints to Osiander and his colleagues. A committee, with the fanatical Cardinal Salzburg for its president, was entrusted with the execution of it. The danger was imminent: the struggle was on the eve of commencing; and it was with the National Council that it was to commence.

However, the citizens prevented it. While the Diet was deliberating as to what should be done in regard to their ministers, the own council was deliberating as to what should be done in regard to the resolution of the Diet. The decision was, that, if it was attempted, by the strong hand, to carry off the ministers of the town, they would with the strong hand set them at liberty. Such a resolution was significant. The Diet, in astonishment, intimated to the nuncio that it was contrary to law to apprehend the ministers of the free town of Nuremberg without having convicted them of heresy.

Chieregati was deeply moved at this new affront to the omnipotence of the pope. “Very well,” said he proudly to Ferdinand, “do nothing but leave me to act. I will seize these heretical preachers in the pope’s name.” No sooner had the Cardinal Archbishop of Mentz, and the Margrave Casimir been apprised of this strange resolution than they repaired in haste to the legate, and implored him to abandon it. The nuncio showed himself inflexible, declaring that within the bosom of Christendom the pope must be obeyed. The two princes took leave of the legate, saying, “If you persist in your design, we call upon you to give us intimation; for we will quit the town before you have proceeded to lay hands on these preachers.”2 The legate abandoned his project.

Having no longer any hope of succeeding in the way of authority, he resolved to have recourse to other expedients, and with this view communicated to the Diet the intentions and injunctions of the pontiff, which he had hitherto concealed. But honest Adrian, who was a stranger to the world, by his very frankness injured the cause which he had so much at heart. “We know well,” said he, in the resolutions transmitted to his legate, “that for several years many abuses and abominations have existed in the holy city. The contagion has spread from the head into the members; it has descended from the popes to the other ecclesiastics. We desire the reformation of this Roman court whence proceed so many evils; the whole world desires it, and it was with a view to its accomplishment that we were resigned to mount the pontifical throne.” The partisans of Rome blushed for shame when they heard these strange words. Like Pallavicini, they thought the confession too frank. On the contrary, the friends of the Reformation rejoiced on hearing Rome proclaiming her corruption. There was no longer any doubt that Luther was right since the pope himself declared it. The reply of the Diet showed how much the authority of the sovereign pontiff had fallen in the empire. The spirit of Luther seemed to have passed into the hearts of the representatives of the nation. The moment was favourable. Adrian’s ear was open; the emperor was absent; the Diet resolved to collect into one body all the grievances which Germany complained of against Rome, and despatch them to the pope. The legate, alarmed at this determination, supplicated and menaced by turns, but in vain. The secular estates were decided and the ecclesiastical offered no opposition. Eighty-four grievances were specified. The abuses and stratagems of the Roman court in making extortions on Germany,—the scandals and profanations of the clergy,—the irregularities and simony of the ecclesiastical tribunals,—the encroachment on the secular power in enslaving consciences, were exposed with equal frankness and force. The states hinted that human traditions were the source of all this corruption. They concluded thus: “If these grievances are not redressed within a limited time, we will consider other means of escaping from all this oppression and suffering.” Chieregati, foreseeing the fearful detail into which the Diet would enter, quitted Nuremberg in haste, that he might not be the bearer of so disagreeable and insolent a message.

Still, was there not room to apprehend that the Diet might be willing to compensate for their boldness by sacrificing Luther? It was thought so at first; but a spirit of truth and justice had fallen

on this assembly. They, like Luther, demanded that a free council should be convened in the empire, and added, that until it took place the pure gospel only should be preached, and nothing should be printed without the approbation of certain individuals of character and learning. These resolutions enable us to apprehend the immense progress which the Reformation had made since the Diet of Worms; and yet the Saxon envoy, the Chevalier von Feilitsch protested solemnly against any censure which the Diet might pronounce, how moderate soever the terms might be. The decision of the Diet was regarded as a first victory gained by the Reformation, and was to be succeeded by others still more decisive. Even the Swiss, in their mountains, thrilled with joy. “The Roman pontiff is vanquished in Germany,” said Zuinglius: “all that remains is to wrest his arms from him. This is the battle we have now to wage, and it will be the fiercest; but we have Christ as witness of the combat.” Luther declared aloud that God had inspired the edict of the princes.2

There was great wrath in the Vatican among the ministers of the papacy. What! it is not enough to have a pope who disappoints all the hopes of the Romans, and in whose palace there is neither music nor play; must secular princes, moreover, hold a language which Rome detests, and refuse the death of the heretic of Wittemberg!

Adrian himself was very indignant at the proceedings in Germany. It was on the Elector of Saxony he discharged his anger. Never, perhaps, did Rome sound an alarm more energetic, sincere, and even more impressive.

“We have waited long, perhaps too long,” said the pious Adrian, in the brief which he addressed to the Elector, “we were desirous to see if God would not be pleased to visit your soul, and enable you at last to escape from the snares of Satan. But where we hoped to gather grapes, we have gathered only sour grapes. The spirit has blown in vain. Your iniquities have not melted away. Open your eyes then, and see the greatness of your fall!

“If the unity of the Church has been broken, if the simple have been turned aside from the faith which they had sucked at the breasts of their mother, if the churches are deserted, if the people are without priests, and the priests no longer receive the honour which is due to them, if Christians are without Christ—to whom do we owe it, if not to yourself? … If Christian peace has fled the earth, if the world is full of discord, rebellion, robbery, assassination, conflagration, if the cry of war resounds from east to west, if a universal battle is preparing, you, still you are the cause!

“Do you not see that sacrilegious man (Luther), tearing to pieces the images of the saints, and even the sacred cross of Jesus Christ, with his guilty hands, and trampling them under his impure feet?… Do you not see him, in his impious wrath, stirring up the laity to wash their hands in the blood of the priests, and throw down the churches of the Lord?

“What matters it, though the priests whom he attacks be bad priests? Has not the Lord said, ‘Do what they say, and not what they do,’ thus pointing at the honour which is due to them, even when their conduct is culpable.

“Rebellious apostate, he is not ashamed to defile the vessels consecrated to the Lord; he plucks from their sanctuaries the holy virgins consecrated to Christ, and gives them to the devil; he takes the priests of the Lord and gives them up to infamous prostitutes.… Frightful profanation, at which the pagans even would have been horrified, had they seen it in the pontiffs of their idols!”

“Of what punishment, of what suffering, think you, then, we shall deem you worthy?… Take pity on yourself, take pity on your miserable Saxons; for if you are not speedily converted, God will cause his vengeance to descend upon you.

“In the name of God Almighty and of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose representative on the earth I am, I declare to you, that you will be punished in this world, and plunged into the eternal fire in that which is to come. Repent and be converted!… Two swords are suspended over your head, the sword of the empire, and the sword of the popedom.…” The pious Frederick trembled on reading this menacing brief. A short time before he had written to the Emperor to say, that old age and sickness rendered him incapable of occupying himself with these affairs; and the reply given to him was the most arrogant letter that ever a sovereign prince had received. Weakened by age, he cast his eyes on that sword which he had carried to the holy sepulchre in the days of his strength. He began to think it might be necessary to unsheath it in defence of the consciences of his subjects, and that already on the brink of the grave, he would not be able to go down to it in peace. He immediately wrote to Wittemberg for the advice of the fathers of the Reformation.

There, also, troubles and persecutions were foreseen. “What shall I say,” exclaimed the mild Melancthon, “to what side shall I turn? We are overwhelmed with hatred, and the world is transported with rage against us.” Luther, Linck, Melancthon, Bugenhagen, and Amsdorff, consulted together, as to the answer to be returned to the Elector. They all proposed nearly the same answer. Their opinion is very striking.

“No prince,” said they, “can undertake a war without the consent of the people from whose hands he received the government. Now, the people have no wish to fight for the gospel, for they do not believe it. Let the princes, then, not take up arms; they are princes of the nations, in other words, of unbelievers.” Thus it was the impetuous Luther who asked sage Frederick to put up the sword into its sheath. He could not give a better answer to the charge brought against him by the pope, of stirring up the laity to wash their hands in the blood of the clergy. Few characters have been less understood than his. This opinion is dated the 8th February, 1523. Frederick restrained himself. The wrath of the pope soon bore its proper fruits. The princes who had expounded their grievances against Rome, frightened at their boldness, sought to appease him by compliance. Several besides declared that victory must remain with the pontiff of Rome, as he appeared to be the stronger. “In our day,” said Luther, “princes content themselves with saying, three times three make nine, or twice seven make fourteen: the account is correct, the affair will succeed. Then our Lord God rises up and says—‘For how much, then, do you count me?… For a cipher, perhaps?’ Then he turns their calculations upside down, and their accounts prove erroneous.”

CHAP. IV

Persecution—Efforts of Duke George—The Convent of Antwerp—Miltenberg—The three Monks of Antwerp—The Scaffold—Martyrdom at Brussels. The flame breathed forth by the humble and meek Adrian kindled the conflagration. His remonstrance caused an immense sensation throughout Christendom. Persecution, which had for some time been arrested, again commenced. Luther trembled for Germany, and strove to lay the storm. “If the princes,” said he, “set themselves in opposition to the truth, the result will be a tumult, which will destroy princes, magistrates, priests, and people. I tremble at the thought of soon seeing all Germany swim in blood. Let us interpose as a wall and preserve our people from the Lord’s anger. The people are no longer what they have

been hitherto.3 The sword of civil war is suspended over the heads of kings. They wish to destroy Luther, but Luther wishes to save them. Christ lives and reigns: I shall live and reign with him."

These words were without effect: Rome was hastening on towards scaffolds and blood. The Reformation, like Jesus Christ, had not come to bring peace, but a sword. For the purposes of God, persecution was necessary. As objects are hardened by fire, to protect them from the influence of the atmosphere, so a trial by fire was to secure evangelical truth against the influence of the world. But this fire did more: it served, as in the early days of Christianity, to kindle an universal enthusiasm for the cause so virulently persecuted. There is in man, when he begins to know the truth, a holy indignation against injustice and violence. An instinctive feeling, which comes from God, urges him to take part with the oppressed, and, at the same time, the constancy of martyrs raises and captivates him, and hurries him on towards the saving doctrine which gives so much courage and so much peace.

Duke George headed the persecution. But he deemed it a small matter to employ it in his own states. He wished, above all, to see its ravages in electoral Saxony—the focus of heresy—and he did every thing to shake the Elector Frederick, and Duke John. Writing them from Nuremberg, he says, "Merchants just come from Saxony relate, with regard to it, things which are strange and contrary to the honour of God and the saints: the sacrament of the supper is there received with the hand. The bread and wine are consecrated in the vulgar tongue; the blood of Christ is put in ordinary vessels; and, at Eulenberg, to insult the priest, a man even entered the church mounted on an ass!… What is the consequence? The minerals with which God had enriched Saxony begin to be exhausted since the innovating preachings of Luther. Oh! would to God that those who boast of having raised up the gospel in the electorate had rather carried it to Constantinople. Luther has a soft and pleasant voice, but a venomous tail, which stings like that of the scorpion. Let us prepare for the battle. Let us throw these apostate monks and profane priests into chains and that without delay: for our remaining locks as well as beards grow white, and remind us that we have only a few days for action."

Thus wrote Duke George to the Elector, who replied firmly and mildly, that whosoever should do a criminal act within his States should not escape condign punishment; but that matters of conscience must be left to God.

George not being able to persuade Frederick, hastened, in his own neighbourhood, to give proof of his severity against the cause which he hated. He imprisoned the monks and priests who adhered to Luther. He ordered back the students belonging to his states who were studying at the universities tainted with the Reformation, and he ordered all New Testaments in the vulgar tongue to be delivered up to the magistrates. The same course was followed in Austria, Wurtemberg, and the Duchy of Brunswick. But it was in the Low Countries which were under the immediate authority of Charles V, that the persecution burst forth with greatest fury. The Augustin convent at Antwerp was full of monks who had received the truth of the gospel. Several of the friars had resided some time at Wittemberg, and from 1519 preached salvation by grace in their church, with great energy. The prior, James Probst, who was of a fiery temperament, and Melchior Mirisch, who was, on the other hand, distinguished for ability and prudence, were arrested and carried to Brussels, about the end of 1521. Probst, surprised and terrified, recanted. Melchior Mirisch found means of softening his judges, and escaped both condemnation and recantation.

These persecutions did not intimidate the monks who were left in the convent of Antwerp. They continued vigorously to preach the gospel. The people flocked to hear them, and the church of the Augustins proved too small, as that of Wittemberg had done. In October, 1522, the storm which was gathering over their heads burst: the convent was shut up, and the monks were imprisoned and condemned to death. Some made their escape. Some females, forgetting the timidity of their sex, rescued one of them, Henry of Zuphten from his executioners.2 Three young monks, Henry Voes, John Esch, and Lambert Thorn, for some time eluded the search of the inquisitors. All the vessels of the convent were sold, the building was barricaded, and the holy sacrament removed from it as from a place become infamous. Margaret, the regent of the Low Countries, received it solemnly into the church of the holy Virgin. Orders were given, that this heretical monastery should be razed to its foundations; and several citizens and females who had received the gospel with joy were cast into prison.4

Luther was much grieved on learning these tidings. “The cause which we defend,” said he, “is no longer a simple game: it wishes blood: it demands life. The fates of Mirisch and Probst were to be very different. The prudent Mirisch soon became the docile servant of Rome, and the executioner of the imperial decrees against the adherents of the Reformation. On the contrary, Probst, who had escaped from the inquisitors, bewailed his fault, withdrew his recantation, and, at Bruges in Flanders, boldly preached the doctrine which he had abjured. Arrested anew and imprisoned at Brussels, his death seemed inevitable.7 A franciscan, moved with pity, aided his escape, and Probst “saved by a miracle of God,” says Luther, arrived at Wittemberg, where his double deliverance filled the hearts of the friends of the Reformation with joy. The Romish priests were every where in arms. The town of Miltenberg on the Maine, belonging to the Elector-Archbishop of Mentz, was one of the Germanic cities which had received the Word of God with the greatest readiness. The inhabitants were strongly attached to their pastor, John Draco, one of the most enlightened men of his time. He was compelled to retire, but the Roman ecclesiastics quitted at the same time, dreading the popular vengeance. An evangelical deacon alone remained to administer spiritual consolation. At the same time troops from Mentz entered and spread over the town, uttering blasphemies, brandishing their swords, and giving themselves up to debauchery.

Some evangelical Christians fell under their blows, others were seized and thrown into dungeons, the Romish rites were again set up, the reading of the Bible was prohibited, and the inhabitants were forbidden to speak of the gospel, even in their most private intercourse. On the entry of the troops the deacon had taken refuge in the house of a poor widow. He was denounced to the rulers, who sent a soldier to seize him. The humble deacon hearing the soldier, who was seeking his life, advancing with hasty steps, quietly waited for him, and when the door was hastily opened he rose mildly to meet him, and embracing him cordially said, “I salute you, my brother; here I am, plunge your sword into my bosom.”4 The fierce soldier, astonished, let his sword fall from his hand, and would not allow any harm to be done to the pious evangelist.

Meanwhile the inquisition of the Low Countries, thirsting for blood, scoured the country, and searched every where for the young Augustins who had escaped from the persecution of Antwerp. Esch, Voes, and Lambert, were at last discovered, chained, and carried to Brussels. Egmondanus, Hochstratten, and some other inquisitors, summoned them before them. Hochstratten asked, “Do you retract your assertion that the priest has not power to pardon sins, and that pardon belongs to God only?” He next enumerated all the evangelical doctrines, and summoned them to abjure

them. “We recant nothing,” exclaimed Esch and Voes firmly; “we will not abjure the Word of God; we will sooner die for the faith!”

Inquisitor.—“Do you confess that you have been led astray by Luther?” The Young Augustins.—“Just as the apostles were led astray by Jesus Christ.” The Inquisitors.—“We pronounce you heretics, who deserve to be burnt alive; and we hand you over to the secular arm.”

Lambert was silent: he was afraid of death: anguish and doubt agitated his soul. “I ask four days,” said he, in a suppressed tone. He was taken back to prison. As soon as this period was expired, the sacerdotal consecration was formally withdrawn from Esch and Voes, who were handed over to the council of the Regent of the Low Countries. The council handed them over hand-cuffed to the executioner. Hochstratten, and three other inquisitors accompanied them even to the scaffold. When arrived near the scaffold, the young martyrs eyed it calmly; their constancy, their piety, their youth, drew tears even from the inquisitors. When they were bound, the confessors approached: “We ask you once more, Will you receive the Christian faith?” The Martyrs.—“We believe in the Christian Church; but not in your Church.” A half hour passed away: it was hoped that the prospect of so frightful a death would intimidate the youths. But, the only persons who were calm amidst the agitated crowd which covered the public square, they sung psalms, occasionally interrupting this employment to say boldly, “We wish to die for the name of Jesus Christ.”

“Be converted, be converted,” exclaimed the inquisitors, “or you will die in the name of the devil.”—“No,” replied the martyrs: “we will die as Christians for the truth of the gospel.” The pile was set on fire. While the flame ascended slowly, divine peace filled their hearts; and one of them even went so far as to say, “I feel as if reclining on a bed of roses.” The solemn hour had come: death was at hand: the two martyrs, with loud voice, exclaimed, “O Domini Jesu, Fili David, miserere nostri!” “Lord Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us!” Then they began in a solemn voice to repeat the creed. At length the flames reached them; but, before depriving them of life, burned the cords with which they were bound to the pile. One of them taking advantage of his liberty, threw himself on his knees, and thus worshipping his Master,5 with clasped hands, exclaimed,—“Lord Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us!” The fire surrounded their bodies: they sung the Te Deum laudamus. Shortly after their voice was stifled by the flames, and all that remained of them was their ashes. The execution had lasted four hours. It was on the 1st July, 1523, that the first martyrs of the Reformation thus gave their lives for the gospel.

All good men shuddered when they heard of it. The future excited great alarm. “Executions begin,” said Erasmus. “At length,” exclaimed Luther, “Jesus Christ gathers some fruit from our doctrine. He forms new martyrs.” But the joy which Luther felt at the fidelity of these two Christian youths was damped by the thought of Lambert. He was the most learned of the three, and had taken the place of Probst, as preacher, at Antwerp. Agitated in his dungeon, and afraid of death, he was still more alarmed by his conscience, which reproached him with his cowardice, and urged him to confess the gospel. Shortly after having got the better of his fears, he boldly proclaimed the truth, and died like his brethren. A rich harvest was produced from the blood of these martyrs. Brussels turned towards the gospel. “Wherever Aleander raises a scaffold,” said Erasmus, “the effect is the same as if he sowed heretics.”4

“Your bonds are my bonds,” exclaimed Luther, “your dungeons my dungeons, and your scaffolds my scaffolds!” We are all with you and the Lord is at our head.” He then wrote a beautiful poem in

celebration of the death of the young monks. In a short time the poem was sung in Germany and the Netherlands, in town and country, every where producing an enthusiastic feeling for the faith of the martyrs:—

No! their ashes will not die;

Abroad their holy dust will fly, And scatter'd o'er earth's farthest strand, Raise up for God a warlike band.

Satan, by taking life away, May keep them silent for a day; But death has from him victory wrung, And Christ in every clime is sung.

CHAP. V

New Pope—The Legate Campeggio—Diet of Nuremberg—Demand of the Legate—Reply of the Diet—Project of a Secular Council—Alarm and efforts of the Pope—Bavaria—League of Ratisbon—Rigour and Reform—Political Schisms—Opposition—Intrigues of Rome—Edict of Bruges—Rupture.

Adrian would doubtless have persisted in violent courses. The inefficacy of his attempts to arrest the Reformation, his orthodoxy, his zeal, his rigour, his conscience even would have made him a cruel persecutor. Providence put it out of his power. On the 14th September, 1523, he died, and the Romans, delighted at their deliverance from this rigid stranger, decked the gate of his physician with flowers, placing over them the inscription—"To the saviour of his country."

Julius de Medici, cousin of Leo X, succeeded, under the name of Clement VII. From the day of his election, no more was heard of religious reform. The new pope, like many of his predecessors, thought only of upholding the privileges of the papacy, and employing them as the means of extending his power.

Wishing to repair the faults of Adrian, Clement sent to Nuremberg a legate of his own temper, one of the ablest prelates of his court, the Cardinal Campeggio, a man of great experience in business, and acquainted with almost all the princes of Germany. The legate, who had been received with great pomp in the towns of Italy, soon became aware of the change which had taken place in the empire. On entering Augsburg, wishing, according to custom, to give his benediction to the people, he was received with laughter. He held it as pronounced, and entered Nuremberg incognito, without repairing to the Church of St. Sebald, where the clergy were in attendance. No priests went before him in sacerdotal garments, no crucifix was carried before him in state. One would have said it was an ordinary individual walking along the street. Every thing announced to the papacy that its reign was drawing to a close. The Diet had again been opened at Nuremberg, in January, 1524. A storm threatened the national government, which had owed its existence to the firmness of Frederick. The Suabian league, the wealthiest towns of Germany, and, above all, Charles V, had vowed its destruction. It was accused of favouring the new heresy. Accordingly, it was resolved to renew the administration without retaining one of the old members. Frederick, in vexation, immediately quitted Nuremberg. The festival of Easter being at hand, Osiander and the evangelical preachers redoubled their zeal. The former preached openly, that antichrist entered Rome the very day Constantine the Great quitted it to take up his residence at Constantinople. The consecration of branches, and several of the other ceremonies of the festival were omitted;

four thousand persons received the Supper in both kinds, and the Queen of Denmark, the emperor's sister, received it publicly in the same form in the castle. "Ah!" exclaimed the Archduke Ferdinand in a transport of rage, "I wish you were not my sister." "The same womb carried us," replied the queen, "and I will sacrifice every thing to please you except the Word of God."

Campeggio shuddered on beholding so much hardihood, but affecting to despise the laughter of the people, and the sermons of the preachers, trusting to the support of the emperor and the pope, he reminded the Diet of the edict of Worms, and demanded that the Reformation should be suppressed by force. At these words several of the princes and deputies expressed their indignation. "What," said they to Campeggio, "have become of the grievances presented to the pope by the Germanic nation?" The legate, in accordance with his instructions, assumed an air of simple astonishment. "Three copies of that production," said he, "reached Rome, but we had no official communication of it, and I could not believe that a document so unbecoming could have emanated from your lordships." The Diet was indignant at this reply. If this is the way in which their representations are received by the pope, they, too, in their turn, will know how to receive those which he may be pleased to address to them. "The people," said several deputies, "are thirsting for the Word of God, and to force it from them, as ordered by the edict of Worms, were to cause torrents of blood to be shed." The Diet immediately proceeded to prepare an answer to the pope. Not having power to abolish the edict of Worms, they appended a clause which virtually annulled it. "It is necessary," said they, "to conform to it so far as possible." Several States had declared that it was impossible. At the same time evoking the importunate shade of the Councils of Constance and Basle, the Diet demanded that an universal Council of Christendom should be convened in Germany. The friends of the Reformation did not stop here. What was to be expected from a council, which, perhaps, never would be called, and which, in all events, would be composed of bishops from all nations? Would Germany submit its anti-Roman feelings to prelates from Spain, France, England, and Italy? The national government having been overthrown, its place must be supplied by a national assembly to protect the interests of the people. In vain did Hannaart, who had been sent from Spain by Charles V, and all the partisans of Rome and the empire, oppose this project. The majority of the Diet were inflexible. It was agreed that a Diet, a secular assembly, should meet at Spires in November, to regulate all religions questions, and that the States should direct their theologians forthwith to prepare a list of the controverted points, to be submitted to this august assembly. The task was immediately commenced. Each province prepared its document. Never had Rome been threatened with a mightier explosion. Franconia, Brandenburg, Henneberg, Windsheim, Wertheim, Nuremberg, declared, in evangelical terms, against the seven sacraments, the abuses of the mass, the worship of saints, and the supremacy of the pope. "Here," said Luther, "is money of a good stamp." Not one of the questions generally agitated will be passed over in silence in this national council. The majority will obtain general measures.… The unity of Germany, its independence, and Reformation will be secured. At this news the pope could not restrain his anger. What! Is it dared to establish a secular tribunal to decide on religious matters, and that contrary to his authority? If this monstrous resolution is executed, no doubt, Germany is saved, but Rome is destroyed! A consistory was assembled in all haste, and from the agitated state of the senators, it might have been supposed that the Germans were marching on the Capital. "The thing necessary," said Aleander, "is to pluck the electoral hat from the head of Frederick." "The kings of England and Spain," said another cardinal, "must threaten to break off all intercourse with the free towns." At last the congregation decided, that the only means of safety

was to stir up heaven and earth, in order to prevent the meeting at Spires. The pope immediately wrote the emperor. “If I am the first to face the storm, it is not because I am the only person threatened by it, but because I sit at the helm. The rights of the empire are attacked even more than the dignity of the court of Rome.”

While, the pope sent this letter into Castille, he laboured to obtain allies in Germany. He had soon gained one of the most powerful houses of the empire, that of the Dukes of Bavaria. The edict of Worms had not been better observed there than elsewhere, and the evangelical doctrine had made great progress; but, about the end of 1521, the princes of the country having been shaken by Dr. Eck, the Chancellor of the University of Ingolstadt, had approximated to Rome, and issued an edict, by which they enjoined all their subjects to remain faithful to the religion of their fathers. The Bavarian bishops testified their alarm at the proposed encroachment of the secular power; and Eck set out to Rome to petition the pope to extend the influence of the princes. The pope granted every tiling, and even bestowed on the dukes a fifth of the ecclesiastical revenues of their country.

Thus, at a time when the Reformation had not assumed any organised form, Roman Catholicism had recourse to powerful institutions for its support; and Catholic princes, sanctioned by the pope, laid hands on the revenues of the Church long before the Reformation ventured to touch them. What, then, must be thought of the charges which the Roman Catholics have so often made in this respect?

Clement VII could count upon the Dukes of Bavaria in quelling the formidable assembly of Spires. Shortly after, the Archduke Ferdinand, the Archbishop of Salzburg, and several other princes were also gained. But this did not satisfy Campeggio. Germany must be divided into two camps. Germans must be set against Germans.

During his stay at Stuttgard, the legate, in concert with Ferdinand, had sketched the plan of a league against the Reformation. “There is every thing to be feared,” said he, “from an assembly, where the popular voice will be heard. The Diet of Spires may destroy Rome and save Wittemberg. Let us close our ranks and arrange our order of battle.” Ratisbon was fixed on as the place of rendezvous.

Notwithstanding of the jealousy between the houses of Bavaria and Austria, Campeggio succeeded, in the end of June, 1524, in bringing about a meeting in this town, between the Dukes of Bavaria and the Archduke Ferdinand. The Archbishop of Salzburg, and the bishops of Trent and Ratisbon, joined them. The bishops of Spires, Bamberg, Augsburg, Strasburg, Basle, Constance, Frei singen, Passau, and Brixen, were represented by deputies. The legate opened the meeting, with an energetic picture of the dangers to which the Reformation exposed the princes and clergy. “Let us extirpate heresy, and save the Church,” exclaimed he. The conferences continued during fifteen days in the town-house of Ratisbon. A grand ball, which was kept up during a whole night, enlivened this first Catholic assembly, held by the papacy against the rising Reformation. The measures intended to destroy the heretics were afterwards resolved. The princes and bishops engaged to execute the edicts of Worms and Nuremberg—to allow no change in public worship—to give no toleration within their States to any married ecclesiastic—to recall all the students belonging to their States who might be at Wittemberg, and to employ all the means in their power for the extirpation of heresy. In regard to difficult passages of Scripture, preachers

were enjoined to confine themselves to the interpretation given by the fathers of the Latin Church, viz., Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory. Not daring, in presence of the Reformation, to re-establish the authority of the schoolmen, they contented themselves with laying the first foundations of Roman orthodoxy. On the other hand, not being able to shut their eyes to the scandals and corrupt manners of the priests, they agreed on a scheme of reform, in which they agreed to pay regard to those German grievances in which the court of Rome were least concerned. Priests were forbidden to engage in trade, to haunt taverns, frequent dances, and engage over the bottle in discussing articles of faith.

Such was the result of the confederation of Ratisbon. While taking up arms against the Reformation, Rome conceded somewhat to it. In these resolutions may be observed the first influence of the Reformation of the sixteenth century, in effecting an internal revival in catholicism. The gospel cannot display its power without compelling its opponents in some way to imitate it. Emser had opposed a translation of the Bible to the translation of Luther, and Eck Common Places to those of Melancthon; and now Rome opposed to the Reformation those partial attempts at reform to which we owe modern catholicism. But all these acts of Rome were in reality only subtile expedients to escape from the danger which threatened her, branches plucked, it is true, from the tree of the Reformation, but planted in a soil in which they could only die. Life was wanting, and always will be wanting, to similar attempts.

We are here presented with another fact. At Ratisbon the Roman party formed the first league which destroyed German unity. It was in the camp of the pope that the signal for battle was given. Ratisbon was the cradle of that schism—that political disruption of Germany, which still, in our day, so many Germans deplore. The national assembly of Spires might, by sanctioning and generalising the Reformation of the Church, have secured the unity of the empire. The separatist conventicle of Ratisbon rent the nation for ever into two parties.

Meanwhile the projects of Campeggio did not at first succeed so well as had been imagined. Few princes responded to the call. The most decided opponents of Luther, Duke George of Saxony, the Elector Joachim of Brandenburg, the ecclesiastical electors, and the imperial towns took no part in it. The feeling was, that the pope’s legate was forming in Germany a Roman party against the nation itself. The popular sympathies counterbalanced the religious antipathies, and the Reformation of Ratisbon soon became the object of popular derision. But the first step was taken: the example was given. It was thought that there would afterwards be little difficulty in strengthening and extending the Roman league. Those who still hesitated would find it impossible to avoid being hurried along by the progress of events. To the legate Campeggio belongs the honour of having discovered the mine which brought the Germanic liberties within a finger’s breadth of destruction. Thenceforth Luther’s cause ceased to be entirely of a religious nature; the dispute of the monk of Wittemberg held a place in the politics of Europe. Luther is going to be eclipsed, and Charles V, the pope, and the princes will be the principal characters on the theatre where the great drama of the sixteenth century is to be performed. The assembly of Spires, however, was still in perspective: it might repair the mischief which Campeggio had done at Ratisbon. Rome, therefore, used every effort to prevent it. “What!” said the deputies of the pope, not only to Charles V, but to his ally Henry VIII and the princes of Christendom, “What! do those proud Germans pretend to decide questions of faith in a national assembly! Apparently, kings, the imperial majesty, all Christendom, the whole world will be obliged to stoop to their decrees.” The

moment was well chosen for influencing the emperor. The war between this prince and Francis I was at its height. Pescara and the Constable de Bourbon had quitted Italy in May, and, having entered France, laid siege to Marseilles. The pope, who did not regard this attack with a friendly eye, was able to make a powerful diversion in the rear of the imperial army. Charles, who must have been afraid to displease him, did not hesitate, but at once sacrificed the independence of the emperor for the favour of Rome and the success of his struggle with France. On the 15th July, Charles, at Burgos in Castille, issued an edict in which, in an imperious and impassioned tone, he declared “that it belonged to the pope alone to assemble a council—to the emperor alone to ask it: that the meeting fixed to take place at Spires could not, and would not, be tolerated: that it was strange in the German nation to undertake a work which all the other nations of the world, even with the pope, would not be entitled to do; that the proper course was to hasten the execution of the decree of Worms against the new Mahomet.”

Thus, from Spain and Italy proceeded the stroke which arrested the progress of the gospel in Germany. This did not satisfy Charles. In 1519 he had offered to Duke John, the Elector’s brother, to marry his sister, the Archduchess Catherine, to John Frederick, the duke’s son, and heir to the electorate. But was not this the house of Saxony which maintained the principles of religious and political independence in Saxony, and which Charles hated? He determined to break entirely with the troublesome and criminal representative of evangelical and national ideas, and gave his sister in marriage to John 3, king of Portugal. Frederick who, in 1519, had been indifferent to the overtures of the king of Spain, was able, in 1524, to suppress the indignation he felt at the emperor’s conduct, but Duke John keenly expressed what he felt at the blow thus inflicted.

Thus the two hostile camps which were long to rend the empire became more distinctly marked.

CHAP. VI

Persecution—Gaspard Tauber—A. Bookseller—Cruelties in Wurtemberg, Salzburg, Bavaria, Pomerania—Henry of Zuphten. The Romish party did not stop here. The alliance of Ratisbon was not to be a mere form. It was necessary that it should be sealed with blood. Ferdinand and Campeggio went down the Danube together from Ratisbon to Vienna, and, during the voyage, gave to each other promises of cruelty. Persecution immediately commenced in the Austrian states. A citizen of Venice, named Gaspard Tauber, had circulated the works of Luther, and had himself written against the invocation of saints, purgatory, and transubstantiation. Being thrown into prison, he was summoned by the judges, as well theologians as lawyers, to retract his errors. It was thought that he was willing to do so, and every thing was prepared to give the people of Vienna the solemn spectacle. On the birth-day of Mary, two desks were erected in the cemetery of St. Stephen, the one for the leader of the choir, who was to chant in celebration of the heretic’s repentance, and the other for Tauber himself. The form of recantation was put into his hand:2 the people, the singers, and the priests were waiting in silence. Whether Tauber had not given any promise, or whether, at the moment of abjuration, his faith suddenly revived with new force, he exclaimed, “I am not convinced, and I appeal to the Holy Roman Empire.” The ecclesiastics, the choir, and the people were amazed. But Tauber continued to demand death sooner than deny the gospel. He was beheaded, and his body was burnt. His courage made a lasting impression on the citizens of Vienna. At Bude, in Hungary, an evangelical bookseller, named John, had circulated the New Testament, and Luther’s writings, throughout the country. He was tied to a stake, then all

his books were gradually piled around him, and set on fire. John displayed unshaken courage, exclaiming, from the midst of the flames, that he was happy in suffering for the Lord. “Blood succeeds blood,” exclaimed Luther, on hearing of his death, “but this noble blood which Rome is pleased to shed, will at length suffocate the pope with all his kingdoms and all his kings.”5

Fanaticism became more and more inflamed: evangelical ministers were driven from their churches; magistrates were banished: sometimes dreadful executions took place. In Wurtemberg an inquisitor named Reichler, caused the Lutherans, and especially their preachers, to be hung on trees. Barbarians were seen coolly nailing ministers to the stake by the tongue, so that the poor sufferers in struggling or tearing themselves from the wood to which they were fastened, to regain their liberty were horribly mutilated, and thus were made the instruments of depriving themselves of that gift of speech, which they had long employed in preaching the gospel. The same persecutions were carried on in the other States of the Catholic League. An evangelical minister of Salzburg was on the way to prison, where he would have ended his days. While the officers, who had him in charge, were drinking in an inn on the road, two peasants, moved with compassion, eluded their vigilance, and delivered the pastor. The wrath of the arch ishop was inflamed against the poor youths; and, without any legal process, he gave orders that they should be beheaded. They were led away secretly, at an early hour, beyond the town. When they arrived at the spot where they were to suffer, the executioner himself hesitated: “for,” said he, “they have not been tried.” “Do what I command you,” sharply replied the commissary of the archbishop, “and leave the responsibility to the prince!” And the heads of the young deliverers immediately fell under the sword.

Persecution raged especially in the States of the Dukes of Bavaria: the priests were deposed, and the nobles banished from their castles; informers were employed over the whole country; distrust and terror reigned in all hearts. A magistrate, named Bernard Fichtel, was journeying to Nuremberg on the affairs of the duke; on the highway he fell in with Francis Burkhard, professor at Ingolstadt, a friend of Dr. Eck. Burkhard accosted him, and they travelled on together. After supper, the professor began to speak of religion. Fichtel, being aware of his companion, reminded him that the new edict prohibited such conversation. “Between us,” replied Burkhard, “there is no room for fear.” Fichtel then said, “I do not believe that this edict can ever be executed,” and expressed himself in an equivocal manner on the subject of purgatory. He added that it was a horrible thing to inflict death for religious opinions. At these words Burkhard could not restrain himself. “What more just,” exclaimed he, “than to cut off the heads of all these villains of Lutherans!” He, however, parted with Fichtel on good terms, but hastened to inform upon him. Fichtel was cast into prison; and the poor man, who had never thought of becoming a martyr, and whose convictions were not deep, only escaped death by the disgrace of a recantation. There was now no safety any where: not even in the bosom of a friend. But the death which Fichtel escaped, others met. In vain was it to preach the gospel only in secret. The dukes persecuted it in the shade, in concealment, under the roofs of houses, in secret retreats, in the fields.

“The cross and persecution,” said Luther, “reign in Bavaria: these ferocious beasts carry it with fury.”

Even the north of Germany was not sheltered from these cruelties. Bogislas, Duke of Pomerania, having died, his son, who had been brought up at the court of Duke George, persecuted the

gospel; Suaren and Knipstraw were obliged to save themselves by flight. But it was in Holstein that one of the strongest instances of fanaticism was given.

Henry of Zuphten, who had escaped, as we have seen, from the convent of Antwerp, was preaching the gospel at Bremen; Nicholas Boye, pastor at Mehldorf, in the Dittmarches, and several pious persons in that district having invited him to preach the gospel to them, he complied. Forthwith, the prior of the Dominican, and the vicar of the official of Hamburg, consulted together. “If he preaches, and the people listen to him,” said they, “all is lost!” The prior, after a wakeful night, got up early in the morning, and proceeded to the wild and sterile moor, where the forty-eight regents of the country usually assembled. “The monk of Bremen is arrived,” said he to them, “to ruin all the Dittmarches.” These forty-eight simple and ignorant men, who were assured that they would acquire great renown by ridding the world of the heretical monk, resolved to put him to death without having either seen or heard him.

It was Saturday, and the prior wishing to prevent Henry from preaching on Sunday, arrived at midnight at the house of pastor Boye, with the letter of the forty-eight regents. “If it is God’s will that I die in the Dittmarches,” said Henry Zuphten, “heaven is as near there as any where else. I shall preach.”

He mounted the pulpit and preached powerfully. The hearers, touched and inflamed by his eloquence, had scarcely left the church when the prior put into their hands a letter from the forty-eight regents, forbidding them to allow the monk to preach. They immediately sent their representatives to the heath, and, after long debate, the Dittmarches agreed that, considering their complete ignorance of the matter, they would wait till Easter. But the enraged prior waited on some of the regents, and anew inflamed their zeal. “We will write him,” said they. “Beware of doing so,” replied the prior; “if he begins to speak, nothing can be done to him. He must be seized during the night, and burnt before he can open his mouth.”

It was so resolved. The day after the feast of the Conception, after it was night, the Ave Maria was tolled. At this signal, all the peasants of the neighbouring villages assembled, to the number of five hundred, and their leaders having caused five hogsheads of Hamburgh beer to be pierced, in this way inspired them with great courage. Midnight struck as they reached Mehldorf. The peasants were armed; the monks carried torches; the whole proceeded, without order, uttering furious cries. On arriving at the village, they kept a profound silence lest Henry should escape. The doors of the curacy were suddenly burst open, and the drunken peasants rushed in, striking at every thing that came in their way. They threw down vases, kettles, goblets, clothes, snatched up whatever gold or silver they could find, and pouncing on the poor pastor, struck him, crying, “Kill him! kill him!” They then threw him into the mire. But Henry was their object. They pulled him from his bed, bound his hands behind his back, and dragged him after them. “What brought you here?” they asked. Henry having answered mildly, they exclaimed. “Away! away! if we listen to him we will become heretics like himself.” He had been hurried naked over the ice and snow, his feet were bleeding, and he begged they would put him on horseback. “Good sooth,” replied they in derision, “we are going to furnish heretics with horses! Get along!” And they continued to drag him till they reached the heath. A woman, who was at the door of her house, as the poor servant of God passed, began to cry. “Good woman,” said Henry to her, “weep not for me.” The bailie pronounced his condemnation. Then one of the furious men who had brought him, struck the servant of Jesus

Christ over the head with a sword: another struck him with a club. Next a poor monk was brought to receive his confession. “Brother,” said Henry to him, “did I ever do you any harm?” “No,” replied the monk. “Then I have nothing to confess to you.” The monk withdrew in confusion. Many ineffectual attempts were made to light the pile. In this way the martyr stood for two hours before these furious peasants—calm, and with his eyes raised towards heaven. As they were binding him to throw him on the pile, he began to make confession of his faith. “Burn first,” said a peasant, striking him on the mouth with his fist, “and you will speak after.” He was thrown down, but fell on the side of the pile. John Holme, seizing a club, struck him on the breast, and he lay stretched out dead on the burning faggots. “Such is the true history of the sufferings of the holy martyr, Henry of Zuphten.”

CHAP. VII

Divisions—Lord’s Supper—Two Extremes—Carlstadt—Luther—Mysticism of the Anabaptists—Carlstadt at Orlamund—Mission of Luther—Interview at dinner—Conference of Orlamund—Carlstadt banished. The Reformation, while the Romish party were every where drawing the sword against it, was undergoing new developments. It is not at Zurich or Geneva, but at Wittemberg, the centre of the Lutheran revival, that we must trace the beginnings of that Reformed Church, of which Calvin has become the greatest doctor. These two great families slept in the same cradle. The union ought also to have crowned their age. But the question of the Supper having been once raised, Luther violently rejected the reformed element, and found himself and his Church in an exclusive Lutheranism. The chagrin which he felt at this rival doctrine deprived him somewhat of the good humour which was natural to him, and gave him a spirit of distrust, a habitual dissatisfaction and irritation, which he had not shown previously.

It was between two old friends—between the champions, who, at Leipsic, had fought together against Rome—between Carlstadt and Luther that this dispute arose. Their attachment to contrary doctrines proceeded, both in the one and in the other, from estimable feelings. In fact, there are two extremes in religion; the one consists in materialising, the other in spiritualising every thing. The former is the extreme of Rome—the latter that of the mystics. Religion, like man himself, consists of body and soul; the pure idealists, as well as the materialists, are equally wrong both in religion and in philosophy.

Such is the grand discussion which lies hid under the dispute as to the Supper. While, on a superficial glance, we see only a paltry quarrel about words, a more profound examination discovers in it one of the most important controversies which can occupy the human mind. The Reformers thus form two great divisions; but each of them carries with it a portion of the truth. Luther, with his adherents, mean to combat an exaggerated spiritualism. Carlstadt, and the reformed, attack a hateful materialism. Each opposes the error which he deems most fatal, and, in opposing it, perhaps goes beyond the truth. But no matter; each of them is true in its general tendency, and though belonging to different armies, these two distinguished doctors are ranged under one common banner—that of Jesus Christ, who alone is the truth in its fullest extent.

Carlstadt thought that nothing could be more hurtful to true piety than confidence in external ceremonies, and in a certain magical influence in the sacraments. Rome had said, that external participation in the sacrament of the Supper was sufficient to save, and this principle had materialised religion. Carlstadt saw nothing better fitted to spiritualise it anew than to deny all

bodily presence of Christ; and he taught that the sacred repast was merely a pledge to believers of their redemption. On this subject Luther took quite an opposite direction. He had at the outset maintained the view which has just been indicated. In his writing on the mass, which appeared in 1520, he said, “I can every day enjoy the sacraments, if only I remember the word and promise of Christ, and with it nourish and strengthen my faith.” Neither Carlstadt, Zuinglius, nor Calvin, has ever said any thing stronger. It even seems that, at this period, the idea often occurred to him, that a symbolical explanation of the Supper would be the most powerful weapon completely to overthrow the whole popish system; for in 1525 he says that, five years before, he had fought many hard battles in defence of this doctrine; and that any one who could have proved to him that there was nothing but bread and wine in the Supper, would have done him an immense service. But new circumstances occurred, which engaged him in an opposition, sometimes passionate, to these very views to which he had so nearly approximated. The fanaticism of the Anabaptists explain the direction which Luther then took. These enthusiasts were not satisfied with setting little value on what they called the external word, in other words, the Bible, and pretending to special revelations of the Holy Spirit; they also went the length of despising the sacrament of the Supper as something external, and to speak of internal communion as alone true. Thenceforth, in all the attempts which were made to explain the doctrine of the Supper in a symbolical manner, Luther saw nothing but the danger of shaking the authority of the Holy Scriptures, of substituting arbitrary allegories for their true meaning, of spiritualising every thing in religion, making it consist not in divine graces but in human impressions; and thus substituting for true Christianity a mysticism, a theosophy, a fanaticism, which would inevitably become its tomb. It must be acknowledged that, but for the powerful opposition of Luther, the mystical, enthusiastic, and subjective tendency, would then, in all probability, have made rapid progress, and trampled under foot all the blessings which the Reformation was destined to diffuse in the world.

Carlstadt, impatient at not being able freely to develope his faith at Wittemberg, urged by his conscience to combat a system, which, according to him, “lowered the death of Christ, and annihilated his righteousness,” resolved “to make an outbreak for the love of poor deluded Christendom.” He quitted Wittemberg in the beginning of 1524, without notice either to the university or the chapter, and repaired to the little town of Orlamund, whose church was under his superintendence. He caused the vicar to be deposed, and himself to be appointed pastor in his stead; and in spite of the chapter, the university, and the Elector, fixed himself in this new post.

Here he soon disseminated his doctrine. “It is impossible,” said he, “to find in the real presence any advantage which does not flow from faith without it; it is therefore useless.” In explaining the words of Christ in the institution of the supper, he had recourse to an interpretation which the Reformed Churches have not received. In the Leipsic discussion, Luther had explained the words, “Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church,” by separating the two clauses, and applying the latter to the person of the Saviour. “In the same way,” said Carlstadt, “take, eat, refers to the bread; but, this is my body, refers to Jesus Christ, who then showed himself, and intimated by the symbolical sign of the breaking of bread, that the body was soon to be destroyed.”

Carlstadt did not stop here. No sooner had he broke loose from the tutelage of Luther, than he felt a revival of his zeal against images. His imprudent harangues, his enthusiastic expressions, must easily, in these times of fermentation, have inflamed men’s minds. The people, thinking they heard a second Elijah, broke the idols of Baal. This zeal reached the surrounding villages. The Elector

wished to interfere; but the peasants answered him, that it was necessary to obey God rather than man. The prince resolved to send Luther to Orlamund to establish peace. Luther saw in Carlstadt a man devoured by a love of renown, a fanatic, who would allow himself to be carried the length of making war on Jesus Christ himself. Frederick might, perhaps, have made a wiser choice. Luther set out, and Carlstadt saw his troublesome rival once more disarranging his plans of reform, and arresting his course.

Jena is on the road to Orlamund. On arriving in this town, on the 23rd August, Luther mounted the pulpit at seven in the morning, and spoke for an hour and a half in presence of a numerous audience, against fanaticism, rebellion, the destruction of images, and contempt of the real presence, in particular, inveighing strongly against the innovations of Orlamund. He did not name Carlstadt, but every one could see that he had him in view.

Carlstadt, whether by chance or design, was at Jena, and among the number of Luther's hearers. He hesitated not to apply for an explanation of the discourse. Luther was at dinner with the prior of Wittemberg, the burgomaster, the clerk, and pastor of Jena, and several officers in the service of the emperor and the margrave, when a letter from Carlstadt was put into his hands, asking an interview; he handed it to those next him, and replied to the bearer, "If Doctor Carlstadt chooses to come to me, well; if he does not choose to do so, I will dispense with it." Carlstadt arrived. His arrival produced a strong sensation in the party. The greater part eager to see the two lions at close quarters, ceased dining and stared, while the more timid grew pale with fear.

Carlstadt, on the invitation of Luther, sat down opposite to him, and then said, "Doctor, in your sermon to-day you put me in the same class with those who preach rebellion and assassination. I say that charge is false."

Luther.—"I did not name you, but since you have felt hit, good and well."

After a moment of silence, Carlstadt resumed.

"I engage to prove, that, on the doctrine of the Sacrament, you have contradicted yourself, and that no man, since the days of the apostles, has taught it so purely as I have done."

Luther.—"Write—debate!"

Carlstadt.—"I challenge you to a public discussion at Wittemberg or Erfurth, if you procure me a safe-conduct."

Luther.—"Fear nothing doctor."

Carlstadt.—"You bind me hand and foot, and when you have put it out of my power to defend myself, you strike me."

There was a pause. Luther resumed.

"Write against me, but publicly, not in secret."

Carlstadt.—"If I thought you were speaking in earnest I would do so."

Luther.—"Do it, and I'll give you a florin."

Carlstadt.—“Give it, I accept it.” At these words, Luther put his hand in his pocket and drew out a gold florin, and giving it to Carlstadt, said, “Take it, and attack me valiantly.”

Carlstadt, holding the gold florin in his hand, turned to the party, and said, “Dear friends, this is my arrhals, a pledge that I am authorised to write against Doctor Luther; I take you all to witness.”

Then bending the florin that it might be known again, he put it into his purse, and shook hands with Luther. Luther drank his health, and Carlstadt returned it. “The more vigorous your attacks, the more agreeable they will be,” resumed Luther.

“If I fail,” replied Carlstadt, “it will be my own fault.”

They again shook hands, and Carlstadt returned home.

Thus, says a biographer, in the same way as from a single spark often arises the conflagration of a whole forest, from a small beginning arose a great division in the Church.

Luther proceeded to Orlamund, and arrived there ill prepared by the scene at Jena. He assembled the council and the church, and said, “Neither the Elector nor the university is willing to recognise Carlstadt as your pastor.” “If Carlstadt is not our pastor,” replied the treasurer of the Town Council, “St. Paul is a false teacher, and your books are lies, for we have chosen him.” As he said these words, Carlstadt entered. Some of the persons near Luther motioned to him to be seated, but Carlstadt, going straight up to Luther, said to him, “Dear doctor, allow me to give you welcome?

Luther.—“You are my enemy. You have my gold florin as a pledge.”

Carlstadt.—“I mean to continue your enemy, so long as you continue the enemy of God and of his truth.”

Luther.—“Begone; I cannot allow you to appear here.”

Carlstadt.—“This is a public meeting. If your cause is just, why fear me?”

Luther (to his servant.)—“Make ready, make ready; I have nothing to do with Carlstadt, and since he will not leave, I start.” At the same time Luther rose up. Then Carlstadt withdrew.

After a momentary pause, Luther resumed, “Prove by Scripture that it is right to destroy images.” A Counsellor.—“Doctor, you will grant that Moses knew the commandment of God,” (opening a Bible.) “Very well; here are his words, ‘Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness.’”

Luther.—“This passage refers only to the images of idols. If I hang up a crucifix in my chamber without worshipping it, what harm can it do me?” A Shoemaker.—“I have often taken off my hat to an image which happened to be in my room or on the road; this is an act of idolatry which robs God of the glory due to him alone.”

Luther.—“It will be necessary then, because of abuse, to destroy females, and throw our wine into the street.”

Another Member of the Church.—“No: they are creatures of God, which we are not enjoined to destroy.”

After the conference had lasted some time longer, Luther and his people got up into their carriage, astonished at what had passed, and without having succeeded in convincing the inhabitants, who also claimed for themselves the right of freely interpreting and expounding the Scriptures. There was great agitation in Orlamund; the people insulted Luther, some even cried to him, “Begone, in the devil’s name. May you break your neck before you get out of our town.” Never yet had the Reformer been subjected to such humbling treatment.

He repaired to Kale, the pastor of which had also embraced the doctrines of Carlstadt. Here he resolved to preach. On entering the pulpit he found the remains of a crucifix in it. At first he was deeply moved; but immediately recovering himself, he gathered the fragments into a corner of the pulpit, and delivered a sermon which contained no allusion to the circumstance. “I wished, by contempt,” said he afterwards, “to have my revenge of the devil.” The nearer the Elector approached his end, the more he seemed to fear that the Reformation was going too far. He gave orders that Carlstadt should be deprived of his situations, and that he should quit not only Orlamund, but the electoral States. In vain did the church of this town interpose in his behalf; in vain did they ask that he should be allowed to reside among them as a citizen, and give an occasional sermon; in vain did they represent that they valued the truth of God more than the whole world, and even than a thousand worlds, had God created a thousand. Frederick was inflexible; he even went the length of refusing the money necessary for his journey. Luther was no party to this harshness of the prince; it was foreign to his nature, and this he showed at an after period. But Carlstadt regarded him as the author of his misfortune, and filled Germany with his complaints and lamentations. He wrote a farewell letter to his friends of Orlamund. This letter, for the reading of which the bells were rung, and which was heard by the assembled Church amidst tears,4 was signed, “Andrew Bodenstein, banished by Luther without having been either heard or convicted by him.”

It is painful to see this bitter quarrel between two who had formerly been friends, and were both excellent men. A feeling of sadness was experienced by all the disciples of the Reformation. What was to become of it, now that its most illustrious defenders had come to blows? Luther saw these fears, and tried to calm them. “Let us fight,” said he, “as fighting for another. The cause is God’s, the management God’s, the glory God’s. He will fight and conquer without us. Let that which must fall, fall. Let that which is to stand, stand. It is not our own cause that is in question, nor is it our own glory that we seek.”

Carlstadt retired to Strasburg, where he published several productions. “He was thoroughly acquainted,” says Dr. Scheur, “with Latin, Greek, and Hebrew;” Luther acknowledged the superiority of his erudition. Of an elevated spirit, he sacrificed his reputation, his rank, his country, his bread even, to his convictions. At a later period he retired to Switzerland. It was there he ought to have broached his doctrines; his independence required the free atmosphere in which an Œcolampadius and a Zuinglius breathed. His doctrine soon attracted almost as much attention as Luther’s Theses had obtained. Switzerland seemed to be gained, and with it Bucer and Capito.

Luther’s indignation being now at its height, he published one of the most powerful, but also one of the most violent, of his controversial writings, viz.: his book “Against the Heavenly Prophets.”

Thus the Reformation, attacked by the pope, attacked by the emperor, attacked by the princes, began also to tear itself to pieces. It appeared on the point of sinking under so many disasters, and

certainly must have sunk if it had only been a work of man. But, when on the point of sinking, it arose with new energy.

CHAPTER VIII

Progress—Resistance to the Leaguers—Meeting between Philip of Hesse and Melancthon—The Landgrave gained over to the Gospel—The Palatinate, Luneburg, Holstein—The Grand Master at Wittemberg. The Catholic League of Ratisbon and the persecutions which followed it, produced a powerful re-action in the population of Germany. The Germans were not disposed to allow themselves to be deprived of that word of God which had at length been restored to them. To the orders of Charles V, to the bulls of the pope, to the menaces and scaffolds of Ferdinand, and the other Catholic princes, their reply was, “We shall keep it.”

Scarcely had the leaguers left Ratisbon, when the deputies of the towns, whose bishops had taken part in this alliance, feeling surprised and indignant, met at Spires, and resolved that their preachers should, in spite of the bishops, preach the gospel—and the gospel alone—conformably to the doctrine of the prophets and apostles. They next proposed to present a firm and unanimous remonstrance, to the National Assembly.

It is true, the imperial letter, dated from Burgos, arrived, and disturbed their thoughts. Nevertheless, towards the end of the year, the deputies of these towns, and several of the nobles, met at Ulm, and took an oath of mutual defence, in the event of attack. Thus, to the camp formed by Austria, Bavaria, and the bishops, the free towns immediately opposed another, which raised the standard of the gospel and national freedom.

While the free towns thus took the advanced posts of the Reformation, several princes were gained to the cause. Early in June, 1524, Melancthon was returning on horseback from a visit to his mother, accompanied by Camerarins and some other friends, when, near Frankfort, he fell in with a brilliant train. It was Philip of Hesse, who, three years before, had visited Luther at Worms, and who was now on his way to the games of Heidelberg, which were to be attended by all the princes of Germany.

Thus Providence brought Philip successively into contact with the two Reformers. It was known that the distinguished doctor had gone on a visit to his native district, and one of the landgrave’s knights said to him, “I believe it is Melancthon.” The young prince immediately put spurs to his horse, and coming up to the doctor, said to him, “Are you Philip?” “I am,” replied the scholar, somewhat intimidated, and preparing respectfully to dismount. “Stay,” said the prince, “turn round and come and spend the night with me, there are some subjects on which I wish to have a conversation with you; fear nothing.” “What could I fear from such a prince as you?” replied the doctor. “Ah! Ah!” said the landgrave laughing, “were I to take you away and give you up to Campeggio, he would not be sorry, I believe.” The two Philips rode along side of each other. The prince put questions, and Melancthon answered. The landgrave was delighted with the clear and striking views presented to him. Melancthon at last begging he might be allowed to continue his journey, Philip of Hesse had difficulty in parting with him. “On one condition,” said he, “and it is, that, on your return, you will write carefully on the subjects which we have been discussing, and send me the production.” Melancthon promised. “Go, then,” said Philip, “and pass freely through my states.”

Melancthon drew up, with his usual talent, “An Abridgement of the Revived Doctrine of Christianity.” This concise and powerful production made a decisive impression on the landgrave, who, shortly after his return from the Heidelberg games, without actually joining the free towns, issued an ordinance, in which, opposing the league of Ratisbon, he commanded that the gospel should be preached in all its purity. He himself embraced it with the energy of his character. “Sooner,” exclaimed he, “abandon my body, and my life, my states, and my subjects, than the Word of God.” A monk, the friar minor Ferber, perceiving the prince’s leaning to the Reformation, wrote him a letter, reproaching him with his conduct, and conjuring him to remain faithful to Rome. “I resolve,” replied Philip, “to remain faithful to the ancient doctrine, but such as is contained in Scripture.” Then he proved, with great force, that man is justified only by faith. The monk, astonished, held his peace.3 The landgrave was called “Melancthon’s Scholar.”

Other princes took a similar direction. The Elector Palatine, refused to lend himself to any persecution. The Duke of Luneburg, nephew to the Elector of Saxony, began to reform his states, and the King of Denmark ordered, that in Schleswig and Holstein, every man should be free to worship God according to his conscience. The Reformation made a still more important conquest. A prince, the important effects of whose conversion began at this time to turn away from Rome. One day, towards the end of June, shortly after Melancthon’s return to Wittemberg, Luther’s chamber was entered by the grand master of the Teutonic Order, Albert, Margrave of Brandenburg. The chief of the chevalier monks of Germany, who was then in possession of Prussia, had gone to the Diet of Nuremberg to invoke the aid of the empire against Poland. He returned with a contrite heart. On the one hand, the sermons of Osiander and the reading of the gospel had convinced him that his condition of monk was contrary to the Word of God; on the other, the breaking up of the national government had taken away all hope of the assistance which he had gone to claim. What then will he do?…. The Saxon Counsellor Planitz, with whom he quitted Nuremberg, asked him to visit the Reformer. “What think you of the rule of my order?” asked the disturbed and agitated prince at Luther. Luther hesitated not: he saw that a conduct conformable to the gospel could alone save Prussia also. “Implore,” said he to the grand master, “implore the help of God; reject the absurd and incongruous rule of your order; put an end to this abominable and truly hermaphrodite supremacy, which is neither religious nor secular. Shun false and seek true chastity—marry, and in place of this nameless monster found a lawful empire.”2 These words pointed out distinctly to the soul of the grand master a situation of which he had till then only had an imperfect glimpse. A smile lighted up his features, but he had too much prudence to declare himself; he held his peace. Melancthon, who was present, spoke in similar terms as Luther, and the prince departed for his states, leaving the Reformers in the belief that the seed which they had sown in his heart would one day bear fruit.

Thus Charles V and the pope had opposed the national assembly of Spires, from a fear that the Word of God might gain all who attended it; but the Word of God could not be bound. It was prohibited to be preached in one of the halls of a town in the Low Palatinate. Well! it had its revenge by diffusing itself throughout all the provinces. It aroused the people, enlightened princes, and, throughout the empire, displayed that divine power of which neither bulls nor ordinances could ever deprive it.

CHAPTER IX

Reformers—The Church of All Saints—Fall of the Mass—Literature—Christian Schools—Science offered to the Laity—Arts—Moral Religion, Esthetical Religion—Music—Poetry—Painting.

While the people and their rulers were thus pressing toward the light the Reformers were striving to produce a general revival, to penetrate the whole mass with the principles of Christianity. The form of worship first engaged their attention. The time fixed by the Reformer on his return from the Wartburg had arrived. “Now,” said he, “that men’s hearts have been strengthened by divine grace, the scandals which polluted the Lord’s kindgom must be made to disappear, and something must be attempted in the name of Jesus.” He demanded that the communion should be dispensed in both kinds, that every thing should be retrenched from the Supper which tended to convert it into a sacrifice, that Christian assemblies should never meet without hearing the Word preached,2 that the faithful, or at least priests and students, should meet every morning at four or five o′clock to read the Old, and every evening, at five or six, to read the New Testament,—that on Sunday, the whole Church should assemble, morning and afternoon, and that the leading object in worship should be the preaching of the Word. In particular, the church of All Saints, at Wittemberg, aroused his indignation. There 9,901 masses were annually celebrated, and 35,570 pounds of wax burnt. So says Seckendorf. Luther called it a “sacrilegious Tophet.” “There are,” said he, “only three or four lazy bellies who still worship this shameful Mammon, and did I not restrain the people, this house of all Saints, or rather all devils, would long ago have made a noise in the world, the like of which was never heard.” The struggle commenced around this church. It was like one of those ancient sanctuaries of Paganism in Egypt, Gaul, and Germany, which behoved to fall, in order that Christianity might be established.

Luther, desiring that the mass should be abolished in this cathedral, on the 1st March, 1523, addressed a first petition on the subject to the chapter; and, on the 11th July, addressed a second. The canons, in reply, urged the orders of the Elector, “What have we to do here,” replied Luther, “with orders from the prince? He is a secular prince. His business is with the sword, and not with the ministry of the gospel.” Luther here clearly draws the distinction between the Church and the State. “There is only one sacrifice,” says he again, “which wipes away sins, Christ, who once offered himself, and we have faith in him, not by works or by sacrifices, but solely by faith in the Word of God.” The Elector, who felt his end drawing near, was repugnant to new reforms. But new urgency was joined to that of Luther. Jonas, provost of the cathedral, thus addressed the Elector:—“It is time to act. A manifestation of the gospel, so bright as that we now have, usually lasts no longer than a ray of the sun. Let us, therefore, make haste.” This letter of Jonas not having changed the Elector’s views, Luther lost patience. He thought the moment to give the fatal blow had arrived, and addressed a threatening letter to the chapter. “I beg you amicably, and solicit you seriously, to put an end to all this sectarian worship. If you refuse, you shall, by God’s help, receive the recompense which you deserve. I say this for your guidance; and I demand a distinct and immediate answer—yes, or no—before next Sunday, that I may know how to act. God grant you grace to follow his light.

Martin Luther,

“Thursday, 8th Dec., 1524.”

“Preacher at Wittemberg.”

At the same time the rector, two burgomasters, and ten counsellors, repaired to the dean, and solicited him, in the name of the university, the council, and the community of Wittemberg, “to abolish the great and horrible impiety committed against the divine majesty in the mass.” The chapter was obliged to surrender. It declared that, enlightened by the Holy Word of God, it acknowledged the abuses to which its attention had been directed, and published a new order of service, which began to be observed on Christmas, 1524.

Thus fell the mass in this famous sanctuary, where it had so long withstood the reiterated assaults of the Reformers. The Elector Frederick, suffering under an attack of the gout, and drawing near his end, was not able, notwithstanding all his efforts, to prevent this great act of reformation. He saw the divine will in it, and yielded. The fall of the Roman observances in the church of All Saints, hastened their end in many of the churches of Christendom. There was every where the same resistance, but there was also the same victory. In vain did priests, and in many places even princes, attempt to throw obstacles in the way; they failed. But it was not worship merely that the Reformation had to change. She, at an early period, placed the school by the side of the Church; and these two great institutions, mighty in regenerating nations, were equally revived by her. The Reformation, when she first appeared in the world, was intimately allied with literature; and this alliance she forgot not in the day of her triumph.

Christianity is not a mere development of Judaism. It does not try, as the papacy would fain do, to confine men again in the swaddling bands of external ordinances and human doctrines. Christianity is a new creation; it seizes man within, and transforms him in his inmost heart; so that he no longer has any need of rules from other men. Through the help of God, he can of himself and by himself, discern what is true, and do what is good. To conduct human nature to this state of independence which Christ has purchased for it, and deliver it from the nonage in which Rome had so long kept it, the Reformation behoved to develope the whole man, renewing his heart and his will by the Word of God, and enlightening his understanding by the study of sacred and profane literature.

Luther understood this. He felt that, in order to secure the Reformation, it was necessary to work upon youth, to improve schools, and propagate in Christendom the knowledge necessary to a profound study of the Holy Scriptures. Accordingly, this was one of the objects of his life. He felt this, particularly at the period which we have now reached, and applied to the counsellors of all the towns of Germany for the foundation of Christian schools. “Dear Sirs,” said he to them, “so much money is annually expended on muskets, roads, and embankments, why should not a little be spent in giving poor youth one or two schoolmasters? God is knocking at our door; happy are we if we open to him. The divine Word now abounds. O! dear Germans, buy, buy, while the market is before your houses. The Word of God and its grace are like a wave which ebbs and goes away. It was with the Jews, but it has passed; and they no longer have it. Paul brought it to Greece, but it passed away; and Greece now belongs to the Turk. It came to Rome and Latium, but thence too it has passed; and Rome now has the pope. Do not suppose you are to have this word for ever. The contempt shown for it will chase it away. Wherefore, let him who would have it seize it, and keep it.

“Give attention to children,” continues he, still addressing magistrates, “for many parents are like ostriches; they grow callous towards their young, and contented with having laid the egg, give themselves no farther trouble. The prosperity of a town consists, not merely in collecting great

treasures, building strong walls, and erecting fine houses, and possessing brilliant armies. If fools come and pounce upon it, its misfortunes will then only be the greater. The true good of a town, its safety and strength, is to have a great number of learned, serious, honest, and well-educated citizens. And whose fault is it, that at present the number of these is so small, if it is not yours, O, magistrates! who have allowed youth to grow up like grass in the forest?"

Luther particularly insists on the study of literature and languages. "What use is there, it is asked, in learning Greek and Hebrew? We can read the Bible in German." "Without languages," replies he, "we should not have received the gospel.… Languages are the sheath which contains the sword of the Spirit; they are the casket which contains the jewels, the vessel which contains the liquor; and as the gospel expresses it, they are the baskets in which are preserved the bread and fishes to feed the people. If we abandon languages, the result will be, that we shall not only lose the gospel, but also become unable to speak and write in Latin or in German. So soon as the cultivation of them ceases, the gospel is in decay, and ready to fall under the power of the pope. But now that languages are again ill honour, they diffuse so much light, that the whole world is astonished; and every one must confess that our gospel is almost as pure as that of the Apostles themselves. The holy fathers, in ancient times, were often mistaken, because they did not know languages; in our days, some, as the Vaudois of Piedmont, do not think languages useful; but though their doctrine is good, they often want the true meaning of the sacred text, they find themselves unarmed against error, and I much fear their faith will not remain pure.2 Had not languages made me sure of the meaning of the Word, I might have been a pious monk, and have peaceably preached the truth in the obscurity of a cloister; but I should have allowed the pope, sophists, and their antichristian empire to stand."

Luther does not confine himself to the education of ecclesiastics; he is desirous that knowledge should no longer be monopolised by the Church; he proposes to give a share of it to the laity, who, till now, had been disinherited. He proposes that libraries should be established, and that they should not be confined to a collection of the editions of the schoolmen and fathers of the Church, but should also contain the works of orators and poets, even though they should be pagans, as well as works on the fine arts, law, medicine, and history. "These writings serve," says he, "to explain the works and miracles of God." This work of Luther is one of the most important which the Reformation has produced. It takes science out of the hands of the priests, who had monopolised it, like those of Egypt in ancient times, and restores it to all. From the impulse thus given by the Reformation, have proceeded the greatest developments of modern times. Those laymen, literary and learned, who now assail the Reformation, forget that they themselves are its work, and that without it they should still be placed, like ignorant children, under the rod of the clergy. The Reformation discerned the intimate union subsisting between all the sciences; she was aware that, as all science comes from God, so it leads back to God. Her wish was that all should learn, and that they should learn all. "Those who despise profane literature," said Melancthon, "have no higher respect for sacred theology. Their contempt is only a pretext by which they try to hide their sloth." The Reformation was not contented with giving a strong impulse to literature, she also gave a new impulse to the arts. Protestantism is often charged with being inimical to the arts, and many Protestants readily admit the charge. We will not enquire whether or not the Reformation ought to prevail; we will content ourselves with observing, that impartial history does not confirm the fact on which this accusation rests. Let Roman Catholicism plume itself on being more favourable to the

arts than Protestantism—all very well. Paganism was still more favourable to them; and Protestantism places her fame on a different ground. There are religions in which the esthetical tendencies of man occupy a more important place than his moral nature. Christian sentiment is expressed, not by the productions of the fine arts, but by the actings of Christian life. Every sect that abandons the moral tendency of Christianity, thereby loses even its right to the Christian name. Rome has not abandoned this essential characteristic, but Protestantism preserves it in much greater purity. Its glory consists in the thorough investigation of whatever belongs to the moral being, and in judging of religions acts, not from their external beauty and the manner in which they strike the imagination, but according to their internal worth and the relation which they bear to the conscience; so that, if the papacy is above all, as a distinguished writer has proved, an esthetical religion, Protestantism is, above all, a moral religion.

Still, although the Reformation addressed man primarily as a moral being, it addressed the whole man. We have just seen how it spoke to his understanding, and what it did for literature: it spoke also to his sensibility, his imagination, and contributed to the development of the arts. The Church was no longer composed merely of priests and monks; it was the assembly of the faithful. All were to take part in worship; and the hymns of the clergy were to be succeeded by those of the people. Accordingly, in translating the Psalms, Luther's object was to adapt them to the singing of the church. In this way a taste for music was diffused over the whole country.

"After theology," said Luther, "it is to music I give the first place and the highest honour. A schoolmaster," he again said, must be able to sing; without it I will not even look at him."

One day, when some fine pieces were sung to him, he rapturously exclaimed, "If our Lord God has conferred such admirable gifts on this earth, which is only an obscure recess, what will it be in the eternal life, in a state of perfection!" … From the days of Luther the people sung; the Bible inspired their hymns; and the impulse given at the period of the Reformation, at a later period, produced those magnificent oratorios which seem to be the complete perfection of the art. The same impulse was given to poetry. It was impossible, in celebrating the praises of God, to be confined to mere translations of the ancient hymns. Luther's own soul, and that of several of his contemporaries, raised by faith to the sublimest thoughts, and excited to enthusiasm by the battles and perils which incessantly threatened the rising Church; inspired, in short, by the practical genius of the Old and the faith of the New Testament, soon gave utterance to their feelings in religious poems, in which poetry and music united and blended their holiest inspirations. Thus the sixteenth century beheld the revival of that divine poetry, which, from the very first, had solaced the sufferings of the martyrs. We have already seen how, in 1523, Luther employed it in celebrating the martyrs of Brussels: other sons of the Reformation followed in his steps. Hymns were multiplied, and spreading rapidly among the people, contributed powerfully to awaken them from their slumbers. It was in this same year that Hans Sach sung The Nightingale of Wittemberg. The doctrine which, for four centuries had reigned in the Church, he regards as the moonlight, during which men wandered in the desert. The nightingale now announces the sun, and singing to the light of day, rises above the clouds of the morning.

While lyric poetry thus arose from the highest inspirations of the Reformation, satire and the drama, under the pen of Hutten, Mürner, and Manuel attacked the most crying abuses.

It is to the Reformation that the great poets of England, Germany, and perhaps France, owe their lofty flight. Of all the arts, painting is the one on which the Reformation had the least influence. Nevertheless it was renewed, and in a manner sanctified, by the universal movement which then agitated all the powers of the human mind. The great master of this period, Lucas Cranach, fixed his residence at Wittemberg, where he lived on intimate terms with Luther, and became the painter of the Reformation. We have seen how he represented the contrasts between Christ and antichrist (the pope), and thus gained a place among the most powerful instruments of the revolution which was transforming the nations. As soon as he had acquired new convictions, he consecrated his chaste pencil to drawings in harmony with Christian belief, and shed on groups of children, blessed by the Saviour, the grace with which he had previously adorned legendary saints, male and female. Albert Durer was also won by the preaching of the Word, and his genius took a new flight. His master-pieces date from this period. From the features with which, from that period, he painted the Evangelists and Apostles, we see that the Bible was restored to the people, and that from it the painter drew a depth, a force, a life, and grandeur, which he never could have found in himself.

Still, however, it must be acknowledged, painting is the art whose religious influence is most liable to strong and well-founded objections. Poetry and music came from heaven, and will again be found in heaven; but painting is constantly seen united to grave immoralities or fatal errors. After studying history, or seeing Italy, we are made aware that humanity has little to expect from that art. But whatever may be thought of this exception which we have thought it our duty to make, our general remark holds true. The Reformation of Germany, while making its first address to the moral nature of man, has given to the arts an impulse which they could not have received from Roman Catholicism.

Thus, there was a universal progress in literature and the arts, in spirituality of worship, in the souls of nations and their rulers. But this magnificent harmony, which the gospel every where produced in the days of its revival, was about to be disturbed. The song of the Nightingale of Wittemberg was to be interrupted by the hissing of the storm and the roaring of the lions. A cloud, in one moment, spread over Germany, and a lovely day was succeeded by a dismal night.

CHAP. X

Political ferment—Luther against Revolution—Thomas Munzer—Agitation—The Black Forest—The Twelve Articles—Luther’s Advice—Helfenstein—Advance of the peasants—Advance of the imperial army—Defeat of the peasants—Cruelty of the princes. A political fermentation, one very different from that which the gospel produces, had long been working in the empire. Borne down by civil and ecclesiastical oppression, bound in several countries to the baronial lands, and sold along with them, the people threatened to rise in fury, and burst their chains. This agitation had been manifested long before the Reformation by several symptoms, and thenceforth religion had been blended with political elements. It was impossible, in the 16th century, to separate these two principles so intimately associated in the life of nations. In Holland, at the end of the previous century, the peasantry had risen up, placing on their colours, as a kind of armorial bearings, bread and cheese, the two great blessings of these poor people. “The shoe alliance” had shown itself in the neighbourhood of Spires, in 1503. In 1513, it had been renewed at Brisgau, and been encouraged by priests. In 1514, Wurtemburg had witnessed “the league of poor Conrad,” the

object of which was to maintain, by revolt, “the rights of God.” In 1515, Carinthia and Hungary had been the theatre of dreadful commotions. These seditions had been suppressed by torrents of blood; but no redress had been given to the people. A political reform was, therefore, no less necessary than a religious reform. The people were entitled to it; but it must be confessed they were not ripe for enjoying it.

Since the Reformation had commenced these popular agitations had been renewed; the minds of men had been absorbed by other thoughts. Luther, whose piercing eye discerned the condition of his countrymen, had, even from the height of the Wartburg, addressed grave exhortations for the purpose of keeping down agitation.

“Revolt,” he had said, “does not produce the amelioration which is desired, and God condemns it. What is revolt but taking vengeance into our own hands? The devil is labouring to excite those who embrace the gospel to revolt in order to bring it into reproach, but those who have perfectly understood my doctrine do not revolt.”

Every thing gave reason to fear that the popular indignation could not be much longer restrained. The government which Frederick of Saxony had had so much difficulty in forming, and which possessed the confidence of the nation, was dissolved. The emperor, whose energy might, perhaps, have supplied the want of this national administration, was absent; the princes, whose union had always constituted the strength of Germany, were divided; and the new declaration of Charles V against Luther, in taking away all hope of future harmony, deprived the Reformer of a portion of the moral authority, by which, in 1522, he had succeeded in calming the storm. The principal embankments which had hitherto confined the torrent were broken down, and nothing could restrain its fury. The religious movement did not produce the political agitation, but in several places it allowed itself to be borne along by its tumultuous waves. Perhaps even more should be conceded; it is, perhaps, necessary to admit that the movement given to the people by the Reformation gave new force to the discontent which was prevailing in the nation. The violence of Luther’s writings, the intrepidity of his actions and his words, the harsh truths which he told, not only to the pope and the prelates, but also to princes themselves, must have contributed to inflame minds already in a state of effervescence. Accordingly Erasmus did not omit to tell him, “We are now gathering the fruits that you have sown.” Moreover, the gladsome truths of the gospel now at length brought fully to light, stirred all hearts, and filled them with hope and expectation. But many unregenerate souls remained unprepared by Christian repentance, faith, and freedom. They wished indeed to reject the yoke of the pope, but they wished not to accept the yoke of Christ. Accordingly, when princes devoted to Rome, sought, in their wrath, to stifle the Reformation, though true Christians knew how to bear these cruel persecutions with patience, the multitude fumed and broke out. Seeing their wishes pent in in one direction, they procured an outlet for them in another. “Why,” said they, “when the Church calls all men to a noble freedom, why should slavery be perpetuated in the state? Why, when the gospel speaks only of meekness, should government reign only by force?” Unhappily at the time when religious reform was received with equal joy by princes and people, political reform, on the contrary, was opposed by the most powerful portion of the nation; while the former had the gospel for its rule and support, the latter had no other principles than violence and despotism. Accordingly, while the one kept within the limits of truth, the other, like an impetuous torrent, quickly overlept these, and also those of justice. But to attempt not to see an indirect influence of the Reformation in the disturbances which broke

out in the empire, were, in my opinion, to give proof of partiality. By means of religious discussions a fire had been kindled in Germany, and it was impossible that some sparks should not fly off from it, of a nature fitted to inflame the passions of the people. The pretensions of some fanatics to heavenly inspiration, augmented the evil. While the Reformation had constantly appealed from the pretended authority of the Church to the real authority of Scripture, these enthusiasts rejected not only the authority of the Church, but also that of Scripture. They spoke only of an internal word, of a revelation of God within, and overlooking the natural corruption of their heart, they gave themselves up to all the intoxication of spiritual pride, and imagined themselves to be saints.

“To them,” says Luther, “the Holy Scripture was only a dead letter, and all began to cry Spirit! Spirit! But, assuredly, I will not follow where their spirit leads them. May God, in his mercy, preserve me from a Church where there are none but saints. I wish to remain where the humble, feeble, and sickly are—who know and feel their sin, and who, without ceasing, sigh and cry to God from the bottom of their heart to obtain his consolation and assistance.” These words of Luther are profound, and mark the change which was taking place in his views as to the nature of the Church. They show, at the same time, how much the religious principles of the revolters were opposed to the Reformation. The most remarkable of these enthusiasts was Thomas Munzer. He was not without talents, had read the Bible, was zealous, and might have been able to do good, if he had known how to collect his agitated thoughts, and find peace of heart. But not knowing himself, and being void of true humility, he was possessed with a desire to reform the world, and, like all enthusiasts, forgot that reform ought to begin at himself. Mystical treatises which he had read in his youth had given a false direction to his mind. He first appeared at Zwickau, quitted Wittemberg after Luther’s return, discontented with the inferior part he was playing there, and became pastor of the small town of Alstädt in Thuringia. Here he could not long remain quiet. He accused the Reformers of founding, by their attachment to the letter, a new papism, and of founding churches which were not pure and holy.

“Luther,” said he, “has delivered consciences from the yoke of the pope; but he has left them in a carnal freedom, and has not carried them forward in spirit toward God.”

He thought himself called by God to remedy this great evil. According to him the revelations of the Spirit were the means by which his reform was to be accomplished. “He who possesses this Spirit,” said he, “has true faith, even though he should never in his life see the Holy Scriptures. Pagans and Turks are more proper to receive it than many Christians who call us enthusiasts.” When he thus spoke he had Luther in his eye. “In order to receive this Spirit,” added he, “it is necessary to mortify the body, wear shabby clothes, let the beard grow, have a gloomy air, keep silence, frequent retired spots, and beg God to give us a sign of his favour. Then God will come and speak with us as he once did with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Did He not do so, it would not be worth men’s while to pay any attention to him.2 I have received a commission from God to assemble his elect in a holy and eternal alliance.” The agitation and ferment working in men’s minds, were only too favourable to the propagation of their enthusiastic ideas. Man loves the marvellous, and every thing that flatters his pride. Münzer, having drawn a portion of his flock into his views, abolished church music, and all ceremonies. He maintained, that, to obey princes, “devoid of reason,” was to serve God and Mammon. Then, marching at the head of his parishioners to a chapel near Alstadt, and which was resorted to by pilgrims from all quarters, he threw it down. Obliged, after this exploit, to flee the country, he wandered up and down in

Germany, and went as far as Switzerland, carrying with him, and communicating to all who would listen to him, the plan of a universal revolution. He every where found men's minds prepared; he threw gunpowder on burning coals, and a violent explosion was the immediate result.

Luther, who had repelled the warlike enterprises of Sickingen, could not allow himself to be carried away by the tumultuous movements of the peasantry. Happily, for social order, the gospel had him in charge; for what might have happened had he given his vast influence to their camp?… He always firmly maintained the distinction between spiritual and secular; he ceased not to repeat, that what Christ emancipated by his Word was immortal souls, and, while with one hand he attacked the authority of the Church, he with the other equally maintained the power of princes. "A Christian," said he, "must endure death a hundred times sooner than give the least countenance to the revolt of the peasants." In a letter to the Elector, he says, "What particularly delights me is, that these enthusiasts make a boast to every one who listens to them, that they are not of us. They say it is the Spirit that prompts them. But I reply,—It is a bad spirit that bears no other fruit than the pillaging of convents and churches: the greatest robbers on the face of the earth can do as much." At the same time Luther, who wished others to have the same liberty that he desired for himself, dissuaded the prince from rigorous measures. "Let them preach as they will, and against whomsoever they see it good; for it is necessary that the Word of God itself should lead the van and give them battle. If theirs is the true Spirit, he will not fear our severities: if ours is the true, he will not fear their violence. Let us leave the spirits to struggle and fight with each other. Some perhaps will be seduced, as there is no battle without wounds; but he who fights faithfully will be crowned. Nevertheless, if they will take the sword, your highness must forbid it, and order them to quit the country." The revolt broke out in the districts of the Black Forest, and the sources of the Danube, which had so often been agitated by popular commotions. On the 19th July, 1524, some Thurgovian peasants rose up against the Abbot of Reichenau, who refused to give them an evangelical preacher. Thousands were soon assembled around the little town of Tengen, for the rescue of an ecclesiastic who was kept prisoner. The revolt spread with inconceivable rapidity from Suabia, as far as the countries of the Rhine, Franconia, Thuringia, and Saxony. All these countries had risen in January, 1525.

Towards the end of this month, the peasants published a declaration in twelve articles, in which they demanded liberty to choose their own pastors, the abolition of small tithes and villanage, the taxes on heritage, liberty of hunting, fishing, and cutting wood. Each demand was supported by a quotation from Scripture. "It we are mistaken," said they in conclusion, "Luther can put us right by Scripture." The opinions of the Wittemberg theologians were asked. Luther and Melancthon gave theirs—each separately. They are very characteristic. Melancthon, who regarded every kind of disturbance as a great crime, oversteps his usual gentleness, and cannot give strong enough expression to his indignation. The peasants are criminals, against whom he invokes all laws, human and divine. If friendly conference proves ineffectual, the magistrates must pursue them as robbers and assassins. "However," he adds, (and it was indeed necessary that some one trait should remind us of Melancthon) let there be pity shown to orphans in inflicting the punishment of death."

Luther's opinion of the revolt was the same as Melancthon's; but he had a heart which beat at the wretchedness of the people. He, on this occasion, showed a lofty impartiality, and told the truth frankly to both parties. He first addressed the princes, and more especially the bishops:

“You,” said he to them, “are the cause of the revolt. Your invectives against the gospel, your culpable oppression of the little ones of the Church, have brought the people to despair. It is not the peasants, dear lords, who rise up against you; it is God himself who wishes to oppose your fury. The peasants are only the instruments whom he is employing to humble you. Think not to escape the punishment which he is preparing for you. Even should you succeed in destroying all these peasants, God would of the very stones raise up new ones to chastise your pride. If I wished revenge, I would laugh in my sleeve—look on while the peasants act—or even stimulate their rage; but God forbid!… Dear lords, for the love of God, lay aside your indignation, treat the poor people with discretion as you would persons drunk and bewildered. Suppress these commotions by gentleness, lest a conflagration break forth, and set all Germany in a blaze. Among their twelve articles are some which are just and equitable.” This exordium was fitted to gain the confidence of the peasants, and make them listen patiently to the truths which he had to tell them. He represented to them that a great part of their demands were doubtless well founded; but that to revolt was to act like pagans—that the duty of Christians was patience, and not war—and that, if they continued to rise in the name of the gospel, against the gospel itself, he would regard them as more dangerous enemies than the pope. “The pope and the emperor,” continued he, “have united against me; but the more the pope and the emperor have stormed, the greater the progress which the gospel has made.… Why so? Because I have never drawn the sword, nor called for vengeance—because I have not had recourse either to tumult or revolt. I have committed all to God, and awaited his strong hand. It is neither with the sword nor the musket that Christians fight, but with suffering and the cross. Christ, their captain, did not handle the sword: he hung upon the tree.” But in vain did Luther give utterance to these most Christian expressions. The people were too much excited by the fanatical discourses of the leaders of the revolt to lend their ear as formerly to the Reformer. “He is playing the hypocrite,” they said: “he is flattering the princes. He has waged war with the pope, and yet he would have us to submit to our oppressors!” The revolt, instead of being calmed, became more formidable. At Weinsberg, Count Louis of Helfenstein, and seventy men under his command, were condemned to death. A party of peasants held their pikes before them in close phalanx; others chased and drove back the count and his soldiers on this bristling forest. The wife of the unhappy Helfenstein, a natural daughter of the Emperor Maximilian, with an infant of two years old in her arms, fell on her knees and, with loud cries, implored the life of her husband, and endeavoured to stop the murderous band; a young boy, who had been in the service of the count, and had joined the rebels, capered near him, playing the dead march on a fife, as if the victims had been dancing to it. All perished: the child was wounded in its mother’s arms, and she herself was thrown on a dung cart, and so taken to Heilbronn. On hearing of these cruelties, a cry of horror was heard among the friends of the Reformation, and a fearful struggle took place in Luther’s feeling heart. On the one hand the peasants, deriding his representations, pretended to revelations from heaven, made an impious use of the threatenings of the Old Testament, proclaimed the equality of ranks, and a community of goods, defended their cause with fire and sword, and had recourse to barbarous executions. On the other hand, the enemies of the Reformation asked the Reformer with a malignant smile, if he did not know that it was easier to kindle a tire than to extinguish it? Indignant at their excesses—alarmed at the thought that they might arrest the progress of the gospel—Luther no longer hesitated; all delicacy was at an end; he broke loose against the rebels with all the force of his character, and, perhaps, exceeded the just limits within which he ought to have confined himself.

“The peasants,” said he, “commit these horrible sins towards God and towards men, and, by so doing, deserve the death both of the body and the soul. First, they revolt against the magistrates to whom they have sworn fidelity. Next, they rob and pillage convents and castles. Last of all, they cloak their crimes with the mantle of the gospel. If you do not put a mad dog to death you will perish yourself, and the whole country with you. He who is slain in fighting for magistrates will be a true martyr, if he has fought with a good conscience. Luther afterwards gives an energetic picture of the culpable violence of the peasantry in compelling simple and peaceful men to enter their alliance, and so drag them into the same condemnation. He then adds, “Wherefore, dear lords, aid, save, deliver, have pity on these poor people. Strike, stab, and kill who can.… If you die you cannot have a happier end, for you die in the service of God, and to save your neighbour from hell.”

Neither gentleness nor force could arrest the popular torrent. It was no longer for divine service that the church bell sounded; whenever its grave and solemn sounds were heard rising from the plains, it was the tocsin, and all rushed to arms. The people of the Black Forest had mustered around John Muller of Bulgenbach. Of an imposing appearance, clothed in a red mantle, and with a red bonnet on his head, this leader paraded proudly from village to village, followed by his peasants. Behind him on a car, adorned with ribbons and branches of trees, waved the three-coloured flag, black, red, and white, the signal of revolt. A herald, decked in the same colours, read the twelve articles, and called on the people to join the movement. Whoever refused was excluded from the community. This procession, which was at first peaceable, soon became more restless. “The barons,” they exclaimed, “must be forced to join the alliance.” And, to bring them to this, they pillaged their granaries, emptied their wine cellars, fished the baronial ponds, laid the castles of those nobles who resisted them in ruins, and burned convents. Resistance inflamed the rage of these rude men. Equality no longer satisfied them: they would have blood; and vowed that every man who wore a spur should bite the dust. On the approach of the peasants, the towns, unable to resist, opened their gates and joined the rebels. In every place they entered, pictures were torn, and crucifixes broken to pieces. Armed females ran up and down the streets threatening the monks When defeated in one place, they again mustered in another, and defied the most formidable armies and bodies of troops. A committee of peasants was established at Heilbronn. The Counts of Lowenstein being captured, were clothed in a white frock, with a white baton in their hands, and made to swear to the twelve articles. Brother George, and you brother Albert, said a tinker to the Counts of Hohenloe, who had repaired to the camp, “Swear to conduct us as brethren; for you also are now peasants: you are no longer lords.” The equality of ranks, that dream of all democrats, was established in aristocratic Germany. A great number of nobles, some from fear and others from ambition, now joined the revolters. The famous Götz of Berlichingen, when he saw his people refuse to obey him, wished to fly to the Elector of Saxony; but his wife, who was in childbed, in order to Keep him near her concealed the Elector’s reply. Götz, almost hemmed in, was obliged to place himself at the head of the rebellious host. On the 7th May, the peasants entered Wurtzburg, and were received by the citizens with acclamation. The troops of the princes and knights of Suabia, who had assembled in this town, evacuated it, and retired in haste to the citadel, the last rampart of the nobility. But the movement had already extended to other parts of Germany. Spires, the Palatinate, Alsace, and Hesse, acknowledged the twelve articles, and the peasants threatened Bavaria, Westphalia, the Tyrol, Saxony, and Lorraine. The Margrave of Baden, having refused the articles, was obliged to flee. The coadjutor of Fuldah

acceded to them, laughing. The small towns said that they had no lances to oppose to the revolters. Mentz, Treves, and Frankfort, obtained the liberties which they claimed. An immense revolution is taking place throughout the empire. The ecclesiastical and secular taxes which oppress the peasants, must be suppressed, the property of the clergy will be secularised to compensate the princes, and provide for the wants of the empire; imposts must be abolished, with the exception of a tribute, which will be paid every ten years; the governing power, recognised by the New Testament, will alone subsist; all other princes will cease to reign; sixty-four free tribunals will be established, and men of all classes will have seats in them; all states will return to their primitive destination; ecclesiastics will, henceforth, only be pastors of churches; princes and knights will only be defenders of the weak; unity of weights and measures will be introduced; and only one species of money will be coined throughout the empire.

Meanwhile, the princes had recovered from their first stupor, and George of Truchsess, general-in-chief of the imperial army, was advancing from the direction of the Lake of Constance. He defeated the peasants on the 2nd of May, at Beblingen, marched on the town of Weinsberg, where the unfortunate Helfenstein had perished, and burnt and razed it, ordering the ruins to be kept up as an eternal memorial of the treachery of the inhabitants. At Fürfeld, he joined the Elector Palatine and the Elector of Treves, and they all advanced in a body towards Franconia.

Frauenburg, the citadel of Wurtzburg, still held out for the princes, and the grand army of the peasants continued under its walls. On learning the approach of Truchsess, they determined on the assault, and on the 15th of May, at nine in the evening, the trumpets sounded, the three-coloured flag was unfurled, and the peasants rushed to the attack, uttering fearful cries. Sebastian of Rotenhan, one of the warmest friends of the Reformation, had the command of the castle. He had placed the defence on a formidable footing, and when he exhorted the soldiers courageously to repel the assault, all had sworn to do so, by raising three of their fingers to heaven. The most dreadful combat then took place. The energy and despair of the peasants was answered by the fortress with petards, showers of sulphur and boiling pitch, and discharges of artillery. The peasants thus struck by invisible enemies, were for a moment surprised, but their fury soon increased. Night advanced, and the struggle was prolonged. The fortress, lighted up by thousands of battle fires, seemed, amid the darkness, like a proud giant, vomiting flames, and single-handed amidst the cannons' roar struggling for the safety of the empire, against the ferocious valour of savage hordes. Two hours after midnight the peasants, having failed in all their efforts, at last withdrew.

They proposed to negotiate either with the garrison or with Truchsess, who was advancing at the head of his army. But this was to abandon their position. Violence and victory alone could save them. After some irresolution, they determined to set out and meet the imperial army; but the artillery and the cavalry made frightful ravages in their ranks. At Königshofen and next at Engelstadt these poor creatures were completely defeated. The princes, nobles, and bishops, abusing their victory, displayed unheard-of cruelty. The prisoners were hung up along the roads. The bishop of Wurtzburg, who had fled, returned, and going over his whole diocese with executioners, watered it at once with the blood of rebels, and the blood of the peaceable friends of the Word of God. Götz of Berlichingen was condemned to perpetual imprisonment. The Margrave Casimir, of Anspach, put out the eyes of eighty-five peasants, who had sworn that they would never again look upon this prince, and cast upon the world this band of blind men, who went up

and down holding each other by the hand, feeling their way, stumbling and begging their bread. The wretched boy, who had played the death march of Helfenstein, was chained to a stake, a fire was kindled around him, and the knights stood by laughing at his horrible contortions. The ritual was every where established in its ancient form. The most flourishing and populous countries of the empire now presented to the traveller only heaps of carcases and smoking ruins. Fifty thousand men had perished, and the people almost every where lost the little freedom which they had hitherto enjoyed. Such was, in the south of Germany, the fearful end of this revolt.

CHAPTER XI

Munzer at Mulhausen—Appeal to the People—March of the Princes—End of the Revolt—Influence of the Reformers—Sufferings—Change. But the evil was not confined to the south and west of Germany. Münzer, after traversing part of Switzerland, Alsace, and Suabia, had again directed his steps towards Saxony. Some citizens of Mulhausen invited him into their town, and appointed him their pastor. The town council having resisted, Münzer deposed it, and named another, composed of his friends, with himself at their head. Entertaining the utmost contempt for the Christ, “sweet as honey whom Luther preached,” he determined to have recourse to the most energetic measures. “It is necessary,” said he, “to make all the nations of Canaan perish by the sword, as Joshua did.” He established a community of goods, and pillaged the convents. Luther, 11th April, 1525, wrote to Amsdorff, “Münzer is King and Emperor of Mulhausen, and no longer merely its pastor.” The poor no longer worked; if any one needed cloth or corn, he went and asked it of some rich neighbour; if refused, the poor man seized it; if the rich man resisted, he was hung. Mulhausen being an independent town, Münzer was able to exercise his power without opposition almost for a year. The revolt of the south of Germany led him to believe that it was time to extend his new kingdom. He caused cannon of large calibre to be cast in the Franciscan convent, and endeavoured to make a rise among the peasants and the miners of Mansfeld. “How long will you still sleep?” said he to them in a fanatical proclamation, “rise and fight for the Lord! It is time. France, Germany, and Italy are on the march. On! on! on! Dran! dran! dran! Pay no regard to the distress of the ungodly. They will beseech you like children, but remain pitiless. Dran! dran! dran! The fire burns. Let your sword be always reeking with blood. Dran! dran! dran! Work while it is day.” The letter was signed, “Münzer, servant of God against the ungodly.” The country people, eager for plunder, flocked to his banners. Every where, in the districts of Mansfeld, Stolberg, Schwarzberg, in Hesse, the Duchy of Brunswick, the peasants rose. The convents of Michelstein, Ilsenburg, Walkenried, Rossleben, and many others near the Hartz, or in the plains of Thuringia, were completely pillaged. At Reinhardsbrunn, which Luther had visited, the tombs of the ancient landgraves were profaned, and the library destroyed.

Terror spread far and wide. At Wittemberg even some uneasiness was felt. These teachers who had not feared either the emperor or the pope, saw themselves obliged to tremble before a mad man. They were constantly looking out for the news, and counted every step of the revolters. “We are here,” said Melancthon, “in great danger. If Münzer succeeds it is all over with us, at least if Christ do not save us. Münzer advances with a cruelty worse than that of the Scythians, and it is impossible to mouth the atrocious menaces which he throws out.” The pious Elector had long hesitated as to the course he ought to pursue. Münzer had exhorted him, him and all princes to be converted, “because,” as he said, “their hour was come;” and he had signed his letters, “Münzer, armed with the sword of Gideon.” Frederick had been desirous to bring back these bewildered

men by gentleness. When dangerously ill, he had written on the 14th April, to his brother John,—“Perhaps these poor people have had more than one ground for revolt. Ah, the poor are oppressed in many ways by their temporal and spiritual lords.” And when he was reminded of the humiliation, revolutions, and dangers to which he was exposed if he did not powerfully suppress the rebellion, he replied, “Hitherto I have been a powerful Elector, having horses and carriages in abundance; if it is now the Lord’s will to take them from me, I will walk on foot.” The first of the princes who had recourse to arms was the young landgrave, Philip of Hesse. His knights and soldiers vowed to live and die with him. After pacifying his own States, he directed his course towards Saxony. Duke John, the Elector’s brother, Duke George of Saxony, and Duke Henry of Brunswick, advanced in the other direction, and united their forces with those of Hesse The peasants frightened at the sight of this army, took refuge on a hill, where, without discipline, without armour, and the greater part without courage, they made a rampart of their waggons. Münzer did not even know how to prepare powder for his immense cannon. No assistance appeared. The army hemmed in the rebels who began to despond. The princes taking pity on them offered conditions, which they seemed disposed to accept, when Münzer betook himself to the most powerful instrument which enthusiasm can bring into play. “To-day,” said he, “we shall see the arm of the Lord, and all our enemies will be destroyed.” At that moment a rainbow appeared, and Münzer took advantage of it. “Fear not,” said he to the burghers and peasants, “I will receive all the bullets which will be shot at you in my sleeve.” At the same time he ordered a young gentleman, Maternus of Geholfen, an envoy of the princes, to be cruelly murdered, that he might in this way deprive the rebels of all hope of pardon. The landgrave having assembled his troops, said to them, “I know well that we princes are often in fault, for we are men; but it is God’s pleasure that princes be honoured. Let us save our wives and our children from the fury of these murderers. The Lord will give us the victory; for he has said, “He who resists the power resists the ordinance of God.” Philip then gave the signal for attack. This was on the 15th May, 1525. The army moved forward; but the crowd of peasants remained immovable, singing the hymn, “Come Holy Spirit,” and waiting till heaven should declare in their favour. The artillery soon broke the main body, carrying death and consternation into the midst of them. Their fanaticism and courage at once forsook them—they were seized with a panic, and fled in disorder. Five thousand perished in the flight. After the battle, the princes and their victorious troops entered Frankenhausen. A soldier having gone up to the loft of the house where he was quartered, found a man in bed. “Who are you?” said he to him. “Are you a rebel?” Then having discovered a portfolio, he took it, and found letters in it addressed to Thomas Münzer. “Are you Thomas,” said the trooper. The sick man, in consternation, said, “No.” But the soldier using dreadful threats, Münzer, (for it was indeed he) confessed who he was. “You are my prisoner,” said the soldier. Being taken before Duke George and the landgrave, Münzer ended by saying that he had done right in trying to chastise the princes since they opposed the gospel. “Wretch,” said they to him, “think of all those whose destruction you have caused.” But he replied with a smile, in the midst of his anguish, “They would have it so.” He received the sacrament under one kind, and was beheaded along with Pfeiffer his lieutenant. Mulhausen was taken, and the peasants were loaded with chains. A noble having observed in the crowd of prisoners a peasant of good appearance, approached him, and said, “Well, my lad, which government pleases you best—that of peasants or that of princes?” The poor man replied with a sigh, “Ah, my lord, there is no knife whose blade cuts so keenly as the tyranny of one peasant over another.” The remains of the revolt were extinguished in blood. Duke George, in particular,

displayed great severity. In the States of the Elector there was neither punishment nor execution. The Word of God, preached in all its purity, had shown its efficacy in restraining the tumultuous passions of the people. In fact, Luther had never ceased to combat the rebellion, which he regarded as the forerunner of the universal judgment. He had spared nothing—instruction, entreaty, not even irony. At the end of the articles prepared by the rebels at Erfurth, he had added as a supplementary article: “Item, the following article has been omitted: Henceforth the honourable council shall have no power; it shall have nought to do but sit like an idol or a log; the community will chew all its meat for it, and the council will govern bound hand and foot. Henceforth the waggon will go before the horses, the horses hold the reins, and all go on admirably, conformably to the fine project which these articles expound.”

Luther did not content himself with writing. While the tumult was at its height, he left Wittemberg, and travelled over several of the districts where the greatest agitation reigned. He preached and laboured to soften down men’s spirits, and his hand, which God rendered powerful, directed, calmed, and brought back to their old channel, those furious torrents which had burst their banks. The teachers of the Reformation every where exerted the same influence. At Halle, Brentz, by the promises of the divine Word, raised the drooping spirits of the burghers, so that four thousand peasants had fled before six hundred citizens. At Ichterhausen, a multitude of peasants having assembled with the intention of demolishing several castles, and putting the noble proprietors to death, Frederick Myconius went to them alone, and such was the power of his eloquence that their design was immediately abandoned.2

Such was the part acted by the Reformers and the Reformation in the midst of the revolt. They combated it with all their might by the sword of the Word, and energetically maintained the principles which alone are capable, at all times, of preserving order and obedience among the nations. Accordingly, Luther maintained that if the power of sound doctrine had not arrested the fury of the people, the revolt would have caused much greater ravages, and completely overthrown both Church and State. There is every reason to believe that this dismal foreboding would have been realised.

If the Reformers thus combated sedition, it was not without receiving severe shocks from it. The moral agony which Luther had first felt in the cell at Erfurth was perhaps at its greatest height after the revolt of the peasants. A great transformation among mankind is not produced without suffering on the part of those who are the instruments of it. To complete the work of Christianity, the agony of the cross was necessary; but He who hung upon the cross addresses each of his disciples in the words, “Are ye able to be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with?” On the part of the princes it was incessantly repeated that Luther and his doctrine were the cause of the revolt, and however absurd this idea was, the Reformer could not see it so generally received without a feeling of deep grief. On the part of the people, Münzer and all the leaders of the sedition represented Luther as a vile hypocrite, a flatterer of the great; and these calumnies were readily credited. The violent terms in which Luther denounced the rebels had offended even moderate men. The friends of Rome triumphed;2 all were against him, and the wrath of his age lay as a burden upon him. But what tore his soul most of all was to see the work of heaven thus dragged through the mire, and placed in the same rank with the most fanatical projects. He here recognised his Gethsemane; he saw the bitter cup which was presented to him, and anticipating universal desertion, exclaimed, “Omnes vos scandalum patiemini in ista nocte.”

Still amidst all this bitterness of feeling he preserved his faith. “He,” said he, “who enabled me to trample the enemy under foot when he rose up against me like a cruel dragon or a raging lion, will not permit this enemy to crush me now that he appears with the perfidious aspect of the serpent. I behold these misfortunes, and I lament them. I have often asked myself if it would not be better to allow the papacy quietly to take its own course, rather than see so many disturbances and divisions break out in the world. But no! Far better rescue some from the devil’s throat than leave them all under his murderous fangs.”5

It was at this period that a revolution in Luther’s mind which had begun in the Wartburg was completed. The internal life no longer sufficed him; the Church and her institutions assumed a high importance in his eyes. The boldness with which he had demolished, stopped at the sight of more radical demolition; he felt that it was necessary to preserve, guide, build up, and from amidst the bloody ruins with which the wars of the peasants covered Germany, the edifice of the New Church began slowly to arise.

These disturbances left a deep and lasting emotion. The population was struck with terror. The masses who had sought in the Reformation only political liberty, withdrew spontaneously when they saw that spiritual liberty alone was offered them. The opposition of Luther to the peasants was equivalent to a renunciation of the ephemeral favour of the people. An apparent calm was soon established, and the turmoil of enthusiasm and sedition, was, throughout Germany, succeeded by a silence which terror inspired.

Thus the popular passions, the revolutionary cause, the prosecution of a radical equality failed in the empire, but the Reformation did not fail. These two movements, which many confound, are clearly distinguished by their different results. Revolt came from beneath, the Reformation from above. A few cavalry and cannon were sufficient to suppress the former, but the latter ceased not to rise, strengthen, and increase in spite of the incessantly renewed attacks of the empire and the Church.

CHAP. XII

Two Issues—Death of Frederick—The Prince and the Reformer—Catholic Alliance—Projects of Charles—Dangers.

Still, however, the cause of the Reformation seemed at first doomed to perish in the abyss which engulphed the popular liberties. A sad event which now occurred seemed destined to hasten its end. At the moment when the princes were marching against Münzer, ten days before his defeat, the old Elector of Saxony,—he whom God had raised up to defend the Reformation against attacks from without,—was descending into the tomb. His strength was daily decaying, and the horrors with which the war of the peasants was accompanied, were breaking his compassionate heart. “Ah!” exclaimed he, with a deep sigh; “if it were God’s will, I would gladly die. No longer do I behold on the earth either love or truth, or faith, or any thing that is good.”

Turning his eyes from the combats with which Germany was resounding, the pious prince calmly prepared for his departure, in his castle of Lochan. On the 4th May, he sent for his chaplain, the faithful Spalatin. “You do well,” said he to him, gently, as he entered, “to come and see me; for the sick should be visited.” Then ordering his couch to be wheeled towards the table, near which Spalatin was seated, he ordered all his attendants to retire, and affectionately taking hold of

Spalatin's hand, spoke to him of Luther, the peasants, and his approaching departure. At eight in the evening Spalatin returned, when the prince opened his whole heart to him, and confessed his sins, in the presence of God. The next day (5th May), he received the communion in both, kinds. He had no member of his family near him—his brother and nephew having set out with the army; but, his domestics were around him, according to the ancient custom of those times. With eyes fixed on the venerable prince, who had been so kind a master, they were all melted in tears. "My little children," said he, with a gentle voice, "if I have offended any one of you, let me have pardon for the love of God; for we princes often give pain to inferiors, and that is wrong." Thus Frederick verified the words of the apostle—"Let the rich rejoice, in that he is made low; because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away."2

Spalatin, who did not again leave him, warmly set before him the rich promises of the gospel; and the pious Elector, in its powerful consolations, enjoyed ineffable peace. The evangelical doctrine was no longer viewed by him as the sword which attacks error, pursues it wherever it is found, and after a vigorous struggle, finally overcomes it; it distilled in his heart like the rain and the flew, filling it with hope and joy. The present world was forgotten, and Frederick saw only God and eternity.

Feeling death rapidly approaching, he destroyed the testament which he had written several years before, and in which he recommended his soul to the "Mother of God," and dictated another, in which he cast himself upon the sacred merits of Jesus Christ alone "for the forgiveness of his sins;" and declared his firm conviction that "he was ransomed by the precious blood of his beloved Saviour." After this he said, "I can do no more;" and at five in the evening gently fell asleep. "He was a child of peace," exclaimed his physician, "and he has departed in peace." "O, death!" said Luther, "how bitter to those whom thou leavest in life."4

Luther, who was then in Thuringia, trying to calm it, had never seen the Elector but at a distance, at Worms, standing beside Charles V. But these two men had met in soul, the first moment the Reformation appeared. Frederick longed for nationality and independence—as Luther longed for truth and Reformation. No doubt, the Reformation was, first of all, a spiritual work; but it was perhaps necessary, to its first success, that it should link itself to some national interest. Accordingly, no sooner had Luther made a stand against indulgences, than the alliance between the prince and the monk was tacitly concluded—an alliance purely moral, without contract, without writing, without words even, and in which the strong gave no other aid to the weak than to allow him to act. But now that the vigorous oak, under whose shelter the Reformation had gradually grown up was hewn down—now that the enemies of the gospel were every where displaying new hatred and strength, while its partisans were obliged to hide themselves or be silent, nothing seemed able to defend it against the sword of its furious persecutors. The confederates at Ratisbon who had vanquished the peasants in the south and west of the empire, every where struck at the Reformation, as well as the revolt. At Wurtzburg and Bamberg, several of the most peaceable citizens, some even who had opposed the peasants, were put to death. "No matter," it was openly said, "they were adherents of the gospel." This was enough to make them lose their heads.

Duke George hoped to make the landgrave and Duke John share in his love and his hatred. "See," said he to them, after the defeat of the peasants, and showing them the field of battle, "see the mischiefs engendered by Luther." John and Philip seemed to give some hope of adopting his

views. “Duke George,” said the Reformer, “imagines he is to triumph now that Frederick is dead; but Christ reigns in the midst of his enemies: in vain do they gnash their teeth; their desire will perish.”

George lost no time in forming a confederation, similar to that of Ratisbon, in the north of Germany. The Electors of Mentz and Brandenburg—Dukes Henry and Eric of Brunswick, and Duke George, met at Dessau, and there, in July, concluded a Roman alliance. George urged the new Elector, and the landgrave, his son-in-law, to give in their adherence to it. Then, as if to announce what were to be its results, he beheaded two citizens of Leipsic, in whose house some of the Reformer’s writings had been found. At the same time a letter of Charles V, dated Toledo, arrived in Germany, appointing a new diet to be held at Augsburg. Charles wished to give a new constitution to the empire, that would enable him to dispose, at pleasure, of the forces of Germany. The religions divisions furnished him with the means. He had only to let loose the Catholics on the evangelicals. When they had mutually enfeebled each other, he would obtain an easy triumph over both. Down with the Lutherans! was the emperor’s watch word.

Thus, there was a kind of universal league against the Reformation. Never had the soul of Luther been so oppressed with fears. The remains of Munzer’s sect had sworn that they would have his life, and his only protector was no more. Duke George, he was informed, intended to apprehend him even in Wittemberg. The princes, who might have been able to defend him, hung down their heads, and seemed to have forsaken the gospel. The university, already thinned by disturbances, was, it was said, to be suppressed by the new Elector. Charles, victorious at Pavia, was assembling a new diet, with the view of giving the finishing blow to the Reformation. What dangers, then, must he not have foreseen.… That anguish, those inward sufferings which had often wrung cries from Luther, tore his soul. How shall he resist so many enemies? Amidst these agitations, in presence of these many perils, beside the corpse of Frederick almost before it was cold, and the dead bodies of the peasants who strewed the plains of Germany—who would have thought it—Luther married!

CHAP. XIII The Nuns of Nimptsch—Luther’s Feelings—End of the Convent—Luther’s Marriage—Domestic Happiness. In the monastery of Nimptsch, near Grimma, there were, in 1523, nine nuns, who diligently read the Word of God, and had perceived the contrast between the Christian life and the life of the cloister. Their names were—Magdalene Staupitz, Eliza Canitz, Ave Grossn, Ave and Margaret Schonfeld, Laneta Golis, Margaret and Catherine Zeschau, and Catherine Bora. The first proceeding of these young persons, after they had withdrawn from the superstitions of the monastery, was to write their parents. “The salvation of our souls,” they said, “does not allow us to continue any longer to live in a cloister.” The parents, fearing the trouble which such a resolution might give them, harshly repulsed the desire of their daughters. The poor nuns knew not what to do. How were they to leave the monastery? They trembled at the thought of so desperate a step. At last, the disgust which the papal worship produced, carried the day. They promised not to quit each other, but to repair, in a body, to some respectable place, decently, and in order. Leonard Koppe and Wolff Tomitzch, two worthy and pious citizens of Torgau, offered their assistance.2 They accepted it, as sent by God himself, and left the convent of Nimptsch without meeting with any opposition, as if the hand of the Lord had opened the gates for them. Koppe and Tomitzch received them in their car; and, on the 7th April, 1523, the nine nuns, astonished at their own hardihood, stopped, with emotion, before the gate of the old Augustin convent, where Luther

was residing.

“It is not I who have done it,” said Luther on receiving them; “but would to God I could thus save all captive consciences, and empty all cloisters.” Several persons made an offer to the doctors to receive the nuns into their houses, and Catherine Bora was taken into the family of the burgomaster of Wittemberg.

If, at that time, Luther had any thought of preparing for some solemn event, it was to mount the scaffold—not approach the hymeneal altar. Many months later, his answer to those, who spoke to him of marriage was, “God can change my heart as he pleases; but now, at least, I have no thought whatever of taking a wife; not that I do not feel some inclination for the married state: I am neither wood nor stone; but I am in daily expectation of the death and punishment due to a heretic.”

Still every thing in the Church continued to advance. The monastic life, an invention of man, was every where succeeded by the habits of domestic life. On Sunday, 9th October, Luther having risen as usual, laid aside his Augustin frock, put on the dress of a secular priest, and then made his appearance in the church, where the change produced the greatest joy. Christendom, which had renewed its youth, gave a glad welcome to all which announced that old things were passed away.

Shortly after the last monk quitted the convent, but Luther still remained; his steps alone were heard in its long passages, and he sat alone in silence in the refectory, which was wont to echo with the tattle of the monks. An eloquent solitude! one which attested the triumphs of the Word of God! The convent had ceased to exist. Towards the end of 1524, Luther sent the keys of the monastery to the Elector, stating that he would see where God might be pleased to give him food. The Elector gave the convent to the university, and asked Luther to continue to reside in it. The abode of the monks was soon to become the hearth of a Christian family.

Luther, whose heart was so well fitted to relish the sweets of domestic life, honoured and loved the married state; it is even probable that he had an attachment for Catherine Bora. For a long time his scruples, and the thought of the calumnies to which the step might give rise, had prevented him from thinking of her; and he had made an offer of poor Catherine, first to Baumgartner of Nuremberg, and then to Doctor Glatz of Nuremberg. But when he saw Baumgartner refuse Catherine, and Glatz refused by her, he asked himself more seriously, if he should not form the connection in his own person. His old father, who had been so much grieved at his embracing the ecclesiastical state, urged him to marry. But there was one idea which perpetually presented itself to Luther’s conscience with new energy; marriage is a divine—celibacy a human institution. He had a horror at every thing that came from Rome. “I wish,” said he, to his friends, “to preserve no part of my papistical life.”3 He prayed night and day, beseeching the Lord to deliver him from his uncertainty. At length all scruples were dissipated by one consideration. To all the motives of convenience and personal feeling which led him to apply to himself the words, “It is not good that man should be alone,” was added a motive of a still higher nature and greater power. He saw, that if he was called to marriage as a man, he was still more called to it as a Reformer. This decided him.

“If this monk marries,” said his friend, lawyer Schurff, “he will make the world and the devil burst with laughter, and destroy the work which he has begun.” This saying made a very different impression on Luther from what might have been supposed. To defy the world, the devil, and his enemies, and, by an action, fitted, as was thought, to destroy the work of the Reformation, to prevent the success of it from being in any way ascribed to him, was the very thing which he desired. Hence, boldly lifting his head, he replied “Very well, I shall do it. I shall play this trick to the world and the devil—I will give this joy to my father, I will marry Catherine.” By marrying, Luther broke still more completely with the institutions of the papacy. He confirmed the doctrine which he had preached by his example, and encouraged the timid entirely to renounce their errors.6 At this time, Rome was, apparently, here and there regaining part of the territory which she had lost: she was, perhaps, beginning to cherish a hope of victory; and lo, a mighty explosion carries surprise and terror into her ranks, and makes her more fully aware of the courage of the enemy, whom she thought she had tamed. “I wish,” said Luther, “to bear testimony to the gospel, not only by my words, but also by my works. In the face of my enemies, who already triumph, and sing jubilee, I mean to marry a nun, in order that they may understand and know that they have not vanquished me. I do not marry in the hope of living long with my wife; but seeing people and princes letting loose their fury against me, foreseeing that my end is near, and that after my death they will trample my doctrine under foot. I mean to leave, for the edification of the weak, a striking confirmation of what I have taught here below.”2 On the 11th June, 1525, Luther repaired to the house of his friend and colleague, Amsdorff. He asked for Pomeranns, whom he distinguished by the name of “the Pastor,” to bless his union. The celebrated painter, Lucas Cranach, and Doctor John Apelles, acted as witnesses. Melancthon was not present.

Luther’s marriage made a noise throughout Christendom. He was assailed from all quarters with accusations and calumnies. “It is incest!” exclaimed Henry VIII. “A monk marrying a vestal!” said some. “Antichrist must be born of this union,” said others; for there is a prophecy that he is to spring from a monk and a nun.” On this Erasmus observed, with a sarcastic smile, “If the prophecy be true, how many thousands of Antichrists must the world already contain!”4 But while Luther was thus assailed, several wise and moderate men within the pale of the Romish Church took up his defence. “Luther,” said Erasmus, “has married a member of the illustrious house of Bora, but without dowry.” A still more venerable testimony was given to him. The teacher of Germany, Philip Melancthon, whom this bold step had at first amazed, said, in that solemn tone, to which even his enemies listened with respect,—“If it is pretended that there is any thing unbecoming in the marriage of Luther, it is a lie and a calumny.6 I think he must have done violence to his own feelings on marrying. Married life is a humble, but it is also a holy state—if there is such a state in the world—and the Scriptures uniformly represent it as honourable in the sight of God.”

Luther was at first moved on seeing so much contempt and wrath poured out upon him. Melancthon redoubled his friendship and regard, and the Reformer was soon able to see in the opposition of men only a sign of the approbation of God. “Did I not offend the world,” said he, “I should have reason to tremble, lest what I have done should not be agreeable to God.”2

There was an interval of eight years between Luther’s attack on indulgences, and his marriage with Catherine Bora. It would thus be difficult, though it is still attempted, to attribute his zeal against the abuses of the Church to an impatient desire of marrying. He was at this time forty-two years of age, and Catherine Bora had been two years at Wittemberg.

Luther was happy in his marriage. “The greatest gift of God,” said he, “is a pious amiable spouse, who fears God, loves her house, and with whom one can live in peace and perfect confidence.” Some months after his marriage, he announced to one of his friends that Catherine had hopes of becoming a mother. A son was born about a year after the marriage.4 The sweets of domestic life soon dissipated the clouds which the anger of his enemies had at first raised around him. His Ketha, (Kate,) as he called her, showed the greatest affection for him—comforted him, when he was depressed, by quoting passages of the Bible to him, relieved him from all the cares of ordinary life, sat beside him during his hours of leisure, embroidered the portrait of her husband, reminded him of the friends to whom he had forgotten to write, and often amused him by her simple-hearted questions. There appears to have been a certain degree of pride in her temper: hence Luther sometimes called her “Sir Kate.” He one day said in jest, that, if he were still unmarried, he would hew an obedient wife for himself out of stone, for such an one no where existed in reality. His letters fully expressed his fondness for Catherine. He called her “his dear and affectionate wife,”—“his dear and amiable Kate.” Luther’s humour was more sportive in Catherine’s society; and this happy turn of mind continued with him ever after, even amidst the greatest dangers. The almost universal corruption of the clergy had brought the priesthood into the greatest contempt, and though there were some true servants of God, their isolated virtues could do away with it. Domestic peace, conjugal fidelity, the surest foundations of earthly happiness, were continually disturbed in town and country by the licentiousness of monks and priests. None were secure against their attempts at seduction. They took advantage of the free access which they had into the bosom of families, and sometimes also of the intimate intercourse furnished by the confessional, to instil a deadly poison into their penitents, and so gratify their vicious propensities. The Reformation, by abolishing the celibacy of priests, re-established the sacredness of the marriage tie. The marriage of ecclesiastics put an end to an immense number of secret crimes. The Reformers became models to their flocks in the most intimate and important relation of life, and the people were not slow in expressing their joy at again seeing the ministers of religion become husbands and fathers.

CHAP. XIV The Landgrave—The Elector—Prussia—Reformation—Secularisation—The Archbishop of Mentz—Conference of Friedewalt—Diet—Alliance of Torgau—Resistance of the Reformers—Alliance of Magdeburg—The Catholics redouble their efforts—Marriage of the Emperor—Threatening Letters—The two Parties.

Luther’s marriage at first seemed to add to the embarrassment of the Reformation, which was still suffering from the shock which it had received from the revolt of the peasants. The sword of the emperor and the princes had always been drawn against it, and its friends, the landgrave and the new Elector, seemed discouraged and afraid to speak out.

However, this state of things was not of long duration. The young landgrave soon stood up boldly. Ardent and courageous, like Luther, he had been won by the charms of the Reformer’s character. He threw himself into the cause of the Reformation with the eagerness of youth, and at the same time studied it with the gravity of a maturer intellect. In Saxony, the place of Frederick had not been supplied either in regard to wisdom or influence; but his brother, the Elector John, instead of the passive part of protection, interfered more directly, and with more courage in religious affairs. When quitting Weimar on the 16th August, 1525, he intimated to the assembled priests, “I desire that in future you preach the pure Word of God, without any human addition.” Some old

ecclesiastics, who did not know how to obey, replied with great simplicity, “We are not forbidden, however, to say mass for the dead, nor to bless water and salt.”—“Every thing,” resumed the Elector, “ceremonies as well as preaching, ought to be regulated by the Word of God.” The young landgrave shortly after formed the strange project of converting his father-in-law, Duke George. Sometimes he proved the sufficiency of Scripture, sometimes attacked the mass, the papacy, and vows. Letter succeeded letter, and all the declarations of the Word of God were alternately opposed to the faith of the old duke.

These efforts did not prove useless. The son of Duke George was gained to the Reformation. But Philip failed with his father-in-law. “In one hundred years,” said the latter, “it will be seen who is in the right.”—“Sad words,” said the Elector of Saxony. “What kind of faith is it that stands in need of such a trial?” “Poor duke…. He will wait long. God, I fear, has hardened him as he did Pharaoh.” In Philip the evangelical party found a bold and intelligent leader, capable of withstanding the formidable attacks which their enemies were preparing. But is there not reason to regret that the head of the Reformation was, from this moment, a man of war, instead of being a mere disciple of the Word of God? The human element was enlarged, and the spiritual element diminished. This was detrimental. For every work ought to be developed according to its own nature, and that of the Reformation was essentially spiritual.

God was multiplying its supports. A powerful state on the frontiers of Germany, Prussia, gladly arrayed itself under the gospel standard. The chivalric and religious spirit which had founded the Teutonic order had gradually died away with the times which gave it birth. The knights, now seeking only their private interest, had produced dissatisfaction among the people subject to them. Poland had profited by this in 1466 to obtain from the order a recognition of her sovereignty. The people, the knights, the grand master, the Polish government, were so many opposite powers, which were continually jostling each other, and rendered the prosperity of the country impossible.

Then came the Reformation, and in it was recognised the only means of deliverance to this unhappy people. Brismann, Speratus, Poliander, (Dr. Eck’s secretary at the Leipsic discussion,) and others preached the gospel in Prussia.

One day a mendicant, from the countries subject to the Teutonic knights, arrived at Wittemberg, and, halting before Luther’s door, with solemn voice sang Poliander’s beautiful hymn,—

“To us at length salvation comes.” The Reformer, who had never heard the hymn, listened with astonishment and rapture. The foreign accent of the singer increased his joy. “Again! again!” exclaimed he, when the mendicant had finished. He then asked him where he got the hymn, and his tears began to fall when he learned that from the shores of the Baltic a cry of deliverance was resounding even in Wittemberg. Then clasping his hands, he thanked God. In fact, salvation was there.

“Take pity on our misery,” said the people of Prussia to the grand master, “and give us preachers who proclaim the pure gospel of Jesus Christ.” Albert at first gave no answer, but he entered into conference with Sigismund, King of Poland, his uncle and sovereign lord, who acknowledged him as hereditary Duke of Prussia. The new prince entered his capital of Konigsberg amid the ringing of bells, and the acclamations of the people; all the houses were splendidly decorated, and the streets strewed with flowers. “There is only one order, said Albert, and that is Christendom.” The

monastic orders disappeared, and the divine order was re-established. The bishops gave up their secular rights to the new duke; the convents were turned into hospitals; the gospel was preached even in the humblest village, and, in the following year, Albert married Dorothea, daughter of the King of Denmark, whose “faith in the one only Saviour” was immoveable. The pope called upon the Emperor to exercise severity against this “apostate” monk, and Charles put Albert under the ban.

Another prince, of the family of Brandenburg, Albert, Archbishop of Mentz, was then on the point of following the example of his cousin. The war of the peasants threatened the ecclesiastical states in particular; the Elector, Luther, all Germany believed that they were on the eve of a great revolution. The archbishop thinking that the only means of saving his principality was secretly to secularise it, asked Luther to prepare the people for this bold step. This Luther did by a letter which he prepared for them, and intended to publish. “God,” said he, “has laid a heavy hand on the clergy: they must fall: nothing can save them.”5 But the war of the peasants having terminated much more speedily than had been imagined, the cardinal kept his temporal possessions; his fears were dissipated, and he renounced the project of secularisation.

While John of Saxony, Philip of Hesse, and Albert of Prussia openly professed the Reformation, and thus the place of prudent Frederick was supplied by three princes of resolution and courage, the holy work made progress in the Church and among the nations. Luther solicited the Elector to establish the evangelical ministry throughout the States instead of the priesthood of Rome, and to appoint a general visitation of the churches. About the same time episcopal powers began to be exercised, and ministers to be consecrated. “The pope, the bishops, the monks, and the priests, need not make a noise. We are the Church. There is no other Church than the assembly of those who have the Word of God, and are purified by it.”

All this could not be said and done without producing a powerful re-action. Rome had thought the Reformation extinguished in the blood of the rebellious peasants, but every where its flames re-appeared brighter and fiercer. She resolved to make a new effort. The pope and the emperor wrote threatening letters, the one from Rome, the other from Spain. The imperial government prepared to replace matters on the ancient footing, and it was seriously proposed entirely to crush the Reformation at the approaching Diet. The electoral prince of Saxony and the landgrave, alarmed, met on the 7th November, at the castle of Friedewalt, and agreed that their deputies at the Diet should act on a common understanding. Thus, in the forest of Sullingen were formed the first elements of an evangelical alliance opposed to the leagues of Ratisbon and Dessau. The Diet was opened, on the 11th December, at Augsburg. The evangelical princes did not attend in person. The deputies of Saxony and Hesse spoke out boldly at the outset. “The revolt of the peasants,” said they, “was occasioned by imprudent severity. Neither by fire nor sword can the truth of God be plucked out of men’s hearts. If you resolve on employing violence against the Reformation, the result will be more dreadful evils than those which you have just with difficulty escaped.”

It was felt that the resolution which should be taken could not fail to be of immense importance. Every one was desirous to put off the decisive moment in order to gain additional strength. It was, therefore, resolved to meet again at Spires in May following. The rescript of Nuremberg was meantime to continue in force. “Then,” said they, “we will thoroughly decide the points of holy faith,

righteousness, and peace." The landgrave prosecuted his design. In the end of February, 1526, he had a conference with the Elector at Gotha. The two princes agreed that if they were attacked on account of the Word of God, they would unite their whole forces to resist their adversaries. This alliance was ratified at Torgau. It was to have important results. The landgrave did not think the alliance of Torgau sufficient. Convinced that Charles V was seeking to form a league "against Christ and his holy Word," he wrote letter after letter to the Elector representing the necessity of uniting with other states. "For myself," said he, "I would die, and be chased from my throne, sooner than abjure the Word of God." At the electoral court there was great uncertainty. In fact, there was a serious obstacle to the union of the evangelical princes. This obstacle was in Luther and Melancthon. Luther wished that the evangelical doctrine should be defended by God alone. He thought that the less men interfered with it, the more manifest the interposition of God would appear. All the measures proposed to be taken seemed to him attributable to cowardly timidity and culpable distrust. Melancthon feared that the alliance of the evangelical princes was the very thing to bring on the war which it was wished to avoid. The landgrave did not allow himself to be arrested by these considerations, and endeavoured to induce the states around him to join the alliance, but his efforts were not crowned with success. Frankfort refused to become a party to it. The Elector of Treves withdrew his opposition, and accepted of a pension from the emperor. The Elector Palatine himself, whose evangelical leanings were well known, rejected the propositions of Philip. The landgrave thus failed in the direction of the Rhine, but the Elector, notwithstanding of the advice of the theologians of the Reformation, entered into negotiation with the princes who had at all times rallied round the throne of Saxony. On the 12th June, the Elector and his son, the Dukes Philip, Ernest, Otho, and Francis of Brunswick and Luneburg, Duke Henry of Mecklenburg, Prince Wolf of Anhalt, Counts Albert and Gebhard of Mansfeld, met at Magdeburg, and there, under the precedency of the Elector, formed an alliance similar to that of Torgau.

"God Almighty," said these princes, "having in his ineffable mercy caused his holy and eternal Word, the food of our souls and our greatest treasure here below, to appear again amongst men; and powerful manœuvres having been employed on the part of the clergy and their adherents, to annihilate and extirpate it, we being firmly assured that He who has sent it to glorify his name upon the earth, is able also to maintain it, engage to preserve this holy Word to our people, and for this end to employ our goods, our lives, our states, our subjects, all that we possess—confiding not in our armies, but solely in the omnipotence of the Lord, whose instruments we desire to be." So spoke the princes. The town of Magdeburg was two days after received into the alliance, and the new Duke of Prussia, Albert, Duke of Brandenburg, gave in his adherence to it in a special form. The evangelical alliance was formed, but the dangers which it was intended to avert became every day more alarming. The priests and princes friendly to Rome had seen this Reformation which they thought completely strangled, suddenly rise up before them in a formidable shape. The partisans of the Reformation were already almost as powerful as those of the pope. If they have the majority in the Diet, it is easy to divine what the ecclesiastical states have to expect. Now then or never! The question is no longer merely the refutation of a heresy; a powerful party must be combated. Other victories than those of Dr. Eck must now save Christendom.

Decisive measures had already been taken. The metropolitan chapter of the primary church of Mentz had convened a meeting of all its suffragans, and decided on sending a deputation to the emperor and the pope, to ask them to save the Church. At the same time Duke George of Saxony,

Duke Henry of Brunswick, and the Cardinal-Elector Albert, had met at Halle, and had also resolved to address Charles V. “The detestable doctrine of Luther,” said they, “makes rapid progress. Every day attempts are made to gain even us, and when gentle means fail, attempts are made to compel us by stirring up our subjects. We invoke the assistance of the emperor.” Accordingly, after the conference, Brunswick himself set out for Spain to decide Charles.

He could not have arrived at a more favourable moment. The emperor had just concluded with Francis the famous treaty of Madrid; and as he seemed to have nothing to fear in that quarter, his eyes were now turned wholly to Germany. Francis I had offered to pay half the expenses of the war, whether against the heretics or against the Turks. The emperor was at Seville, on the eve of marriage with a princess of Portugal, and the banks of the Guadalquiver were re-echoing with the sound of festivities. A brilliant nobility, and immense crowds of people thronged the ancient capital of the Moors. Under she arches of the magnificent cathedral was displayed all the pomp of the Church. A papal legate officiated, and never, even in the days of the Arabs, had Andalusia seen a more splendid and imposing ceremony. This was the time when Henry of Brunswick arrived from Germany, and besought Charles V to save the Church and the empire, which were now attacked by the monk of Wittemberg. His request was immediately taken into consideration, and the emperor determined on decisive measures. On the 25th March, 1526, he wrote to several of the princes and towns which adhered to Rome, and at the same time gave the Duke of Brunswick a special commission, to say to them, that with deep grief he had learned that the continual progress of Luther’s heresy was threatening to fill Germany with sacrilege, devastation, and blood—that, on the other hand, he had extreme pleasure in seeing the fidelity of the great majority of the States—that, neglecting every other affair, he was going to quit Spain and repair to Rome to make arrangements with the pope, and thenceforth return to Germany, to combat the detestable pest of Wittemberg; that as to themselves they ought to adhere stedfastly to their faith; and if the Lutherans sought to draw them into error by stratagem or force, they should enter into close union with each other, and resist boldly; that he would shortly arrive and support them with all his authority. On the return of Brunswick to Germany, the Catholic party were overjoyed, and proudly lifted their heads. The Dukes of Brunswick, and Pomerania, Albert of Mecklenburg, John of Juliers, George of Saxony, the Dukes of Bavaria, and all the ecclesiastical princes thought themselves sure of victory after they read the threatening letters of the conqueror of Francis I. They would repair to the approaching Diet, they would humble the heretical princes, and, if they did not otherwise submit, would compel them by the sword. Duke George is confidently affirmed to have said, “I may be Elector of Saxony whenever I please;” an expression to which it was afterwards attempted to give a different turn. One day the duke’s chancellor said at Torgau with an air of triumph,2 “Luther’s cause cannot hold out long, it had better be looked to.”

Luther, in fact, did look to it, but not in the sense thus implied: he attentively followed the designs of the enemies of the Word of God, and thought, as well as Melancthon, that he would soon see thousands of swords drawn against the gospel. But he sought his strength in a higher source than man. “Satan,” wrote he to Frederick Myconius, “is giving full vent to his fury; wicked pontiffs are conspiring and threatening us with war. Exhort the people to fight valiantly before the throne of God by faith and prayer, so that our enemies, being overcome by the Spirit of God, may be compelled to make peace. The first want, the first work is prayer; let the people know that they are now exposed to the edge of the sword and the fury of the devil, and let them pray.”

Thus, every preparation was made for a decisive combat. The Reformation had on its side the prayers of Christians, the sympathies of the people, and the rising influence of mind which no power could arrest. The papacy had in its favour the ancient order of things, the power of ancient custom, the zeal and hatred of formidable princes, and the power of that great emperor whose dominion extended over two worlds, and who had just given so rude a check to the glory of Francis I.

Such was the posture of affairs at the opening of the Diet at Spires. At present we return to Switzerland.

BOOK ELEVENTH Division, Switzerland, Germany

1523–1527

CHAP. I

Unity in Diversity—Primitive Faith and Liberty—Formation of Roman Unity—A Monk and Leo Juda—Theses of Zuinglius—The discussion of January.

We are going to see the diversities, or, as they have been called, the variations of the Reformation. These form one of its most essential features.

Unity in diversity, and diversity in unity, is the law of nature, and also the law of the Church.

Truth is like the light of the sun. The light, as it descends from heaven, is always one and the same, and yet it assumes different colours on the earth, according to the objects on which it falls. In the same manner, expressions, which differ somewhat from each other, may sometimes express the same Christian idea, contemplated under different points of view.

How dull should creation be, were this immense variety of forms and colours which constitute its riches, replaced by an absolute uniformity! In like manner, how desolate the appearance, if all created beings formed only a single magnificent unity.

Divine unity has its rights; human diversity has its rights also. It is not necessary in religion to annihilate either God or man. If you have no unity, your religion is not of God; if you have no diversity, it is not of man. Now, it ought to be of both. Would you erase from the creation one of the laws which God has imposed upon it, viz., that of an immense diversity? “Even things without life,” says St. Paul, “whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?” 1 Corinthians 14:7. But if there is in religious things a diversity, caused by the difference of individuality, and which, consequently, must exist even in heaven, a diversity there is which has been caused by the fall of man, and is a serious calamity.

There are two tendencies which equally lead to error. The former exaggerates the diversity, and the latter the unity. The doctrines essential to salvation form the boundary between these two directions. To exact more than these doctrines is to infringe on the diversity—to exact less is to infringe on the unity. The latter excess is that of rash and rebellious spirits, who turn away from Jesus Christ to form human systems and doctrines. The former exists in various exclusive sects, and, in particular, in that of Rome. The Church should reject error. Did she not do so Christianity could not be maintained. But, were we to push this idea to an extreme, the result would be, that

the Church would require to oppose the smallest deviation, and involve herself in disputes about words. Faith would be swaddled, and Christian sentiment brought into bondage. Such was not the condition of the Church in the days of true Catholicism—I mean the first centuries. It rejected the sectaries who assailed the fundamental truths of the gospel; but these truths admitted, it left faith at full liberty. Rome soon abandoned these wise limits, and in proportion as a domination and doctrine of man was formed in the Church there arose also a unity of man. A human system being once invented, its rigour increased from age to age. Christian liberty, which had been respected by the catholicism of the first ages, was first limited, then chained, then stifled. Conviction, which, according to the laws of human nature and the Word of God, ought to be formed freely in the heart and the understanding of man, was imposed externally as fully formed and symmetrically arranged by his masters. Reflection, will, sentiment, all the faculties of the human mind, which, in due subordination to the Word and the Spirit of God, ought to labour and produce freely, were abridged in their liberty, and compelled to expand in forms previously determined. The spirit of man became like a mirror, on which foreign objects are represented, but which possesses nothing of its own. Doubtless there still were souls taught directly by God. But the great majority of Christians had thenceforth only the convictions of others: a faith properly belonging to the individual became a rarity. The Reformation alone restored this treasure to the Church.

Still there was for sometime a space, within which the human mind was allowed to range, certain opinions which it might admit or reject at pleasure. But, as a besieging army, always drawing closer and closer around the town, does not allow the garrison to stir beyond the precincts of the walls, and at length obliges it to surrender, in the same way was the hierarchy seen, in every age, and almost every year, abridging the space which it had granted provisionally to the human mind, until, at length, the space was entirely encroached upon, and ceased to exist. Everything that was to be believed, loved, or done, was regulated and fixed in the bureaus of the Roman chancery. The faithful were relieved from the trouble of examining, thinking, and wrestling; they had only to repeat the formula which they had been taught. From that time, if there appeared in the bosom of Roman catholicism any man who inherited the catholicism of the apostolic times, that man, incapable of expanding within the limits to which he had been confined, behoved to overleap them, and show anew to the astonished world the lofty flight of the Christian who acknowledges no law save that of God. The Reformation, then, in restoring liberty to the Church, behoved to restore to her her original diversity, and people her with families, united by the great features of resemblance which they derive from their common head, but differing in secondary features and bespeaking the inherent varieties of human nature. It were, perhaps, to be desired that this diversity could subsist in the universal Church without producing sects. Still, it ought to be remembered, that sects are only the expression of this diversity.

Switzerland and Germany, which, till now, had been developed independently of each other, came into contact at the period, the history of which we are now to trace, and exemplified this diversity which was to become one of the characteristic features of Protestantism. We shall see men perfectly agreed on all the great points of faith, differing, however, on secondary questions. No doubt, passion mingled in these discussions; but while deploring this sad mixture, Protestantism, far from disguising the diversity, acknowledges and proclaims it. The path by which she leads to unity is long and difficult, but her unity is real.

Zuinglius was making progress in the Christian life. While the gospel had delivered Luther from the profound melancholy to which he had formerly abandoned himself in the convent of Erfurth, and given him a serenity which often assumed the form of joyfulness, and of which the Reformer thenceforth gave numerous proofs, even in face of the greatest dangers, Christianity had had quite a contrary effect on the joyous child of the mountains of Tockenburg. Withdrawing Zuinglius from his volatile and worldly life, it impressed a gravity on his character that was not natural to it. This serious turn was very necessary. We have seen how, towards the end of 1522, numerous enemies seemed to rise up against the Reformation. Zuinglius was every where loaded with invectives, and disputes often took place, even in churches.

Leo Juda, small in stature, says a biographer, but full of charity for the poor, and of zeal against false teachers, had arrived at Zurich towards the end of 1522, to discharge the office of pastor of the church of St. Peter, having been succeeded at Einsidlen by Oswald Myconius. He was a valuable acquisition to Zuinglius and the Reformation.

One day, shortly after his arrival, he heard an Augustin monk, in the church to which he had been called to be pastor, vehemently preaching, that man is able of himself to satisfy the justice of God. “Reverend father prior,” exclaimed Leo, “listen for an instant, and you, dear citizens, keep quiet; I will speak as becomes a Christian.” He then proved to the people the unsoundness of the doctrine which they had just heard. There was great agitation in the church, and several forthwith angrily assailed the “little priest,” who had come from Einsidlen. Zuinglius appeared before the great council; desiring to give an account of his doctrine in presence of the deputies of the bishop, and the council in their desire to see an end put to these dissensions, summoned a conference for the 29th January, 1523. The news quickly spread over Switzerland. “There is going to be a diet of vagabonds at Zurich,” said the adversaries spitefully—“all the footpads will be there.”

Zuinglius, preparatory to the contest, published sixty-seven theses. Openly in the eyes of all Switzerland, the mountaineer of Tockenburg boldly attacked the pope.

“All,” said he, “who maintain that the gospel is nothing without the confirmation of the Church, blaspheme God.

“The only way of salvation to all men who have been, are, or are to be, is Jesus Christ.

“All Christians are the brethren of Christ, and brethren of each other, and they have no fathers on the earth; thus, orders, sects, and parties fall.

“No constraint should be laid on those who do not acknowledge their error, provided they do not, by seditious conduct, disturb the peace.”

Such were some of the theses of Zuinglius. On the morning of Thursday the 29th of January, more than six hundred persons met in the hall of the great council at Zurich. Citizens and strangers, learned men, persons of distinction, and ecclesiastics, had responded to the call of the council. “What,” it was asked, “is to be the result of all this?” Nobody dared to answer; but the attention, excitement, and agitation of the assembly, showed plainly that great things were expected.

Burgomaster Roust, who had fought at Marignan, presided. The chevalier, James of Anwyl, grand master of the episcopal court of Constance, Faber the vicar-general, and several doctors, represented the bishop. Schaffhausen had sent Doctor Sebastian Hofmeister; he was the only

deputy from the cantons so long as the Reformation was in its infancy in Switzerland. On a table in the middle of the hall was the Bible, and beside it stood a teacher. This was Zuinglius. “I am agitated and tormented on all sides,” he had said; “but still I remain firm, leaning not on my own strength, but on the rock, which is Christ, through whose aid I can do all things.”

Zuinglius arose. “I have preached,” said he, “that salvation is found only in Jesus Christ; and for this I am stigmatised throughout Switzerland as a heretic, a seducer, a rebel.… Now then, in the name of God, here I am to answer.”….

All eyes now turned towards Faber, who rose and replied, “I was not sent here to debate, but only to listen.” The assembly, in surprise, began to laugh. “The Diet of Nuremberg,” continued Faber, “has promised a council in a year; we should wait for it.”

“What!” said Zuinglius, “is not this great and learned assembly as good as a council?” Then addressing the counsellors, he said, “Gracious lords, defend the Word of God.”

Profound silence followed this appeal; after some time it was broken by the burgomaster. “If any one has any thing to say,” said he, “let him do so.” There was again silence. Zuinglius then said, “I implore all my accusers (and I know there are several of them here) to come forward, and for the love of truth, show wherein I deserve blame.” Nobody said a word. Zuinglius renewed his demand a second and third time: it was in vain. Faber being close pressed, for a moment forgot the reserve which he had imposed on himself, to declare that the pastor of Filispach, who was detained in prison, had been convinced by him of his error; but he immediately became reserved as before. In vain was he urged to explain the reasons by which he had convinced the pastor. He was obstinately silent. The spectators, becoming impatient at the silence of the Roman doctors, a voice was heard from the bottom of the hall, exclaiming, “Where are now those valiant men, who speak so loud in the streets? Ho! come forward, here is your man!” Nobody presented himself. Then the burgomaster said, with a smile, “It seems, that the famous sword which smote the pastor of Filispach is not to come out of its scabbard to-day.” So saying, he adjourned the meeting. In the afternoon, when the assembly again met, the council declared, that Master Ulric Zuinglius, not having been censured by any one, should continue to preach the Holy Gospel, and that all the other priests of the canton should teach only what they could establish by the Holy Scriptures.

“God be praised,” exclaimed Zuinglius, “who is pleased that his Holy Word should reign in heaven and on the earth.” Faber could not now restrain his indignation. “The theses of Master Ulric,” said he, “are contrary to the honour of the Church and the doctrine of Christ, and I will prove it.” “Do so,” exclaimed Zuinglius. But Faber refused to do it any where but at Paris, Cologne, or Friburg. “I won’t have any other judge than the gospel,” said Zuinglius; “sooner will the earth open than you succeed in shaking a single word contained in it.” “The gospel,” said Faber, “always the gospel!… We could live holily in peace and charity even though there were no gospel.”3 At these words the audience rose up in indignation, and the discussion closed.

CHAP. II

Caresses of the Pope—Progress of the Reformation—The image of Stadelhofen—Sacrilege—The Ornaments of the Saints. The Reformation, having gained the day, was now to hasten its conquests. After this conflict of Zurich, where the ablest champions of the papacy had remained mute, who would have the courage to oppose the new doctrine? Meanwhile, other weapons were

tried. The firmness of Zuinglius, and his republican leanings, misled his enemies, and hence special methods were employed for the purpose of overcoming him. While Rome was pursuing Luther with her anathemas, she endeavoured to gain the Reformer of Zurich by gentle methods. Scarcely had the discussion closed, when Zuinglius was visited by the son of burgomaster Roust, the captain of the pope's guards, accompanied by the legate Einsius, who had in charge for him a pontifical brief, in which Adrian VI called Zuinglius his well-beloved son, and acquainted him with "his very particular regard." At the same time, the pope made Zink be pressed to gain Zuinglius. "What, then, does the pope commission you to offer?" asked Oswald Myconius. "Every thing," replied Zink, "except the pontifical see."2

There was no mitre and crozier, no cardinal's hat that the pope would not have given to gain the Reformer of Zurich. But in regard to him Rome was under strange illusions. All her offers were unavailing. The Romish Church had a more inveterate enemy in Zuinglius than in Luther. He cared less than Luther did for the ideas and rites of former ages. To provoke his attack upon any custom innocent in itself, it was enough that it was attached to some abuse. The Word of God, he thought, was alone entitled to stand. But if Rome so little understood what was taking place in Christendom, she had counsellors who tried to correct her mistake.

Faber, irritated at seeing the pope thus humbling himself before his adversary, hastened to enlighten him. A courtier, who had always a smile upon his lips and honied words in his mouth, Faber was, by his own account, the friend of every body, even of those whom he was accusing of heresy. But his hatred was mortal. Hence, the Reformer, playing on the word Faber said, "The vicar of Constance is a fabricator … of lies. Let him openly proceed to arms, and see how Christ defends us."

These words were not a vain bravado; for while the pope was speaking to Zuinglius of his eminent virtues, and of the particular confidence which he had in him, the enemies of the Reformer were multiplying in Switzerland. Veteran soldiers, leading families, and mountain shepherds, were uniting in their hatred against this doctrine, which was at variance with their tastes. At Lucerne a pompous spectacle was announced under the name of The Passion of Zuinglius. A dwarf, meant to represent the Reformer, was dragged to execution, crying, that they were going to put the heretic to death. Laying hold of some Zurichers who were at Lucerne, they obliged them to be spectators of this ridiculous exhibition. "They will not disturb my peace," said Zuinglius. "Christ will never be wanting to his people." The Diet itself resounded with menaces against him. "Dear confederates," said counsellor Mullinen to the cantons, "oppose the Lutheran cause in time.… At Zurich a man is no longer a master in his own house." This agitation of the adversary announced what was taking place in Zurich still better than any proclamations could have done. In fact, the victory was yielding its proper fruit; the conquerors gradually took possession of the country, and the gospel daily made new progress. Twenty-four canons, and a great number of chaplains, came, of their own accord to the council, to demand a reform of their statutes. It was resolved to supply the place of these idle priests by pious and learned men, commissioned to give the youth of Zurich a Christian and liberal education, and to establish, instead of their Latin vespers and masses, a daily exposition of a chapter of the Bible according to the Hebrew and Greek text, first for the learned, and then immediately after for the people.

All armies unfortunately contain blundering recruits, who detach themselves from the main body, and prematurely attack some point which ought for the time to have been left untouched. A young priest, named Louis Ketzer, having published in Germany a treatise, entitled “The Judgment of God against Images,” a strong impression was produced, and images became the constant dislike of a portion of the population. When a man allows his attention to be engrossed by secondary matters, it is always to the detriment of more essential matters. A crucifix carefully sculptured and richly adorned had been placed on the outside of one of the gates of the town, at the place called Stadelhofen. The most ardent partisans of the Reformation shocked at the superstition to which this image gave occasion, were unable to pass it without expressing their indignation. A citizen named Claud Hottinger, “a worthy man,” says Bullinger, “and well read in the Scriptures,” having met the miller of Stadelhofen, to whom the crucifix belonged, asked when he meant to pull down his idols. “Nobody obliges you to worship them,” replied the miller. “But do you not know,” resumed. Hottinger, “that the Word of God forbids us to have graven images?” “Very well,” replied the miller, “if you are authorised to pull them down, I abandon them to you.” Hottinger thought himself entitled to act, and shortly after, about the end of September, he set forth from the town with a number of citizens. On arriving at the crucifix, they quietly dug all around it until the image yielded to their efforts, and fell to the ground with a loud noise. This bold action spread general alarm; one would have said that with the crucifix of Stadelhofen, religion itself had been overthrown. “These men are blasphemers! They are worthy of death!” exclaimed the friends of Rome. The council caused the iconoclast burghers to be apprehended.

“No:” said Zuinglius and his colleagues from the pulpit, “Hottinger and his friends are not guilty before God or worthy of death. But they may be punished for having acted with violence, and without the authority of the magistrates.”2

Meanwhile similar acts were repeated. One day a vicar, of the church of St. Peter, seeing a number of poor people before the church without food and clothing, said to one of his colleagues, turning towards some of the pompously decked images, “I would willingly strip these wooden idols in order to clothe these poor members of Jesus Christ.” A few days after, at three in the morning, the saints, and all their ornaments, disappeared. The council ordered the vicar to be imprisoned, though he declared that he was not the guilty party. “What!” said the people, “was it bits of wood our Saviour ordered us to clothe? Is it on account of these images he will say to us, ‘I was naked, and ye clothed me?’ ” Thus, the Reformation, when discountenanced, became only the more powerful. The more it was curbed the more violently it sprang forward, threatening to bear down its opposition.

CHAP. III The October Discussion—Zuinglius on the Church—The Church—First Outline of Presbyterianism—Discussion on the Mass—Enthusiasts—A Voice of Wisdom—Victory—A characteristic of the Swiss Reformation—Moderation—Oswald Myconius at Zurich—The Revival of Letters—Thomas Plater of the Valois.

Even these excesses were to prove salutary. A new combat was necessary in order to secure new triumphs; for it is equally true in mental as in worldly affairs—that there is no conquest without a struggle. Since the soldiers of Rome remained motionless, the combat was to be provoked by rash sons of the Reformation. In fact, the magistrates were uncertain and at a loss how to act. They felt that their conscience required to be enlightened; and, with this view, they resolved to institute a

second public discussion in German, when the question of images should be tried by Scripture. The Bishops of Coire, Constance, and Bale, the university of Bale, and the twelve cantons, were in consequence invited to send deputies to Zurich. The bishops refused the invitation, Remembering the sad figure their deputies had made at the previous discussion, they had no wish to renew these humiliating scenes. Let the evangelicals dispute if they will; but leave them to do it by themselves. The first time we were silent—the second we wont even appear. Rome, perhaps, imagined that there would be no combat from want of combatants. The bishops were not singular in refusing to come. The men of Underwalden replied that they had no learned men among them, but merely honest and pious priests, who explained the gospel as their fathers had done, and therefore they would not send any deputy to Zuinglius, “and the like of him;” but that, if they had him in their clutches, they would handle him in a way which would leave him no desire to repeat the same faults. Schaffhausen and St. Gall alone sent representatives. On Monday, 26th October, after sermon, an assembly of more than nine hundred persons, consisting of members of the Grand Council, and three hundred and fifty priests, filled the large hall of the town-house. Zuinglius and Leo Juda were seated at a table on which lay the Old and New Testament in the original tongues. Zuinglius first spoke, and, demolishing the authority of the hierarchy and its councils with a vigorous arm, established the rights of every Christian church, and claimed the liberty of the primitive ages—of those times when the Church had neither œcumenical nor provincial councils. “The Church universal,” said he, “is diffused over the whole world, wherever there is faith in Jesus Christ, in the Indies as well as at Zurich.… And, as to particular churches, we have them at Berne, at Schaffhausen—here also. But the popes, their cardinals, and their councils, are neither the Church universal nor the Church particular. This assembly which I now address,” he continued energetically, “is the church of Zurich; it desires to hear the Word of God, and it is entitled to enjoin whatever it deems conformable to the Holy Scriptures.”

Thus Zuinglius leant upon the Church—but the true Church; not on priests only, but on the congregation of Christians—on the people. All that Scripture says of the Church in general, he applied to particular churches. He did not think that a church listening with docility to the Word of God, could be deceived. The Church he regarded as politically and ecclesiastically represented by the Great Council. He at first discussed each question in the pulpit, and then, after men’s minds were convinced of the truth, he laid the matter before the Great Council, who, being agreed with the ministers of the Church, adopted the decisions which she approved.2 In the absence of deputies from the bishop, the defence of the pope was undertaken by the old canon, Conrad Hoffman, who had been the means of calling Zuinglius to Zurich. He maintained that the Church, the flock, “the third estate,” had no right to discuss such matters. “I was thirteen years at Heidelberg,” said he, “I lived with a great scholar, called Doctor Joss, a worthy pious man, with whom, for a long time, I ate and drank, and lived on familiar terms; but he always said that it was unbefitting to discuss such subjects. You see well!” Every body was ready to laugh; but the burgomaster stopped the explosion. “Thus, then,” continued Hoffman, “let us wait for a council. For the time being, I have no wish to discuss, but to submit to the bishop, even were he a rogue!”

“Wait for a council!” replied Zuinglius. “And who will attend a council? The pope and lazy ignorant bishops, who will do nothing of their own accord. No: that is not the Church! Höng and Küssnacht (two Zurich villages) are much more certainly a Church than all the bishops and popes put together!”

Thus Zuinglius claimed the restoration of the rights of the Christian people, whom Rome had disinherited of their privileges. The assembly before which he spoke was not, in his view, the Church of Zurich, but it was its primary representative. We have here the germs of the Presbyterian system. Zuinglius withdrew Zurich from the jurisdiction of the bishopric of Constance, detached it from the Latin hierarchy, and on the idea of the flock, of the Christian assembly, founded a new ecclesiastical constitution, to which other countries were at a later period to adhere. The discussion was continued. Several priests having risen to defend images, but without appealing to the Holy Scriptures, Zuinglius and the other reformers employed the Scriptures in refuting them. “If no one rises,” said one of the presidents, “to give Bible arguments in favour of images, we shall call upon some of their defenders by name.” Nobody coming forward, he called upon the curate of Wadischwyl. “He is asleep,” cried one of the audience. The curate of Horgen was then called upon. “He sent me in his stead,” replied his vicar; “but I dont wish to answer for him.” The Word of God gave evident tokens of its power in the midst of this assembly. The friends of the Reformation were full of power, liberty and joy; their opponents appeared speechless, uneasy, desponding. In succession were called the curates of Laufen, Glattfelden, Wetzikon, the rector and curate of Pfäffikon, the dean of Elgg, the curate of Bäretschwyl, the Dominican and Cordelier friars, who were known every where to preach up images, the Virgin, saints, and the mass, but all answered that they could not say any thing in their favour, and that, in future, they would apply to the study of the truth. “Hitherto,” said one of them, “I have believed the ancient; now I mean to believe the new doctors.” “It is not us that you ought to believe,” exclaimed Zuinglius, “it is the Word of God. The Scriptures alone never deceive.” The meeting was protracted, and night drew on. President Hofmeister of Schaffhausen, rose and said, “Blessed be the Almighty and Eternal God who giveth us the victory in all things.” He then exhorted the counsellors of Zurich to abolish images. The meeting was again held on Tuesday, under the presidency of Vadian, for the discussion of the doctrine of the mass. “Brethren in Christ,” said Zuinglius, “far be it from us to think that there is any deception or falsehood in the blood of Christ. Our only object is to show that the mass is not a sacrifice which one man can present to God for another man, unless, indeed, it can be shown that a man can eat and drink for his friend.” Vadian having asked on two several occasions if any of those present were ready to defend the doctrine which was impugned, by Scripture, and nobody having answered, the canons of Zurich, the chaplains, and several other ecclesiastics, declared that they agreed with Zuinglius. But no sooner had the Reformers thus vanquished the partisans of the ancient doctrines, than they were compelled to struggle against those impatient men who demand sudden and violent innovations, instead of wise and gradual reforms. The unhappy Conrad Grebel rose and said, “It is not enough to have discussed the mass—it is necessary to abolish its abuses.”—“The council,” replied Zuinglius, will issue a decree on this subject.” Then Simon Stumpf exclaimed, “The Spirit of God has already decided! why then remit it to the council for decision?”

Commander Schmidt of Kussnacht rose up gravely and uttered words full of wisdom. “Let us teach Christians,” said he, “to receive Christ into their hearts. Till this hour you have all gone after idols. Those of the plain have run to the mountains, and those of the mountains have run to the plain; the French to Germany, and the Germans to France. Now you know where you ought to go. God has united all things in Christ. Noble men of Zurich run to the true source; let Jesus Christ again enter on your territory, and resume his ancient empire.” This address made a deep impression, and none having appeared to contradict it, Zuinglius, under deep emotion, rose and said,

“Gracious lords, God is with us!… He will defend his cause. Now, then, … in the name of God, … forward!…” Here he was so deeply agitated that he was obliged to stop. He wept and many wept with him.

Thus terminated the discussion. The presidents rose; the burgomaster thanked them, and then this old warrior, addressing the council, said gravely, with the voice which had so often been heard on the battle-field. “Now, then, let us take into our hands the sword of the Word of God, … and may God prosper his own work.” This discussion of October, 1523, had been decisive. The greater part of the priests who had been present at it, returned full of zeal to different parts of the canton, and the effect of these days was felt all over Switzerland. The church of Zurich, which had always been, to a certain degree, independent of the bishopric of Constance, was now fully emancipated. Instead of resting through the bishop on the pope, it henceforth rested through the people on the Word of God. Zurich resumed the rights of which Rome had robbed it. The town and the country rivalled each other in the interest they felt for the work of the Reformation, and the Great Council only followed the movement of the people. On important occasions the town and villages intimated what their views were. Luther had restored the Bible to the Christian people. Zuinglius went farther, and restored their rights. This is a characteristic feature of the Reformation in Switzerland. It confided the maintenance of sound doctrine under God to the people, and recent events have shown that the people are better custodiers of this deposit than priests and pontiffs.

Zuinglius did not allow himself to be inflated by victory. On the contrary, the Reformation was proceeded with, by his desire, with great moderation. When the council asked his advice, he said, “God knows my heart; he knows that I am disposed to build up and not to pull down. I know timid souls who require to be gently dealt with; let the mass then be for some time longer read in all the churches on Sunday, and let care be taken not to insult those who celebrate it.” The council issued a decree to this effect. Hottinger and Hochrutiner, one of his friends, were banished from the canton for two years, and forbidden to return without permission. At Zurich, the Reformation followed a wise and Christian course. Exalting this city higher and higher, it made it glorious in the eyes of all the friends of the Word of God. Accordingly, those in Switzerland who had hailed the new day which was rising on the Church, felt powerfully attracted toward Zurich. Oswald Myconius, driven from Lucerne, had remained for six months in the valley of Einsidlen, when one day as he was returning from a journey to Glaris, worn out with heat and fatigue, he was met by his son, young Felix, who came running to tell him that he was called to Zurich to direct one of the schools. Oswald, unable to credit the good news, was suspended between hope and fear.3 “I am yours,” he at last wrote to Zuinglius. Geroldsek parted with him with regret, while sad thoughts filled his mind. “Ah!” said he to him, “all who profess Christ go away to Zurich; I fear that we shall one day all perish together,”—a mournful presentiment which the death of Gerlodsek and so many other friends of the gospel was to realise too truly on the plains of Cappel.

Myconius at last found a safe port in Zurich. His predecessor, who from his stature, had been nick-named at Paris, “the great devil,” had neglected his duties; Oswald devoted all his powers and all his heart to the fulfilment of them. He explained the Latin and Greek classics, and taught rhetoric and logic, while the youth of the town listened to him with joy. Myconius was to be to the young what Zuinglius was to adults.

Myconius was first alarmed at the advanced scholars he was to have; but he gradually resumed courage, and had, ere long, distinguished among his pupils a youth of twenty-four, whose look bespoke a love of study. He was named Thomas Plater, and was originally from the Valais. In the beautiful valley where the torrent of the Viege after escaping from the ocean of glaciers and snow which surround Mount Rosa, rolls its turbulent waters between St. Nicholas and Stalden, on the mountain which rises on the right of the river, still stands the village of Grächen. It was the birthplace of Plater. From the vicinity of these colossal Alps was to come forth one of the most original characters who figured in the grand drama of the 16th century. Placed at the age of nine with a curate, a relation, the little peasant, when beaten, as he often was, cried, to use his own words, like a hare when it is put to death. One of his cousins took him with him to visit the German schools. He was already more than twenty years of age, and, while running from school to school, could scarcely read. Having arrived at Zurich, he firmly resolved to attend to his education; and having made a bench for himself in a corner of Myconius' school, said to himself, "There you will learn or die." The light of the gospel penetrated his heart. One morning, feeling very cold, and having nothing to heat the school stove, which it was his office to keep going, he said to himself, "You have no wood, and so many idols in the church." Though Zuinglius was to preach, and the bells had begun to ring, nobody was present. Plater silently entered the church, and carrying off a St. John that stood upon an altar, put it in the stove, saying, "Down with you, for you must pass through it." Doubtless, neither Myconius or Zuinglius would have approved the act. In truth, unbelief and superstition, required to be combated with better weapons. Zuinglius and his colleagues had given the right hand of fellowship to Myconius, who daily expounded the New Testament in the church of Notre Dame to a large and attentive andience. A public discussion, which took place on the 13th and 14th of January, 1524, had given a new blow to Rome. In vain had canon Koch exclaimed, "The popes, the cardinals, the bishops, and the councils, these are my church!…"

Every thing was advancing in Zurich; men's minds were enlightened, their hearts were fixed, the Reformation was established. Zurich was a fortress gained by the new doctrine, and from its walls that doctrine was to spread over the whole confederation.

CHAPTER IV

Diet of Lucerne—Hottinger Arrested—His Death—Deputation of the Diet to Zurich—Abolition of Processions—Abolition of Images—The two Reformations—Appeal to the People. The enemy was aware of this, and saw the necessity of resolving to strike a decisive blow. He had long enough been mute. The strong men of Switzerland, the cuirassed and steel-clad warriors at last resolved to rise; and they had never risen without reddening the battle-field with blood. The Diet had met at Lucerne. The priests laboured to stir up the first council of the nation in their favour. Friburg and the Waldstetten showed themselves their ready instruments; Berne, Basle, Solenre, Glaris, Appenzel were undecided. Schaffhausen almost declared for the gospel, but Zurich alone stood up boldly as its defender. The partisans of Rome urged the Diet to yield to their demands and prejudices. "Let all be prohibited," said they, "to preach, or announce any thing new or Lutheran, secretly or publicly; and to speak or dispute on these topics in taverns and over their cups." Such was the ecclesiastical law which the confederation was asked to establish.

Nineteen articles to this effect were drawn up, and being approved on the 26th January, 1523, by all the states except Zurich, were sent to all the bailies, with orders to see that they were strictly observed. “This,” says Bullinger, “caused great joy among the priests, and great grief among the faithful.” Persecution, being thus regularly organised by the superior authority of the confederation, now began.

One of the first who received the orders of the Diet was Henry Flackenstein of Lucerne, bailie of Baden, within whose jurisdiction Hottinger had retired on his banishment from Zurich, after throwing down the crucifix of Stadelhofen. Here he had not kept a watch upon his tongue, but one day at table in the Angel Inn, at Zurzach, had said that the priests were bad expounders of the Holy Scriptures, and that it was necessary to confide entirely to God alone. The inn-keeper, who was constantly going and coming, bringing in bread and wine, became a listener to language which seemed to him very strange. Another day, Hottinger had been to see one of his friends, John Schutz of Schneyssingen. After they had dined together, Schutz asked, “What then is this new faith which the priests of Zurich are preaching.” “They preach,” replied Hottinger, “that Christ was once sacrificed for all Christians, that by this single sacrifice he has purified and ransomed them from all their sins, and they show, by the Holy Scriptures, that the mass is a lie.”

Hottinger had afterwards quitted Switzerland, (this took place in February, 1523,) and gone on business across the Rhine to Waldshut. Measures were taken to make sure of him, and towards the end of February, the poor Zuricher, who suspected nothing, having again crossed the Rhine, no sooner reached Coblentz, a village on the left bank of the river, than he was arrested. He was taken to Klingenan. As he confessed his faith frankly, Flackenstein became irritated, and said, “I will take you where you will find your answer.” In fact, the bailie took him successively before the judges of Klingenan, before the superior tribunal of Baden, and at length, as none would declare him guilty, he took him before the Diet assembled at Lucerne. He was determined to find judges who would condemn him. The Diet lost no time, and condemned Hottinger to be beheaded. On learning his sentence, he gave thanks to Jesus Christ. “Very good, very good,” said James Troger, one of the judges, “we are not here to listen to sermons. You will babble some other time.” “His head must first be taken off,” said bailie Amort of Lucerne laughing, “but if it comes on again, we will all embrace his creed.” “May God forgive those who condemn me,” said the prisoner. Then a monk having put a crucifix to his lips, he pushed it away saying, “It is in the heart that we ought to receive Christ.” When he was led away to execution, several in the crowd could not refrain from tears. “I am going to eternal happiness,” said he, turning towards them. On reaching the place of execution, he raised his eyes to heaven, and said, “I commit my soul into thy hands, O my Redeemer.” Next moment his head rolled on the scaffold. No sooner had Hottinger’s blood been shed than the enemies of the Reformation took advantage of it still more to inflame the rage of the confederates. In Zurich itself must the evil be suppressed. The dreadful example which had just been given must have filled Zuinglius and his partisans with terror. One vigorous effort more and Hottinger’s death will be followed by that of the Reformation.… The Diet immediately resolved that a deputation should be sent to Zurich, to ask the council and citizens to abjure their faith. On the 21st of March, the deputation was received. “Ancient Christian unity,” said the deputies, “is broken; the evil extends; already have the clergy of the four Waldstettes declared, that if aid is not given to them, they will be obliged to desist from their functions. Confederates of Zurich, join your efforts to ours; strangle this new faith; depose Zuinglius and his disciples; then let us all unite in applying a

remedy to the encroachments of the popes and their courtiers."

Thus spoke the enemy. What, then, were the men of Zurich to do? Would their hearts fail them, and their courage melt away with the blood of their fellow-citizen?

Zurich did not long leave her friends and enemies in uncertainty. The council answered calmly and nobly, that they could not make any concession when the Word of God was involved, and afterwards proceeded to reply in terms still more eloquent.

It had been customary, from the year 1351, that, on Whitsunday Monday, a numerous procession, in which every pilgrim bore a cross, should repair to Einsidlen to worship the Virgin. Great irregularities were committed during this festival, which was established in memory of the battle of Tatwyll. The procession was to take place on the 7th May. On the application of the three pastors the council abolished it, and all the other processions were successively reformed. Nor did they stop here. Relies, the source of many superstitions, were honourably buried. Thereafter, on the demand of the three pastors, the council issued a decree purporting that, as God alone was to be honoured, images should be removed from all the churches of the canton, and their ornaments employed in relieving the poor. Twelve counsellors, (one from each tribe,) the three pastors, the architect of the town, blacksmiths, locksmiths, carpenters, and masons, repaired to the different churches, and, locking the doors behind them,3 took down the crosses, picked away the figures in fresco, whitened the walls, and carried off the images, to the great joy of the faithful, who, said Bullinger, "saw in this act a brilliant homage rendered to God." In some country churches the ornaments were burned to the honour and glory of God. Organs, which were frequently played in connection with divers superstitions, were abolished, and baptism was administered after a new formula, from which every thing not Scriptural was excluded.

Burgomaster Roust, and his colleague, gladly hailed the triumphs of the Reformation with their last look. They had lived long enough, and they died at the very time of this great revival. The Swiss Reformation presents itself under an aspect very different from that of the German Reformation. Luther had set his face against the excesses of those who broke down the images in the churches of Wittemberg; but images fell in the presence of Zuinglius in the churches of Zurich. This difference is explained by the peculiarities of the two Reformers. Luther wished to retain in the Church every thing that was not directly contrary to Scripture, whereas Zuinglius wished to abolish every thing that could not be proved by Scripture. The German Reformer wished to remain united to the Church of former ages, and was satisfied with purging it of every thing that was opposed to the Word of God. The Zurich Reformer passed by all these ages, returned to apostolic times, and subjecting the Church to a complete transformation, laboured to re-establish it in its primitive form. The Reformation of Zuinglius was therefore the more complete. The work which Providence had committed to Luther—the re-establishment of justification by faith—was doubtless the great work of the Reformation; but this work once finished, there remained others which, though perhaps secondary, were still important. This was, more especially, the work of Zuinglius. In fact, two great tasks were given to the Reformers. Christian Catholicism, which was born amid Jewish pharisaism and Greek heathenism, had gradually yielded to the influence of these two religions, and thereby been transformed into Roman Catholicism. Now the Reformation, in as much as it had been called to purify the Church, was bound to emancipate it equally from the heathen and from the Jewish element. The Jewish element existed especially in that department of Christian doctrine which

bears reference to man. Catholicism had received from Judaism the pharisaical ideas of self-righteousness, and salvation by human powers, or works. The heathen element existed especially in that department of Christian doctrine which relates to God. In Catholicism, the idea of an infinite God, whose all-sufficient power acts every where, and without ceasing, had been adulterated by heathenism. In its place the reign of symbols, images, and ceremonies, had been introduced into the Church, and the saints had become the demigods of the papacy.

Luther's Reformation was directed essentially against the Jewish element. This was the element with which he had to struggle, when an audacious monk was sent by the pope, to vend the salvation of souls for ready cash. The Reformation of Zuinglius was specially directed against the Heathen element. This element he had encountered when in the Church of Our Lady of Einsidlen, as of old in the temple of Diana of Ephesus, a crowd who had flocked from all quarters, stupidly prostrated themselves before an idol decked in gold. The Reformer of Germany proclaimed the great doctrine of justification by faith, and thereby gave a death-blow to the pharisaical righteousness of Rome. No doubt the Reformer of Switzerland did so also; the inability of man to save himself forms the basis of the work of all reformers. But Zuinglius did more. He proved the supreme, universal, exclusive existence and agency of God, and thus gave a mortal thrust to the pagan worship of Rome.

Roman Catholicism had exalted man and dishonoured God. Luther humbled man: Zuinglius exalted God.

These two tasks, which were theirs specially, but not exclusively, were both completed. That of Luther laid the foundation of the building: that of Zuinglius put on the cope-stone.

It was reserved for a still greater genius on the banks of the lake of Geneva, to impress both characters at once on the Reformation. But while Zuinglius was thus advancing with rapid strides at the head of the confederation, the temper of the cantons was always becoming more hostile. The Zurich government felt the necessity of being able to fall back on the people. The people, i.e., the assembly of the faithful, was, moreover, according to the principles of Zuinglius, the highest power on earth to which an appeal could be made. The council resolved to sound them, and ordered the bailies to put the question to all the communes, whether they were willing to endure every thing for the sake of Jesus Christ, "who," said the council, "gave for us sinners his life and blood." The whole canton had taken a deep interest in the progress of the Reformation in the town, and in many places the houses of the peasantry had become Christian schools, in which the Holy Scriptures were read. The proclamation of the council, which was read in all the districts, was received with enthusiasm. "Let our rulers," replied they, "adhere boldly to the Word of God, we will help them to maintain it; and if any annoyance is given them, we will bring assistance to our brave fellow-citizens." The peasantry of Zurich showed then, as they have shown since, that the strength of the Church is in the Christian people. But the people were not alone. The man whom God had placed at their head, responded nobly to their appeal. Zuinglius, as it were, multiplied himself for the service of God. All who, in the Helvetic cantons, endured any persecution for the gospel, applied to him. The responsibilty of affairs, the care of the Church, anxious interest in the struggle carried on in all the Swiss vallies, formed the burdens of the Zurich evangelist.5 At Wittemberg, news of his courage were received with joy. Luther and Zuinglius were two great luminaries placed in upper and lower Germany, and the doctrine of salvation, so powerfully preached by them,

spread over the extensive regions, which descend from the heights of the Alps to the shores of the Baltic and the Northern Ocean.

CHAP. V

New Opposition—Œxlin carried off—The Family of the Wirths—The mob at the Convent of Ittingen—The Diet of Zug—The Wirths seized and given up to the Diet—Condemnation. The Word of God could not thus triumphantly spread over extensive districts without arousing the indignation of the pope in his palace, the curates in their presbyteries, and the Swiss magistrates in their councils. Their terror increased every day. The people were consulted; the christian people again became of some weight in the Christian Church, and their faith and their sympathies were appealed to instead of the decrees of the Roman chancery.… This formidable attack required a still more formidable resistance. On the 18th April, the pope addressed a brief to the confederates, and the Diet assembled at Zug in the month of July, yielding to the pressing exhortations of the pontiff, sent a deputation to Zurich, Schaffhausen and Appenzel, to declare to these States its firm determination to destroy the new doctrine, and prosecute its adherents, in their goods, their honours, and even their lives. This warning was not heard in Zurich without emotion; but it was firmly answered, that, in matters of faith, obedience could only be given to the Word of God. On hearing this reply, Lucerne, Schwitz, Uri, Underwalden, Friburg, and Zug, gave loud utterance to their rage, and forgetting the reputation and strength which the accession of Zurich had of old given to the rising confederation, forgetting the precedence which had already been conceded to it, the simple and solemn oaths which had been taken to it, and the many common victories and reverses, these states declared that they would not sit in Diet with Zurich. Thus, in Switzerland, as in Germany, the partisans of Rome were the first to violate federal unity. But menaces and ruptures of alliance, were not sufficient. The fanaticism of the cantons demanded blood, and it was soon seen with what weapons the papacy sought to combat the Word of God. A friend of Zuinglius, the excellent Œxlin, was pastor at Berg, near Stein, on the Rhine. The bailie, Amberg, who had appeared to listen gladly to the gospel,2 wishing to obtain this bailiwick, had promised the leading men in Schwitz to destroy the new faith. Œxlin, though he was not subject to his jurisdiction was the first on whom his severity was to be exercised. On the night of 7th July, 1524, a knock was heard towards midnight at the pastor’s door. On being opened, the bailie’s soldiers seized him, and carried him off prisoner, notwithstanding of his cries. Œxlin, on his part, thinking they were going to assassinate him, cried murder; the inhabitants got up in alarm, and the whole village was soon in a frightful tumult, the noise of which reached as far as Stein. The sentinel on guard at the castle of Hohenklingen fired the alarm cannon, the tocsin sounded, and the inhabitants of Stein, Stammheim, and the adjacent places, were all, in a few moments, in motion, inquiring, amid the darkness, as to what had happened in the district. At Stammheim lived vice-bailie Wirth, whose two sons, Adrian and John, young priests full of piety and courage, earnestly preached the gospel. John, especially, in the fulness of faith, was ready to give his life to his Saviour. It was a patriarchal family. Anna, the mother, who had given the bailie a numerous family, and had brought them up in the fear of the Lord, was revered for her virtues over the whole district. On hearing of the tumult of Berg, the father and the two eldest sons came out of the house. The father’s indignation was roused when he saw that the bailie of Frauenfeld had exercised his authority in an illegal manner. The sons were grieved to learn that their brother, their friend, he whose good example they loved to follow, was carried off as a criminal. Each of them seized a

halbert, and, in spite of the fears of an affectionate wife and mother, the father and the two sons joined the band of the citizens of Stein, determined to deliver their pastor. Unhappily a crowd of those nondescript individuals who always spring up whenever there is any disturbance, were also astir. They set off in pursuit of the bailie's officers, who, hearing the tocsin and sounds of alarm, made all speed, and dragging along their victim, soon placed the Thur between themselves and their pursuers. The people of Stein and Stammheim reached the river side, but having no means of crossing, stopped, and resolved to send a deputation to Frauenfeld. "Ah!" said bailie Wirth, "the pastor of Stein is so dear to us that I would willingly give up every thing for him, my goods, my liberty, and even my life." The mob finding themselves near the convent of the Cordeliers of Ittingen, who were supposed to stimulate the tyranny of the bailie Amberg, entered, and got possession of the refectory. These miserable beings soon became intoxicated, and scenes of disorder ensued. Wirth implored them, but in vain, to quit the convent;2 he even exposed himself to be maltreated by them. His son Adrian remained outside the cloister. John entered it, but distressed at what he saw he immediately came out again. The intoxicated peasants began to break into the wine cellars and stores, to break the furniture to pieces, and burn the books.

News of these disorders having reached Zurich, deputies from the council hastened to the spot, and ordered those who had come out of the canton to return to their homes. The order was obeyed. But a crowd of Thurgovians, attracted by the tumult, installed themselves in the convent, and there made good cheer. Suddenly, no one knew how, a fire broke out, and the convent was reduced to ashes.

Five days after, the deputies of the cantons met at Zug. Cries of revenge and death were heard in the assembly. "Let us march," said they, "with banners unfurled, on Stein and Stammheim, and smite their inhabitants with the sword." The vice-bailie and his two sons, on account of their faith, had long been the objects of special hatred. "If any one is guilty," said the deputy of Zurich, "let him be punished; but be it according to the laws of justice, and not by violence." Vadian, deputy of St. Gall, supported this view. Then the envoy, John Hug of Lucerne, unable to restrain himself, exclaimed, with dreadful oaths,1 "The heretic, Zuinglius, is the father of all these revolts, and you, doctor of St. Gall, you favour his infamous cause, you aid him in securing its triumphs.… You ought not to sit longer among us." The deputy of Zug endeavoured to restore peace, but in vain, Vadian retired; and, as some of the populace had designs upon his life, he secretly left the town, and arrived, by a devious course, at the convent of Cappel.

Zurich, determined to suppress all disorder, resolved, in the meantime, to apprehend those who had roused the anger of the confederates. Wirth and his sons were living peaceably at Stammheim. "Never will the enemies of God be able to overcome his friends," said Adrian Wirth from the pulpit. The father received information of the fate which awaited him, and was urged to fly with his sons. "No," said he: "trusting in God, I mean to wait for the officers." And, when the soldiers made their appearance at his house, he said, "My lords of Zurich might have spared themselves all this trouble; they had only to send a child for me, and I would have obeyed." The three Wirths were led away to the prison of Zurich. Rutiman, bailie of Nussbaum, shared their fate. They were closely examined, but nothing was discovered in their conduct to criminate them. 3 As soon as the deputies had learned the imprisonment of these four citizens, they demanded that they should be sent to Baden, and gave orders, in the event of a refusal, to march upon Zurich and carry them off. "To Zurich," replied the deputies of this state, "it belongs to ascertain whether these

men are guilty or not; and we have found no fault in them." Then the deputies of the cantons exclaimed, "Will you deliver them to us? Answer yes or no; and not one word more." Two of the deputies of Zurich took horse, and rode off at full speed to their constituents. On their arrival all the town was in great agitation. If the prisoners were refused, the confederates would come and seek them with arms in their hands; and, if they were delivered, it was the same thing as giving them up to death. Opinions were divided. Zuinglius was decidedly for refusing. "Zurich," said he, "must remain faithful to its constitutions." At last it was thought that a middle course had been found. "We will remit the prisoners to you," said they to the diet, "but on condition that you will only examine them as to the affair of Ittingen, and not as to their faith." The Diet acceded to the terms; and on the Friday before St. Bartholomew's day (August, 1524,) the three Wirths and their friend, accompanied by four counsellors of state, left Zurich.

There was general lamentation. It was foreseen what fate awaited these two old men and these two youths. Nothing but sobbing was heard as they passed along. "Alas!" exclaims a contemporary, "what a mournful procession." The churches were crowded. "God," exclaimed Zuinglius, "God will punish us. Ah! let us, at least, implore him to impart his grace to these poor prisoners, and strengthen their faith.2 On Friday evening the accused arrived at Baden, where an immense crowd was waiting for them. They were first taken to an inn and then to prison. They had difficulty in moving forward, the people pressed so close upon them to see them. The father, who walked in front, turned towards his sons, and mildly said to them, "See, my dear children, we are, as the apostle says, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men." 1 Corinthians 4:9. Then perceiving in the crowd his mortal enemy, bailie Amberg, the cause of all his misfortunes, he went up and offered him his hand, but the bailie turned away. Clasping his hand in his, he calmly said, "God lives in heaven, and knows all things." The inquest commenced on the following day. Bailie Wirth was first brought in. He was put to the torture without regard to his character or his age; but he persisted in declaring that he was innocent of the pillaging and burning of Ittingen. He was then charged with destroying an image of St. Anne…. Nothing could be proved against the other prisoners, except that Adrian Wirth was married, and preached after the manner of Zuinglius and Luther; and that John Wirth had given the sacrament to a sick person, without bell and taper. But the more their innocence was proved, the more the rage of their adversaries increased. From morning till noon the old man was kept under the torture. His tears could not soften his judges. John Wirth was still more cruelly tortured. "Tell us," he was asked in the midst of his agony, "tell us where you got your heretical faith? Was it from Zuinglius, or some other person?" And, as he exclaimed, "O merciful and eternal God, come to my aid and support me!" "Ah, well!" said one of the deputies to him, "where is now thy Christ?" When Adrian appeared, Sebastian of Stein, deputy of Berne, said to him, "Young man, tell us the truth; for if you refuse to tell it, I swear to you, by my knighthood, which I acquired in the very place where God suffered martyrdom, that we will open all the veins of your body in succession." Then the young man was attached to a cord, and as they swung him in the air, "My little master," said Stein, with a diabolical smile, "here is our marriage present," alluding to the marriage of the Lord's young servant. The process being concluded, the deputies returned to their cantons to make their report, and did not return till four weeks after. The bailie's wife, the mother of the two young priests, repaired to Baden, with an infant in her arms, to intercede with the judges. John Escher of Zurich, accompanied her as advocate. Perceiving among the judges the landamman of Zug, Jerome Stocker, who had two different times been bailie of Frauenfeld. "Landamman," said he to

him, “you know bailie Wirth: you know that he has all his life been an honest man.” “You say true, my dear Escher,” replied Stocker, “he never harmed any one; fellow citizens and strangers were always kindly received at his table; his house resembled a convent, an inn, an hospital. Hence, if he had robbed or murdered, I would do every thing in my power to obtain his pardon. But since he has burned St. Anne, the grandmother of Christ, he must die!”…. “God have mercy on us,” exclaimed Escher. The gates were shut. This was on the 28th September, and the deputies of Berne, Lucerne, Uri, Schwitz, Underwald, Zug, Glaris, Friburg, and Soleure, having proceeded to judgment with closed doors, according to custom, pronounced sentence of death on bailie Wirth, his son John, who was strongest in the faith, and appeared to have carried the others along with him, and bailie Rutiman. Adrian, the second son, was granted to his mother’s tears. The officers proceeded to the tower to fetch the prisoners. “My son,” said the father to Adrian, “do not avenge our death, although we have not deserved to suffer….” Adrian’s tears fell fast. “My brother,” said John to him, “the cross of Jesus Christ must always follow his word.”

After the judgment was read, these three Christians were taken back to prison; John Wirth walked in front, the two vice-bailies next, and a vicar followed. As they passed the castle bridge, where was a chapel consecrated to St. Joseph, “Prostrate yourselves, and invoke the saints,” said the priest to the two old men. John Wirth, who was in advance, turned back on hearing these words, and cried out, “Father, remain firm. You know there is only one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.” “Certainly, my son,” replied the old man, “and with the help of his grace I will remain faithful unto the end.” All three now began to repeat the Lord’s Prayer, “Our Father which art in heaven.” Then they passed the bridge.

They were afterwards led to the scaffold. John Wirth, whose heart was filled with the tenderest anxiety for his father, took farewell of him. “My dearly beloved father,” said he to him, “henceforth you are no longer my father, and I am no longer your son; but we are brethren in Christ our Lord, for whose name I am to suffer death. To-day, dearly beloved brother, if it pleases God, we shall go to him who is the father of us all. Fear nothing.”—“Amen!” replied the old man, “and may God Almighty bless you, my beloved son, and my brother in Christ!”

Thus, on the threshold of eternity, this father and son took leave of each other, hailing the new mansions where they were going to be united by everlasting ties. The greater part of those around them were weeping bitterly. Bailie Rutiman prayed in silence. The three having knelt down, “in the name of Christ,” were beheaded. The multitude, on seeing the marks of the torture upon their bodies, gave loud utterance to their grief. The two bailies left twenty-two children, and forty-five grandchildren. Anne had to pay twelve gold crowns to the executioner, who deprived her husband and son of life.

Thus blood, pure blood had flowed. Switzerland and the Reformation were baptised with the blood of martyrs. The great enemy of the gospel had done his work; but in doing it his power was broken. The death of the Wirths was to hasten the triumphs of the Reformation.

CHAPTER VI

Abolition of the Mass—Zuinglius’ dream—Celebration of the Lord’s Supper—Brotherly Charity—Original Sin—The Oligarchs against the Reformation—Divers Attacks.

It was not thought desirable to proceed to the abolition of the mass in Zurich, immediately after that of images; but now the moment seemed arrived. Not only was evangelical light diffused among the people; but, moreover, the blows which the enemy struck, called upon the friends of the gospel to reply to them by striking demonstrations of their immoveable fidelity. Every time that Rome erects a scaffold, and cuts off heads, the Reformation will hold up the Word of the Lord, and cut off abuses. When Hottinger was executed, Zurich abolished images; now that the heads of the Wirths have rolled on the scaffold, Zurich will reply by the abolition of the mass. The more Rome increases her cruelties, the more will the Reformation see her power increase. On the 11th April, 1525, the three pastors of Zurich presented themselves, with Megander and Oswald Myconius, before the great council, and petitioned for the re-establishment of the Lord's Supper. Their speech was grave; all minds were solemnised; every one felt the importance of the resolution which the council was called to take. The mass, that mystery which, for more than three centuries, was the soul of the religious service of the Latin Church, behoved to be abolished; the corporal presence of Christ behoved to be declared an illusion, and the illusion itself made palpable to the people. To resolve on this required courage, and there were men in the council who shuddered at the very idea of it. Joachim Am-Grüt, under-secretary of State, terrified at the bold demand of the pastors, opposed it with all his might. "These words—This is my body," said he, "irresistibly prove that the bread is the body of Christ himself." Zuinglius observed, that in the Greek language εστι (is) is the only word to express signifies; and he quoted several instances in which this word is employed in a figurative sense. The great council being convinced, hesitated not; the evangelical doctrines had penetrated all hearts. Besides, now that the Church was separated from Rome, there was some satisfaction in making it as much so as possible, and in placing a deep gulf between her and the Reformation. The council accordingly ordered the abolition of the mass, and decreed that, next day, Holy Thursday, the Lord's Supper should be celebrated in accordance with apostolic usage.

Zuinglius was eagerly occupied with these thoughts; and, at night, after he closed his eyes, he continued searching out arguments to oppose his adversaries. The subject which had occupied him so much during the day, again presented itself in sleep. He dreamt that he was disputing with Am-Grüt, and could not answer his leading objection. Suddenly a person appeared, and said "Why do you not quote Exodus 12:11. 'Ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover." ' Zuinglius awoke, leapt out of bed, took up the Septuagint translation, and found in it the very word εστι (is) whose meaning here, by the confession of all, can only be signifies.

Here, then, we have in the very institution of the passover under the Old Testament, the meaning for which Zuinglius contends. How then, is it possible to avoid the conclusion that the two passages are parallel? The next day Zuinglius selected this passage for his text, and spoke so forcibly, that he removed all doubts. This circumstance, which is so naturally explained, and the expression used by Zuinglius, when he said, that he did not remember the appearance of the person whom he saw in his dream, have given rise to the charge that the Reformer learned his doctrine from the devil.

Altars had disappeared; and their places were supplied by single tables, on which stood the bread and wine of the eucharist, while an attentive congregation thronged around. There was something solemn in the numbers. On Holy Thursday, the young; on Friday (Passion day), adults; and on Easter, the old, successively celebrated the Lord's death. The deacons read the passages of

Scripture which refer to the sacrament, the pastors addressed an earnest exhortation to the flock, urging all those who, by continuing in sin, would defile the body of the Lord Jesus to abstain from this sacred supper. The people knelt; the bread was handed round on large platters or wooden plates, and each person broke a portion; the wine was dispensed in wooden cups—this being thought to approach nearest to the first institution. Surprise and joy filled all hearts.

Thus the Reformation was effected in Zurich. The simple celebration of the Lord's death seemed to have again infused into the Church the love of God, and the love of the brethren. The words of Jesus Christ were again spirit and life. While the different orders and different parties of the Church of Rome had never ceased to dispute with each other, the first effect of the gospel, on again entering the Church, was to establish charity among the brethren. The love of the primitive ages was restored to Christendom. Enemies were seen renouncing old and inveterate hatred, and embracing each other, after having eaten together of the bread of the eucharist. Zuinglius, delighted at these touching manifestations, thanked God that the Lord's Supper was again performing those miracles of love which the sacrifice of the mass had long ceased to produce.

"Peace dwells in our city," exclaimed he; "among us no pretence, no dissension, no envy, no quarrel. Whence can such agreement come but from the Lord; and because the doctrine which we preach disposes us to innocence and peace?

There were now charity and unity, but not uniformity. Zuinglius, in his "Commentary on True and False Religion," which he dedicated to Francis I, in March, 1525, the year of the battle of Pavia had presented some truths, in the manner best fitted to gain a reception from human reason, in this following the example of several of the most distinguished scholastic theologians. Thus he had applied the term disease to original corruption, and restricted that of sin to the actual transgression of the law. But these statements, though they called forth some remonstrances, did not interrupt brotherly love; for Zuinglius, while persisting in calling original sin a disease, added, that, in consequence of it, all men were undone, and that the only remedy was in Jesus Christ.5 There was therefore no Pelagian error here. But while the celebration of the Supper in Zurich was accompanied with a return to Christian brotherhood, Zuinglius and his friends had so much more to endure externally, from the irritation of adversaries. Zuinglius was not only a Christian leader; he was also a true patriot; and we know with what zeal he combated enlistment, pensions, and foreign alliances. He was convinced that these influences from abroad destroyed piety, blinded reason, and sowed discord. But his loud protestations must have hurt the progress of the Reformation. In almost all the cantons, the leaders who received foreign pensions, and the officers who led the Helvetic youth to battle, formed powerful factions, formidable oligarchies which attacked the Reformation, not so much from any view to the Church, as on account of the prejudicial effect it threatened to have to their interests and honours. They had already gained the day at Schwitz. This canton, in which Zuinglius, Leo Juda, and Myconius had taught, and which might have been expected to follow in the wake of Zurich, was again all at once opened to mercenary enlistments, and shut against the Reformation. At Zurich even, some wretches, stirred up by foreign intrigues, attacked Zuinglius in the middle of the night, threw stones at his house, broke his windows, and with loud cries called him "the red Uli, the vulture of Glaris;" so that Zuinglius was awoke, and ran for his sword. This circumstance is characteristic of the man. But these isolated attacks could not paralyse the movement which was carrying forward Zurich, and beginning to shake Switzerland. They were only like stones thrown in to arrest a torrent. The

waters, rising on every side, threatened to break down the strongest obstacles. The Bernese having declared to the Zurichers that several states had refused to sit with them in diet in future. “Very well,” replied those of Zurich, calmly raising their hands to heaven, as the men of Rutli in former days, “we have a firm assurance that God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in whose name the Confederation was formed, will not forsake us, but will, at last, in mercy, give us a seat beside His Sovereign Majesty.” With such a faith the Reformation had nothing to fear. But will it gain similar victories in the other states of the Confederation? Will not Zurich be left alone in favour of the Word? Will Berne, Basle, and other cantons besides, remain subject to the power of Rome? We shall now see. Let as turn then towards Berne, and study the progress of the Reformation in the most influential state of the Confederation.

CHAPTER VII

Berne—The Provost of Watteville—First Successes of the Reformation—Haller at the Convent—Accusation and Deliverance—The Monastery of Königsfeld—Margaret of Watteville to Zuinglius—The Convent open—Two opposite Champions—Clara May and the Provost of Watteville. No where was the struggle to be keener than at Berne, where the gospel had at once powerful friends and formidable foes. At the head of the friends of the Reformation stood banneret John Weingarten, Bartholomew May, member of the little council, his sons, Wolfgang and Claudius, his grandchildren, James and Benedict, and, above all, the family of Watteville. The avoyer James Watteville, who had, from 1512, filled the first place in the republic, had early read the writings of Luther and Zuinglius, and had often conversed on the gospel with John Haller, pastor at Alsentingen, whom he had protected against his persecutors. His son, Nicholas, aged thirty-one, had been for two years provost of the church of Berne; and, as such, in virtue of papa ordinances, enjoyed great privileges. Hence, Berthold Haller called him “our bishop.” The prelates and the pope were exceedingly desirous to bind him to the interests of Rome, and every thing might have been expected to estrange him from the knowledge of the gospel; but the agency of God was more powerful than the flattery of man. Watteville was converted from darkness to the pure light of the gospel, says Zuinglius.3 The friend of Berthold Haller, he read all the letters which the latter received from Zuinglius, and could not sufficiently express his admiration. The interest of the two Wattevilles who were at the head, the one of the State, the other of the Church, might have been expected to carry the republic. But the opposite party was not less powerful.

Among its leaders were observed the schultheiss of Erlach, banneret Willading, and several patricians, whose interests were the same as those of the convents placed under their administration. Behind these influential individuals were an ignorant and corrupt clergy, who called the evangelical doctrine “an invention of hell”. In the month of July, counsellor Mullinen said in full assembly, “Dear confederates, take care that the Reformation do not gain upon us. In Zurich, people are not safe in their houses; they require soldiers to defend them.” In consequence, application was made to John Heim, the lecturer of the Dominicans at Mentz, who came to Berne, and began to inveigh, from the pulpit, with all the eloquence of St. Thomas, against the Reformation.

Thus the two parties were arrayed against each other, the struggle seemed inevitable, and even the result not doubtful. In fact, a common faith united a portion of the people to the most distinguished families of the state. Berthold Haller, full of confidence in the future, exclaimed,

“Provided God’s anger is not turned against us, it is impossible that the Word of God can be banished from this town, for the Bernese are hungering for it.”

Shortly after, two acts of the government seemed to throw the balance in the favour of the Reformation. The Bishop of Lausanne having announced an episcopal visitation, the council caused the provost Watteville intimate to him that the would have to dispense with it. And, at the same time, the councils of Berne issued an ordinance, which, while it apparently made some concession to the enemies of the Reformation, consecrated its principles. They decreed that the Holy Gospel, and the doctrine of God, as it could be proved from the books of the Old and New Testament, should be preached freely and openly, and that nothing should be said of any doctrine, dispute or writing, proceeding from Luther or other teachers.4 The surprise of the adversaries of the Reformation was great when they saw the evangelical ministers loudly appealing to this ordinance. This decree, which was the basis of all which followed, was the legal commencement of the Reformation in Berne. There was thenceforward more decision in the movement of this state, and Zuinglius, whose eye was attentive to all that took place in Switzerland, could write to the provost Watteville, “All Christians rejoice because of this faith which the pious town of Berne has just received.” “The cause is that of Christ,” exclaimed the friends of the gospel;6 and they devoted themselves to it with still greater courage. The enemies of the Reformation, alarmed at these first advantages, formed their phalanx, and resolved to strike a blow which would ensure the victory. They conceived the project of disencumbering themselves of those ministers whose audacious eloquence subverted the most ancient customs. A favourable opportunity soon occurred. There was in Berne, at the place now occupied by the hospital of the Isle, a convent of nuns of St. Dominic, dedicated to St. Michael. The day of this archangel (29th September) was a great festival in the monastery. This year it was attended by several ecclesiastics, among others, by Wittembach of Bienne, Sebastian Meyer, and Berthold Haller. Having entered into conversation with the nuns, among whom was Clara, daughter of Claudius May, one of the props of the Reformation, Haller said to her, in presence of her grandmother, “The merits of the monastic state are imaginary, whereas marriage is an honourable state, having been instituted by God himself.” Some nuns, to whom Clara related the conversation of Berthold, raised cries of terror. It was soon circulated in the town; “Haller maintains that all nuns are children of the devil.” … The opportunity sought by the enemies of the Reformation had arrived; they appeared before the lesser council, and referred to an ancient ordinance, which bore that any person carrying off a nun from the monastery should lose his head, but asked, “for a mitigation of the sentence,” and that it should be considered sufficient without hearing the three ministers to banish them for life. The lesser council acceded to the petition, and the matter was speedily carried before the great council.

Thus Berne was on the eve of being deprived of her Reformers. The intrigues of the papal party had prevailed. But Rome, though she triumphed when she addressed the oligarchs, was beaten before the people and their representatives. No sooner had the names of Haller, Meyer, and Wittembach, the men whom all Switzerland venerated, been pronounced in the great council, than a powerful opposition was manifested to the lesser council and the clergy. “We cannot,” exclaimed Tillman, “condemn the accused without hearing them. Their testimony is surely as good as that of some women.” The ministers were then called. It was felt difficult to dispose of the affair. At length John of Weingarten said, “Let us give credit to both parties.” It was so decided. The ministers were discharged, with a request, however, to meddle only with the pulpit and not with the cloister. But

the pulpit was sufficient for them. The efforts of the enemy had redounded to their disgrace. The Reformation had gained a great victory. Accordingly, one of the patricians exclaimed, “Now that everything is said, Luther’s affair must go forward.”

It did, in fact, go forward, and even in places where it might have been least expected. At Königsfeld, near the castle of Hapsburg, stood a monastery adorned with all the monastic magnificence of the middle ages, and containing the ashes of several members of the illustrious house which has given so many emperors to Germany. Here the greatest families of Switzerland and Suabia made their daughters take the veil. Not far from this spot, on 1st May, 1308, the Emperor Albert had fallen under the dagger of his nephew, John of Suabia, and the beautiful painted window of the church of Königsfeld represented the fearful punishments which had been inflicted on the relations and vassals of the guilty parties. Catherine of Waldburg-Truchsess, abbess of the convent, at the period of the Reformation, counted among her nuns Beatrice of Landenberg, sister of the Bishop of Constance, Agnes of Mullinen, Catherine of Bonnstetten, and Margaret of Watteville, the provost’s sister. The liberty which this convent enjoyed, and which, at a former period had led to criminal irregularities, allowed the introduction of the Holy Scriptures, and the writings of Luther and Zuinglius. In a short time matters assumed an entirely new appearance. Near the cell to which Queen Agnes, the daughter of Albert, retired, besprinkled with blood, as it had been “Maydew,” and where, spinning wool or working embroidery to ornament the church, she had mingled acts of devotion and thoughts of vengeance, Margaret Watteville had only thoughts of peace; read the Scriptures, and mingled salutary ingredients to compose an excellent electuary. Then, composing herself in her cell, the young nun ventured on the bold step of writing to the teacher of Switzerland. Her letter shows better than any observations could do, the Christian spirit which animated those pious females, who have been, and still, even in our day, are so much calumniated.

“Grace and peace through the Lord Jesus Christ, be ever given and multiplied to you, by God our Heavenly Father,” said the nun of Königsfeld to Zuinglius. “Very learned, reverend, and dear Sir, I beseech you not to be offended with the letter which I write to you. The love which is in Christ urges me to do it, especially since I have learned that the doctrine of salvation grows from day to day by your preaching of the Word of God. Wherefore, I offer up thanks to God Almighty for enlightening us anew, and sending us, by his Holy Spirit, so many heralds of his Holy Word; at the same time, I earnestly beseech Him to clothe you with His might, you and all those who proclaim His glad tidings, that arming you against all the enemies of the truth, He may make His Divine Word grow in every heart. Very learned Sir, I venture to send you this small token of my affection. Deign not to despise it. It is the gift of Christian charity. If this electuary does you good, and you have any wish for more, let me know; it would give me great delight to do something that might be agreeable to you. I am not alone in this. The feeling is common to all who love the gospel in our convent of Königsfeld. They present their salutations in Jesus Christ to your reverence, and we all together, without ceasing, recommend you to His mighty protection.

“Saturday before Lætare, 1523.”

Such was the pious letter of the nun of Königsfeld to the teacher of Switzerland. A convent, into which gospel light had thus penetrated, could not long continue the practices of monastic life. Margaret Watteville, and her sisters, persuaded that they could serve God better in their families

than in the cloister, asked leave to quit it. The council of Berne, in alarm, first tried to bring the nuns to reason; the provincial and the abbess had recourse by turns to threats and promises. But the sisters, Margaret, Agnes, Catherine, and their friends were immoveable. Next the rules of the convent were relaxed. The nuns were exempted from fasts and matins, and their income was increased; but they replied to the council, “It is not liberty of the flesh we ask, but liberty of the spirit. We, your poor and innocent prisoners, ask you to have pity on us.” “Our prisoners, our prisoners,” exclaimed banneret Krauchthaler, “I wont have them to be my prisoners.” This, from one of the firmest supporters of convents, decided the council. The convent was thrown open, and shortly after, Catherine Bonnstetten married William Diesbach.

Still Berne, instead of frankly arraying itself on the side of the Reformers, kept a certain middle course, and endeavoured, as it were, to hold the balance between the two parties. A circumstance caused it to lay aside this equivocal procedure. Sebastian Meyer, lecturer to the Franciscans, published a recantation of Roman errors, which produced a great sensation. Pourtraying the life of convents, he said, “Their inmates live more impurely, fall more frequently, rise more tardily, walk more uncertainly, repose more dangerously, show pity more rarely, reform more slowly, die more desperately, and are punished more severely.” At the moment when Meyer was thus declaring against cloisters, John Heim, the Dominican reader, was exclaiming from the pulpit. “No; Christ did not, as the evangelicals teach, give satisfaction to his Father once for all. God must be daily reconciled with men by the sacrifice of the mass, and good works.” Two citizens who were in the church, got up, and said, “It is not true.” This led to great noise. Heim stood mute. Several urged him to continue, but he came down from the pulpit without finishing his discourse. The next day the great council, with one blow, struck both Rome and the Reformation, banishing from the town the two great controversialists, Meyer and Heim. “They are neither clear nor muddy,” it was said of the Bernese, playing on the word Luther, which, in old German, means clear. But vain was the attempt to suppress the Reformation in Berne. It was making progress in every direction. The nuns of the monastery of the Isle had not forgotten Haller’s visit. Clara May, and several of her friends, anxiously asking what they ought to do, wrote to the learned Henry Bullinger, who replied, “St. Paul enjoins young women not to make vows, but to marry; and not live in idleness, under a false semblance of piety. (1 Timothy 5:13-14) Follow Jesus in humility, charity, patience, purity, and honesty.” Clara, seeking help from above, resolved to follow this advice, and quit a life contrary to the Word of God, invented by man, and fraught with seduction and sin. Her father, Bartholomew, who had passed fifty years on battle fields and in councils, rejoiced when he learned his daughter’s resolution. Clara quitted the convent. The provost, Nicolas Watteville, whose whole interest bound him to the Roman hierarchy, and who, on the first vacancy in Switzerland, must have risen to the episcopal bench, also renounced his honours, his benefices, and his hopes, to keep a pure conscience, and, breaking off all the ties by which the popes had tried to entwine him, he entered the state of marriage instituted by God from the beginning of the creation. Nicolas Watteville married Clara May, and his sister Margaret, the nun of Königsfeld, was, about the same time, united to Lucius Tscharner of Coire.

CHAP. VIII

Basle—Œcolampadius—He goes to Augsburg—He enters the Convent—He returns to Sickingen—Returns to Basle—Ulric Von Hutten—His projects—Last Effort of Chivalry—Hutten dies at Uffnan.

Thus every thing gave intimation of the triumphs which the Reformation was shortly to gain in Berne. A city of no less importance, and at this time the Athens of Switzerland—Basle—began also to prepare for the great combat which signalises the sixteenth century.

Each town of the Confederation had its peculiar aspect. Berne was the city of great families; and there the question was apparently to be decided in favour of the party who should gain certain of the leading men of the city. At Zurich the ministers of the Word, as Zuinglius, Leo Juda, Myconius, Schmidt, drew after them a powerful community of citizens. Lucerne was the town of arms and military enlistments. Basle that of knowledge and printing. Erasmus, the head of the republic of letters in the sixteenth century, had fixed his residence in it, and, preferring the liberty which he here enjoyed, to the seductive invitations of popes and kings, had become the centre of a large circle of literary men. But a humble, meek, and pious man, inferior in genius to Erasmus, was soon to exercise over the town a more powerful influence than that of the prince of schools. Christopher Utenheim, Bishop of Constance, in concert with Erasmus, sought to gather round him men fitted to accomplish a kind of intermediate Reformation. With this view he gave an invitation to Capito and Œcolampadius. In the latter there was somewhat of the monk, which often annoyed the illustrious philosopher. But Œcolampadius soon became enthusiastically attached to him, and perhaps would have lost all his independence in this close relation, had not Providence removed him from his idol. In 1517, he returned to Weinsberg, his native town, and was shocked with the irregularities and profane jests of the priests. He has left us a fine memorial of the grave spirit which then animated him in his celebrated work “on the Easter Merriment,” which appears to have been written about this time.

Having been called, towards the end of 1518, to Augsburg, as preacher of the cathedral, he found this town still agitated by the famous interview which had taken place there in May, between Luther and the papal legate. It was necessary to take a part for or against: Œcolampadius, without hesitation, declared for the Reformer. This frankness soon raised up a keen opposition against him, and, being convinced that his timidity, and the weakness of his voice, would not allow him to succeed in the world, he began to look around, and fixed his eye on a neighbouring convent of monks of St. Bridget, celebrated for their piety, and their profound and liberal studies. Feeling the want of repose, leisure, rest, and prayer, he turned toward these monks, and asked them, “Can one live with you according to the Word of God?” They having assured him that this could be done, Œcolampadius crossed the threshold of the convent on the 23rd April, 1520, but under the express condition that he was free should ever the service of God call him elsewhere.

It was well that the future Reformer of Basle should, like Luther, know this monastic life, which was the highest expression of Roman Catholicism. But he found no repose: his friends blamed the step; and he himself declared openly that Luther was nearer the truth than his opponents. Hence Dr. Eck, and other Roman doctors, followed him with menaces even into his calm retreat. At this time Œcolampadius was neither one of the Reformed, nor a follower of Rome. He wished a kind of purified Catholicism, which no where exists in history, but the idea of which has served many as a kind of stepping-stone. He set about correcting the statutes of his order by the Word of God. “I pray you,” said he to the friars, “don’t esteem your ordinances more than the commandments of the Lord.” The monks replied, “We wish no other rule than that of the Saviour. Take our books, and mark, as in the immediate presence of Christ, whatever you find contrary to his Word.” Œcolampadius began the task, but found it painfully wearisome. “Almighty God!” he exclaimed,

“what abominations has not Rome approved in these statutes!” No sooner had he pointed out some of these than the wrath of the friars began to be kindled. “Heretic,” they exclaimed: “apostate, you deserve a dark dungeon till the end of your days.” He was excluded from the common prayers. But the danger was still greater from without. Eck and his people had not abandoned their projects. In three days he was told he was to be arrested. He went to the friars, and said to them, “Will you give me up to assassins?” The monks were speechless and irresolute. They were unwilling either to save or to destroy him. At this moment some friends of Œcolampadius arrived near the cloister with horses to conduct him to a place of safety. At this news the monks determined on allowing the departure of a brother who had brought trouble into their convent. “Adieu!” he said, and was free. He had been nearly two years in the cloister of St. Bridget.

Œcolampadius was saved: at length he again breathed. Writing to a friend he says: “I have sacrificed the monk and got back the Christian.” But his flight from the convent and his heretical writings were every where known; every where also people stood aloof on his approach. He knew not what to do, when, in the spring of 1522, Sickingen offered him an asylum, which he accepted. His spirit, which had been weighed down by monastic bondage, took a new spring amid the noble warriors of Ebernburg. “Christ is our liberty,” exclaimed he, “and what men regard as the greatest misfortune—death itself—is to us true gain.” He forthwith began to read the gospels and epistles to the people in German. “As soon as the trumpets resound,” said he, “the walls of Jericho crumble away.”

Thus, in a fortress on the banks of the Rhine, amid boisterous knights, the most modest man of his age anticipated that transformation of worship which Christendom was soon to undergo. Ebernburg, however, was too narrow for him; and he felt the want of other society than that of military men. The bookseller, Cratander, invited him to Basle. Sickingen gave his permission; and Œcolampadins, happy to revisit his old friends, arrived on the 16th November, 1522. After living for some time as a simple scholar, without public vocation, he was appointed vicar of the church of St. Martin; and perhaps it was this call to a humble and unknown employment that decided the Reformation of Basle. Whenever Œcolampadius mounted the pulpit, an immense crowd filled the church.2 At the same time the public lectures, given both by him and Pellican, were crowned with so much success, that even Erasmus was obliged to exclaim, “Œcolampadius triumphs.” In fact, says Zuinglius, this meek but firm man, shed around him the sweet savour of Christ, and all who heard him made progress in the truth. Often, indeed, the news spread that he would soon be obliged to leave both, and again commence his adventurous travels. His friends, particularly Zuinglius, were in great alarm; but the report of new successes gained by Œcolampadius, soon dissipated their fears, and strengthened their hopes. The fame of his labours even reached Wittemberg, and rejoiced Luther, who daily talked of him to Melancthon. Meantime the Saxon Reformer was not without uneasiness. Erasmus was at Basle, and Erasmus was the friend of Œcolampadius. Luther thought it his duty to put one whom he loved on his guard. “I much fear,” he wrote, “that, like Moses, Erasmus will die in the plains of Moab, without conducting us into the land of promise.”2

Erasmus had retired to Basle, as a quiet town, situated in the centre of the literary movement, and from the bosom of which he could, by means of the printing-press of Frobenius, act upon France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and England. But he did not like to be disturbed, and if he felt some

jealousy at Œcolampadius, there was another man who inspired him with still greater alarm. Ulric Von Hutten had followed Œcolampadius to Basle. For a long time he had attacked the pope as one knight attacks another. “The axe,” said he, “is already laid to the root of the tree. Germans, yield not at the first brunt of the battle; the die is cast—the enterprise is begun. Liberty for ever!” He had abandoned Latin, and now wrote only in German; for it was the people he wished to address. His ideas were grand and noble. An annual assembly of bishops was, according to him, to regulate the affairs of the Church. A Christian constitution, and, above all, a Christian spirit, was to spread from Germany as formerly from Judea, over the whole world. Charles V was to have been the young hero destined to realise the golden age; but Hutten’s hopes in him having been disappointed, he had turned to Sickingen, and asked from chivalry what the empire refused. Sickingen, at the head of the feudal nobility, had played a distinguished part in Germany; but the princes had shortly after besieged him in his castle of Landstein, and the new engines, cannon and bullets, had battered down those old walls which had been accustomed to other kinds of assault. The taking of Landstein had been the final defeat of chivalry, the decisive victory of artillery over lances and bucklers, the triumph of modern times over the middle ages. Thus, the last exploit of knighthood, was to be in favour of the Reformation—the first efforts of new weapons and wars was to be against it. The steel clad men who fell under the unexpected force of bullets, and lay among the ruins of Landstein, gave place to other knights. Other feats of arms were about to commence. A spiritual chivalry succeeded that of the Du Guesclins and Bayards, and those old broken battlements, those rained walls, those aspiring heroes, proclaimed still more forcibly than Luther was able to do that it was not by such allies and such weapons that the gospel of the Prince of Peace would gain the victory. With the downfall of Landstein and chivalry, had fallen all Hütten’s hopes. Over Sickingen’s dead body he bade adieu to all the glorious days of which his imagination had dreamed, and, losing all confidence in man, all he now asked was a brief obscurity and repose. He came to seek them in Switzerland beside Erasmus. These two men had long been friends; but the rude and boisterous knight, disdaining the judgment of others, always used to lay his hand on his sword, and, attacking right and left all whom he met, could seldom move in accordance with the delicate and timid Erasmus, with his refined manners, his smooth and polished address, his eagerness for approbation, and his readiness to make every sacrifice to obtain it, fearing nothing in the world so much as a dispute.

Hütten having arrived at Basle a poor sick fugitive, immediately inquired for his old friend. But Erasmus trembled at the thought of sharing his table with a man under the ban of the pope and the emperor, a man who would care for no one, borrow money of him, and doubtless bring after him a crowd of those “evangelists,” of whom Erasmus was always becoming more afraid. He refused to see him, and, shortly after, the magistrates of Basle begged Hütten to leave the town. Hutten, mortified and irritated against his timid friend, retired to Mulhausen, and published a violent philippic against Erasmus, who wrote a very clever reply. The knight had seized the sword with both hands, and brought it down with force upon his adversary; the scholar, dexterously slipping aside, had returned the strokes of the sword with strokes of his beak.2

Hutten behoved again to fly. He arrived at Zurich, where he met with a generous reception from the noble-minded Zuinglius. But cabals obliged him to quit this town also, and, after passing some time at the baths of Pfeffers, he repaired with a letter from the Swiss Reformer to the house of pastor John Schnepp, who dwelt in the little islet of Ufnau, on the Lake of Zurich. This poor

minister received the poor exiled knight with the most touching charity. It was in this peaceful and unknown retreat, after a most agitated life—banished by some, pursued by others, forsaken almost by all, after constantly combating superstition, yet, as it would seem, without even possessing the truth, Ulrick von Hutten, one of the most remarkable minds of the sixteenth century, died in obscurity towards the end of August, 1523. The poor pastor, who was skilful in the healing art, had in vain given him all his care. With him died chivalry. He left neither money, nor furniture, nor books—nothing in the world except a pen. Thus was the hand of iron broken that had presumed to support the ark of God.

CHAP. IX

Erasmus and Luther—Uncertainty of Erasmus—Luther to Erasmus—Work of Erasmus against Luther on Free Will—Three Opinions—Effect on Luther—Luther on Free Will—The Jansenists and the Reformers—Homage to Erasmus—Rage of Erasmus—The Three Days.

There was a man in Germany more formidable to Erasmus than the unfortunate knight; this was Luther. The moment had arrived when the two greatest wrestlers of the age were to measure their powers in close combat. The two Reformations at which they aimed were very different. While Luther desired an entire Reformation, Erasmus, a friend of the middle course, sought to obtain concessions from the hierarchy, which might again unite the two extreme parties. The vacillation and uncertainty of Erasmus disgusted Luther. He said to him, “You wish to walk on eggs without crushing them, and among glasses without breaking them.” At the same time, to the vacillation of Erasmus, he opposed complete decision. “We Christians,” said he, “ought to be sure of our doctrine, and know how to say yes or no without hesitating. To attempt to hinder us from affirming with perfect conviction what we believe, is to deprive us of faith itself. The Holy Spirit is not a sceptic. He has written in our hearts a firm and powerful assurance, which makes us as certain of our faith, as we are of life itself.”3

These words at once tell us on which side strength lay. In order to accomplish a religious transformation, there must be a firm and living faith. A salutary resolution in the Church never will proceed from philosophical views and human opinions. To fertilise the earth after long drought, the lightning must pierce the cloud, and the reservoirs of heaven be opened. Criticism, philosophy, history even may prepare the paths for true faith, but cannot supply its place. In vain do you clean out your canals and repair your embankments, so long as the water descends not from the sky. All human sciences without faith are only canals without water.

Whatever might be the essential difference between Luther and Erasmus, the friends of Luther, and Luther himself, long hoped to see Erasmus united with them against Rome. Sayings which his caustic humour let fall were reported, and showed his disagreement with the most zealous friends of Catholicism. One day, for instance, when he was in England, he had a keen discussion with Sir Thos. More on transubstantiation. “Believe that you have the body of Christ,” said More, “and you have it really.” Erasmus made no answer. Shortly after he left the banks of the Thames, and More lent him his horse to the sea-side; but Erasmus took it with him to the continent. As soon as More knew of it, he reproached him in the keenest terms. Erasmus only answered by sending him the following stanza:— Of Christ’s body, this you declared the creed:

“Believe you have it, and you have indeed.”

Apply the doctrine to your missing steed;

Believe you have it, and you have indeed.

Erasmus had appeared in this character not only in England and Germany. At Paris it was said, “Luther has only widened the opening of the door of which Erasmus had previously picked the lock.” The situation of Erasmus was difficult. In a letter to Zuinglius he says, “I will not be unfaithful to the cause of Christ, at least in so far as the age will permit.” In proportion as he saw Rome bestirring herself against the Reformation, he, from prudential motives, drew off. He was applied to from all quarters—the pope, the emperor, kings, princes, the learned; and even his most intimate friends, urged him to write against the Reformer.4 The pope wrote unto him—“No work would be more agreeable to God—none more worthy of yourself and your genius.” For a long time Erasmus resisted these solicitations; he could not disguise from himself that the cause of the Reformers was the cause of religion as well as of letters. Besides, Luther was an opponent with whom none were fond of engaging, and Erasmus thought he could already feel the redoubled and sturdy blows of the champion of Wittemberg. In reply to a theologian of Rome he wrote: “It is easy to say, ‘Write against Luther;’ but it is a task pregnant with danger.”2 Thus he would, and yet would not. This irresolute conduct of Erasmus subjected him to the attacks of the most violent men of both parties. Luther himself found it difficult to reconcile the respect which he had for the learning of Erasmus with the indignation which he felt at his cowardice. He resolved to escape from this painful condition, and in April, 1524, wrote him a letter, which he gave to the care of Camerarius. “As yet,” said he, “you have not received of the Lord the courage necessary to march with us to give battle to the papists. We bear with your weakness. If letters flourish, if they open to all the treasures of the Scriptures, it is a gift for which we are indebted, under God, to you—a magnificent gift, for which our thanksgivings ascend to heaven. But do not abandon the task which has been imposed on you, in order to pass into our camp. No doubt your eloquence and genius would be useful to us; but since your courage fails you, remain where you are. I could wish that our people would allow your old age to slumber peacefully in the Lord. The greatness of our cause has long transcended your powers. But, on the other hand, my dear Erasmus, desist from throwing at us so many handfuls of pungent salt, which you know so well how to disguise under flowers of rhetoric. It is more painful to be slightly bitten by Erasmus, than to be ground to death by all papists put together. Content yourself with being the spectator of our tragedy: publish no book against me; I, on my part, will publish none against you.”

Thus Luther, the man of war, asked for concord: it was Erasmus, the man of peace, who disturbed it.

Erasmus received this proceeding on the part of the Reformer as the greatest of insults, and if he had not already resolved to write against Luther, it is probable that he resolved now. He replied, “Perhaps Erasmus, by writing against you, will do more service to the gospel than some fools who write for you, and who do not allow me to be any longer a mere spectator of this tragedy. But he had other motives also.

Henry VIII of England, and the leading men of that kingdom, were extremely urgent that he should declare publicly against the Reformation. Erasmus, during a moment of courage, allowed the promise to be forced from him. Besides, his equivocal situation had become a continual torment to him: he loved repose, but the necessity he felt of continually vindicating himself troubled his life: he

loved glory, but he was accused of fearing Luther, and of being too feeble to answer him: he was accustomed to the first place, but the little monk of Wittemberg had dethroned the mighty Erasmus. He behoved then, by a courageous act, to conquer back the place which he had lost. All ancient Christendom was imploring him to do so. Ability, and the greatest reputation of the age, were wanted to oppose the Reformation. Erasmus yielded. But what weapon was he going to employ? Will he cause the thunders of the Vatican to roar? Will he defend abuses which are the disgrace of the papacy? Erasmus could not do so. The great movement by which men's minds were agitated, after the deathlike lethargy which had lasted for so many ages, filled him with joy, and he would have feared to trammel it. Not being able to appear as the champion of Roman Catholicism, in regard to the additions which it has made to Christianity, he undertook to defend it in what it has cut off. In his attack upon Luther, Erasmus selected the point in which Catholicism is blended with rationalism—the doctrine of free will, or of the natural power of man. Thus, while undertaking the defence of the Church, Erasmus pleased the men of the world; while battling for the pope, he battled also for the philosophers. It has been said that he was awkwardly trammeled by an obscure and useless question. Luther, the Reformers, and their age, thought otherwise. We agree with them. "I must acknowledge," said Luther, "that in this combat you are the only one who has seized your opponent by the throat. I thank you with all my heart, for I like better to deal with that subject than with all those secondary questions of the pope, purgatory, and indulgences, with which, till this hour, the enemies of the gospel have pestered me.2 His own experience, and the attentive study of the Holy Scriptures and of St. Augustin, had convinced Luther that the actual powers of man so incline him to evil, that all he can do of himself is to attain to a certain external decency, altogether insufficient in the eyes of the Deity. At the same time, he had learned that God gives a true righteousness, by carrying on the work of faith through operation of the Holy Spirit. This doctrine had become the principle of his religious life, the predominant idea in his theology, and the point on which the whole Reformation turned.

While Luther maintained that every thing good in man came from God, Erasmus took the side of those who thought that this good came from man himself. God or man …—good or evil …—these, surely, are not paltry questions; if these are such questions, they must be sought for elsewhere. In the autumn of 1524, Erasmus published his famous work, entitled "Disquisition on Free Will." No sooner had it appeared than the philosopher could scarcely credit his own courage. He trembled, while, with eyes fixed on the arena, he beheld the gauntlet which he had just thrown down to his opponent. The die is cast, "wrote he, with emotion, to Henry VIII," the book on Free Will has appeared.… This, believe me, is a daring act. I expect to be stoned.… But I console myself by the example of your majesty, whom the wrath of those people has not spared." His alarm soon increased to such a degree, that he bitterly regretted the step he had taken. "Why was I not allowed," he exclaimed, "to spend my age in the garden of the Muses! Here I am, at sixty, pushed violently forward into the arena, and instead of the lyre, holding the cestus and net.…" "I know," said he to the Bishop of Rochester, "that in writing on free will, I was not in my sphere.… You congratulate me on my triumphs.… Ah, I know not in what I triumph! The faction (the Reformation) is daily increasing. Was it then my destiny that, at my age, I was to be transformed from a friend of the Muses into a miserable gladiator?"….

It was much, doubtless, for the timid Erasmus to have taken the field against Luther. But still he was far from having given proof of great hardihood. He seems, in his book, to attribute little to the

will of man, and to leave the greater part to divine grace; but, at the same time, he chose his arguments in such a way as to make it be believed, that man does all, and God does nothing. Not daring to express his thoughts distinctly, he affirms one thing, and proves another; leaving one at liberty to suppose that he believed what he proved, and not what he affirmed.

He distinguishes three opinions opposed in different degrees to that of Pelagius. “Some,” says he, “think that man can neither will nor begin, far less accomplish any thing that is good, without special and continual help from divine grace. This opinion seems probable enough. Others teach that the will of man has power only to do evil, and that grace alone performs in us any thing that is good; and, lastly, there are some who maintain that there never was any free will, either in man or angels, either in Adam or in us, whether before or after grace, but that God produces in man both good or evil, and that every thing which takes place, happens through absolute necessity.

Erasmus, while seeming to admit the first of these opinions, employs arguments which militate against it, and which may be employed by the most decided Pelagian. Thus, while referring to the passages of Scripture, in which God presents man with a choice of good and evil, he adds, “Man then must will and choose; for it would be ridiculous to say to any one, Choose! if it were not in his power to do so.”

Luther was not afraid of Erasmus. “Truth,” said he, “is mightier than eloquence. The victory belongs to him who lisps the truth, and not to him who is eloquent in favour of falsehood.” But when he received the work of Erasmus, he found the book so feeble, that he hesitated to answer it. “What!” said he to him, “so much eloquence in so bad a cause; one would say it was a man serving up mire and filth on gold and silver plate. It is impossible to get hold of you any where. You are like an eel which slips between the fingers; or, like the Proteus of the poets, who changes in the very hand of the person who is trying to bind him.”

Meanwhile, as Luther did not answer, the monks and scholastic theologians began to shout: “Ah! well, where is now your Luther? Where is the great Maccabeus? Let him enter the lists! Let him come forward! Ah! ah! he has at length found the man that was wanted for him. He now knows how to keep in the back ground. He has learnt to hold his tongue.”

Luther saw that he behoved to answer; but it was not till the end of 1525 that he began to prepare; and Melancthon having intimated to Erasmus that Luther would use moderation, the philosopher was quite astonished. “If I have written with moderation,” said he, “it is my natural turn: but Luther has the indignation of the son of Peleus (Achilles). And how could it be otherwise? When a ship encounters a tempest, like that which has risen against Luther, what anchor, what ballast, what helm, would not be necessary to enable it to keep its course? Hence, if he answers me in a manner not in accordance with his character, these sycophants will exclaim that we understand one another.” We will see that Erasmus was soon to be disencumbered of these fears. The doctrine of an election by God, the only cause of man’s salvation, had always been dear to the Reformer; but, till now, he had only considered it in a practical point of view. In his reply to Erasmus, it presented itself to him in a speculative form; and he laboured to prove, by the arguments which seemed to him most conclusive, that God does every thing in the conversion of man, and that our heart is so alienated from the love of God, that every sincere inclination to good can only proceed from the regenerating agency of the Holy Spirit.

“To call our will a free will,” said he, “is to do like princes, who string together a long series of titles, calling themselves the lords of such and such kingdoms, such and such principalities, and distant islands (as Rhodes, Cyprus, and Jerusalem), while they have not the least power over them.” At the same time, Luther here makes an important distinction, which shows well that he did not participate in the third opinion which Erasmus had described and imputed to him. “The will of man,” says he, “may be called a free will, not in relation to what is above it—that is to say, God, but in relation to what is beneath—that is to say, the kings of the earth. When my goods, my fields, my house, my farm, are in question, I can act, make, and manage freely. But in things which regard salvation, man is captive; he is subject to the will of God, or rather to that of the devil.”3 Among all the teachers of free will,” exclaims he, “show me a single one who has in himself strength sufficient to endure a little injury, a passionate attack, or even a look from his enemy, and to do it joyfully, then,—without even asking him to abandon his body, his goods, his honour, and all things,—I declare that you have gained your cause.”

Luther’s eye was too piercing not to detect the contradictions into which his opponent had fallen. Accordingly he proceeded, in his reply, to enclose the philosopher in the net in which he had placed himself. “If the passages which you quote,” said he, “prove that it is easy for us to do good, why do you dispute? What need have we of Christ and the Holy Spirit? Christ has done foolishly in shedding his blood to procure us a strength, which we already have from nature.” In fact the passages quoted by Erasmus were to be interpreted in quite a different sense. This much debated question is clearer than at first sight it seems. When the Bible says to man, “Choose,” it is because it presupposes the assistance of the grace of God, by which alone he can do what it commands. God, in giving the command, gives also the power to perform it. When Christ said to Lazarus, come forth, it was not because Lazarus could raise himself, but, because, in commanding him to come forth from the tomb, he gave him power to do so, and accompanied his word with creative power. He speaks, and it is done. Besides, it is quite true that the man whom God addresses must will; it is himself that wills, and not another; but still he can receive this will only from God. It must, no doubt, be in the man; and this command which God addresses to him, and which, according to Erasmus proves man’s power, so reconcileable with the agency of God, that it is precisely the means by which this agency is carried on. God says to man, “Be converted,” and while so saying, converts him. But the view on which Luther especially dwelt in his reply was, that the passages quoted by Erasmus, are designed to teach men what they ought to do, and their incapability of doing it, but not at all to acquaint them with this fancied power which is assigned to them. “How often does it happen,” says Luther, “that a father calls his little child to him, saying, ‘My son, will you come? Come, come then!’ in order the child may learn to cry for help, and allow itself to be carried by him.”

After combating the arguments of Erasmus in favour of free will, Luther defends his own against the attacks of his opponent. “Dear Diatribe,” says he ironically, “mighty heroine, who pretend to have overthrown the word of the Lord in the gospel of St. John, ‘Without me ye can do nothing,’ which you, however, regard as the strongest in my power, and call the Achilles of Luther, listen to me for a little. At all events, until you prove that this word nothing not only may, but must signify some little thing, all your high words, all your splendid illustrations, have no more effect than chips of straw would have in extinguishing an immense conflagration. What have we to do with the assertions—‘This may mean; that may be understood thus—when you are bound to demonstrate

that it must be so understood.' If you fail to do so, we take the declaration in its natural sense, and laugh at all your illustrations, your great preparations and pompous triumph." At length, in a second part, Luther shows, and always by Scripture, that it is the grace of God that does all. "In one word," says he at the end, "since Scripture uniformly opposes Christ to all that is not Christ; since it declares that whatever is not Christ and in Christ, is under the power of error, darkness, the devil, death, sin, and the wrath of God, it follows that all the passages of the Bible which speak of Christ are contrary to free will. Now, these passages are innumerable; the Sacred Volume is filled with them."

We see that the discussion between Luther and Erasmus is the same as that which, a century later, took place between the Jansenists and the Jesuits—between Pascal and Molina. To what is it owing, that while the Reformation has had such mighty results, Jansenism, defended by the most distinguished geniuses, has been suppressed without force? It is because Jansenism went back to St. Augustin, and leant upon the fathers; whereas the Reformation went back to the Bible, and leant upon the Word of God. It is because Jansenism made a compromise with Rome, and wished to establish a medium between truth and error; the Reformation confided in God alone, cleared away the soil, removed all the human rubbish which had covered it for ages, and laid bare the primitive rock. To stop midway is useless labour; in all things it is proper to go forward to the end. Hence, while Jansenism has passed away, the destinies of the world are bound up with evangelical Christianity.

Luther, after keenly refuting the error, paid a brilliant, but perhaps somewhat sarcastic, homage to the person of Erasmus. "I confess," said he, "that you are a great man. Where were more learning, intellect, ability in writing and speaking ever seen? For myself I have nothing of the kind; there is only one thing from which I can derive any glory…. I am a Christian. May God raise you in the knowledge of the gospel, infinitely above me, so that you may surpass me as much in this respect, as you already do in every other."

Erasmus was beside himself on reading Luther's reply; he would see nothing in his compliments but the honey of a poisoned cup, or the embrace of a serpent. He immediately wrote to the Elector of Saxony, demanding justice; and Luther having tried to appease him, he laid aside his ordinary habit, and as one of his most ardent apologists expresses it, began "to inveigh in a broken voice and grey hairs."

Erasmus was vanquished. Moderation had been his forte, and he had now lost it. The energy of Luther he could only supply by rage. The wise man wanted wisdom. He replied, publicly, in his Hyperapistes, accusing the Reformer of barbarism, falsehood, and blasphemy. The philosopher even went the length of prophesying. "I prophesy," said he, "that no name under the sun will be more execrated than that of Luther." This prophecy, after a lapse of three centuries, was answered on the jubilee of 1817, by the enthusiastic acclamations of the whole Protestant world.

Thus, while Luther, with the Bible, placed himself at the head of his age, Erasmus, in opposing him, wished to occupy the same place with philosophy. Which of the two leaders has been followed? Both, no doubt. Nevertheless, the influence of Luther on the nations of Christendom has been infinitely greater than that of Erasmus. Even those who did not well understand the matter in dispute, seeing the conviction of one of the antagonists, and the doubts of the other, could not help believing that the former was in the right and the latter in the wrong. It has been said that the three

last centuries, the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth, may be conceived as an immense battle of three days. We willingly adopt the happy expression, but not the part which is assigned to each day. The same task is given to the sixteenth and to the eighteenth century. The first day and the last it is philosophy that breaks the ranks. The sixteenth century philosophical! Strange mistake. No; each of these days had a distinct and striking characteristic. The first day of battle, it was the Word of God and the Gospel of Christ that triumphed. Then Rome was defeated, as well as philosophy, in the person of Erasmus and her other representatives. The second day, we admit Rome, her authority, her discipline, and her doctrine re-appear, and are on the eve of triumphing, by the intrigues of a celebrated society and the power of the scaffold, as well as by some characters of great veracity and men of distinguished genius. The third day, human philosophy rises up in all its pride; and finding not the gospel but Rome on the field of battle, makes easy work, and soon carries all the entrenchments. The first day is the battle of God, the second the battle of the priest, and the third the battle of reason. What will be the fourth? The confused melée, we think, the furious battle of all the powers together, to terminate in the triumph of Him to whom the triumph belongs.

CHAP. X The Three Adversaries—Source of the Truth—Anabaptism—Anabaptism and Zuinglius—Constitution of the Church—Prison—The Prophet Blaurock—Anabaptism at St. Gall—An Anabaptist family—Dispute at Zurich—The limits of the Reformation—Punishment of the Anabaptists. But the battle which the Reformation fought on the grand day of the sixteenth century was not one only: it was manifold. The Reformation had at once several enemies to combat. After protesting against the decretals and supremacy of the popes, next against the cold apophthegms of the rationalists, philosophers, and schoolmen; it at the same time stood up against the reveries of enthusiasm, and the hallucinations of mysticism—opposing to these three powers at once the sword and buckler of Divine revelation.

It must be admitted that there is a great resemblance, a remarkable unity in these three adverse powers. The false systems which in all ages are most opposed to evangelical Christianity, are always characterised by their making religious knowledge proceed from within the man himself. Rationalism makes it proceed from reason; mysticism, from some internal light; Roman Catholicism, from an illumination of the pope. These three errors seek the truth in man; evangelical Christianity seeks it wholly in God. While rationalism, mysticism, and Roman Catholicism admit a permanent inspiration in certain persons like ourselves, and thus open the door to all errors and all variations, evangelical Christianity recognises this inspiration only in the writings of the Apostles and Prophets, and alone exhibits that grand, and beautiful, and living unity, which flows always the same through all ages. The work of the Reformation was to re-establish the rights of the Word of God, in opposition not only to Roman Catholicism, but also rationalism and to mysticism itself. The fanaticism of the Anabaptists being extinguished in Germany by Luther’s return to Wittemberg, re-appeared in force in Switzerland, threatening the edifice which Zuinglius, Haller, and Œcolampadius had built on the Word of God. Thomas Munzer, when obliged to quit Saxony in 1521, had arrived on the frontiers of Switzerland. Conrad Grebel, whose restless and ardent temper we have already mentioned, had become connected with him, as well as Felix Manz, son of a canon, and some other inhabitants of Zurich. Grebel had immediately tried to gain Zuinglius. In vain had Zuinglius gone farther than Luther. He saw a party rising that wished to go still farther than he. “Let us,” said Grebel to him, “form a community of true believers; for to them alone the

promise belongs; and let us establish a church in which there is no sin." "We cannot," said Zuinglius, "introduce heaven upon earth, and Christ has taught us that we must allow the tares to grow among the wheat."2

Grebel, having failed with Zuinglius, was desirous to appeal to the people. "The whole Zurich community," said he, "must decide supremely on matters of faith." But Zuinglius dreaded the influence which radical enthusiasts might exercise over a large assembly. He thought that, except in unusual cases, where the people might be called to give in their adherence, it was better to confide religious interests to a college, which might be considered as the elite of the representatives of the Church. Consequently, the Council of Two Hundred, which exercised political supremacy in Zurich, was also intrusted with ecclesiastical power, under the express condition that they should conform in every respect to the rule of Holy Scripture. No doubt it would have been better to constitute the Church fully, and call upon it to name its own representatives, who should be intrusted only with the religious interests of the people; for he who is capable of managing the interests of the State may be very unfit to manage those of the Church, and vice versa. Nevertheless, the inconveniences were not so serious then as they might be at this time, as the members of the Grand Council had entered frankly into the religious movement. Be this as it may, Zuinglius, while appealing to the Church, avoided bringing it too much upon the stage, and preferred the representation system to the active sovereignty of the people. This is what the States of Europe, after the lapse of three centuries, are doing in the political sphere. Repulsed by Zuinglius, Grebel turned in another direction. Roubli, superannuated pastor at Basle, Brödtlein, pastor at Zollekon, and Louis Herzer, gave him a cordial reception. They determined to form an independent community in the midst of the great community—a church in the midst of the Church. A new baptism was to enable them to reassemble their congregation, composed exclusively of true believers. "The baptism of infants," said they, "is a horrible abomination—a manifest impiety, invented by the evil spirit, and by Nicholas II, Pope of Rome. The council of Zurich taking the alarm, ordered a public discussion; and the Anabaptists refusing to abjure their errors, some Zurichers among them were imprisoned, and some strangers banished. But persecution only increased their fervour. "Not with words only," they exclaimed, "but with our blood are we ready to bear testimony to the truth of our cause." Some, girding themselves with cords or osier-twigs, went up and down the streets crying, "A few days, and Zurich will be destroyed. Woe to thee, Zurich! woe! woe!" Several used blasphemous expressions. "Baptism," they said, "is a bath for a dog: it is of no more use to baptise a child than to baptise a cat." Simple and pious people were moved and amazed. Fourteen men, among them Felix Mantz and seven women, were seized and put on bread and water in the heretics' tower. After a fortnight's confinement, they succeeded in raising some planks during the night, and, assisting one another, made their escape. "An angel," they said, "had opened the prison and let them out."2 A monk who had escaped from his convent, George Jacob de Coire, surnamed Blaurock, because it seems he always wore a blue coat, joined them, and was, on account of his eloquence, called the second St. Paul. This bold monk went from place to place, by his imposing fervour constraining people to receive his baptism. One Sunday at Zollekon, while the deacon was preaching, the impetuous Anabaptist interrupting him, exclaimed in a voice of thunder, "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." Then lifting his staff which he had in his hand, he violently struck four blows.

“I am a door,” exclaimed he, “whosoever will enter in by me will find pasture. I am a good shepherd. My body I give to the prison; my life I give to the sword, the scaffold, or the wheel. I am the beginning of baptism and of the bread of the Lord.”

Zuinglius still opposing the torrent of Anabaptism in Zurich, St Gall was soon inundated by it. Grebel arrived, and was received by the brethren with acclamation; and on Palm Sunday, having repaired with a number of his adherents to the banks of the Sitter, he baptised them. The news immediately spread to the neighbouring cantons, and a great crowd flocked from Zurich, Appenzel, and divers other places, to “little Jerusalem.”

Zuinglius was heart-broken at the sight of this agitation. He saw a storm bursting on those districts in which the seed of the gospel was just beginning to spring. He resolved to oppose these disorders, and composed a treatise “on baptism,”5 which the council of St. Gall, to whom he dedicated it, ordered to be read in church before all the people.

“Very dear brethren in God,” said Zuinglius, “the torrent which leaps from our rocks, soon washes down whatever it reaches. At first it is only small stones; but these are carried violently against larger ones, until the torrent becomes so powerful that it carries away every thing it meets, and leaves nothing behind it but screams and useless lamentations and fertile meadows turned into a desert. The spirit of disputation and self-righteousness acts in the same way: it excites disorders, destroys charity, and where it found fair and flourishing churches, leaves nothing behind it but flocks plunged into mourning and despair.”

Thus spoke Zuinglius, the mountaineer of the Tockenburg. “Tell us the Word of God,” exclaimed an Anabaptist who was in the church, “and not the word of Zuinglius.” Confused voices were immediately heard. “Let him take away the book, let him take away the book,” exclaimed the Anabaptists. They then rose and quitted the church, crying, “Keep the doctrine of Zuinglius: as for us, we will keep the Word of God.” This fanaticism manifested itself by still more lamentable disorders. Under the pretext that the Lord commands us to become like children, these poor creatures began to leap in the streets, clapping their hands, to dance a jig together, to squat on the ground, and to roll one another on the sand. Some burnt the New Testament, saying, “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life,” and, several falling into convulsions, pretended that they had revelations of the Spirit. In a lonely house, situated near St. Gall, on the Müllegg, lived a farmer of eighty—John Schucker, with his five sons. They had all, as well as their servants, received the new baptism, and two of the sons, Thomas and Leonard, were distinguished for their fanaticism. On the 7th of February, 1526, (Shrove Tuesday) they invited a great number of Anabaptists to meet at their house, and the father caused a calf to be killed for the occasion. The viands, the wine, and the numerous assemblage, heated their imaginations; they passed the whole night in converse and fanatical gesticulations, convulsions, visions, and revelations. In the morning, Thomas, still agitated by the proceedings of the night, and having even, as it appears, lost his reason, took the bladder of the calf, put some of its gall into it, wishing thus to imitate the symbolical language of the prophets, and, approaching his brother Leonard, said to him in a grave voice, “Thus, bitter is the death which you must endure.” Then he added, “Brother Leonard, go down on your knees.” Leonard knelt. Shortly after. “Leonard rise.” Leonard rose up. The father, the brothers, and the other Anabaptists, looked on in astonishment, asking what God meant to do. Shortly Thomas resumed: “Leonard, kneel again.” Leonard did so. The spectators alarmed at the

dismal look of the poor wretch, said to him, “Think of what you are doing, and take care no mischief happen.”—“Fear not,” replied Thomas: “nothing will happen but the will of our Father.” At the same time he suddenly seized a sword, and bringing it down with force on his brother, who was kneeling before him as a criminal before the executioner, he cut off his head, and exclaimed, “Now the will of the Father is done.” All who were standing round started back in horror, and the farm resounded with cries and groans. Thomas, whose whole clothing was shirt and pantaloons, went off barefoot and bareheaded, out of the house, and ran towards St. Gall, making frantic gestures. He entered the house of burgomaster Joachim Vadian, and, with haggard looks and loud cries, said to him, “I announce to thee the day of the Lord.” The fearful news spread through St. Gall, “He has, like Cain,” it was said, “killed his brother Abel.” The culprit was seized. “It is true I did it,” repeated he incessantly; “but God did it by me.” On the 16th February this poor creature was beheaded by the hand of the executioner. Fanaticism had made its last effort. The eyes of all were opened; and, as an old historian says, the same stroke cut off the head of Thomas Schucker and that of Anabaptism in St. Gall.

It still reigned at Zurich. On the 6th November of the previous year, a public discussion had taken place to please the Anabaptists, who kept continually crying, that they were condemning the innocent without a hearing. The three following theses were proposed by Zuinglius and his friends as the subject of the conference, and victoriously maintained by them in the hall of conference.

“Children born of believing parents, are children of God, like those who were born under the Old Testament, and, consequently, they may receive baptism.

“Baptism is under the New what circumcision was under the Old Testament; consequently baptism must now be administered to children as circumcision was.

“The custom of baptising anew cannot be proved either from examples, or from passages of Scripture, or reasons derived from Scripture. Those who get themselves re-baptised, crucify Jesus Christ.” But the Anabaptists did not confine themselves to merely religious questions. They demanded the abolition of tithes, considering, said they, that they are not of divine institution. Zuinglius replied that on tithes depended the maintenance of churches and schools. He wished a complete religious reform; but he was determined not to allow the public order, or political institutions to be interfered with in the least degree. This was the limit where he saw written in the handwriting of God these words, “Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther.” It was necessary to stop somewhere; and here Zuinglius and the Reformers stopped, in spite of the impetuous men who strove to hurry them still farther.

Still, though the Reformers stopped, they could not stop the enthusiasts who seemed placed beside them to bring out their wisdom and soberness. The Anabaptists did not think it enough to have formed a church. This church was in their eyes the true state. Were they cited before the courts, they declared that they would not recognise civil authority, which was only a remnant of paganism, and that they obeyed no other power but God. They taught that Christians were not permitted to exercise public functions, or bear the sword, and similar in that to certain irreligious enthusiasts who have appeared in our day, they regarded a community of goods as the beau ideal of humanity.

Thus the danger increased: civil society was menaced, and arose to reject these destructive elements from its bosom. The government, in alarm, allowed themselves to be dragged into strange measures. Determined to make an example, they condemned Mantz to be drowned. On the 5th January, 1527, he was placed in a boat. His mother, who had formerly been the canon's concubine and his brother, were among the crowd that accompanied him to the water-edge. "Persevere even to the end," exclaimed they to him. At the moment when the executioner made ready to throw Mantz into the lake, his brother melted into tears; but his mother stood by calm, with resolute heart, dry and sparkling eye, to witness the martyrdom of her son. The same day Blaurock was beaten with rods. As they were taking him out of the town, he shook his blue coat and the dust of his feet against it. It appears that this poor man was, at a later period, burnt alive by the Roman Catholics of the Tyrol. No doubt there was a spirit of revolt among the Anabaptists: without doubt the ancient ecclesiastical law, which condemned heretics to death, was still in force, and the Reformation could not, in one year or two, reform all errors. No doubt, moreover, the Catholic states would have accused the Protestant states of encouraging disorder; but these considerations, while they explain the rigour of the magistrate, cannot justify it. Measures might have been taken against every assault made on the civil constitution; but religious errors, combated by religious teachers, ought to have had entire exemption from civil courts. Such opinions are not lashed away with the whip—they are not drowned when those who profess them are thrown into the water: they rise up from the bottom of the abyss, and the fire only kindles in their adherents greater enthusiasm and thirst for martyrdom. Zuinglius, whose sentiments on this head we have already seen, took no part in these severities.

CHAP. XI

Popish Immobility—Protestant Progression—Zuinglius and Luther—Zuinglius and the Lord's Supper—Luther's great Principle—Carlstadt's writings prohibited—Zuinglius's Commentary—The Suabian Syngram—Capito and Bucer—Need of unity in diversity.

Baptism, however, was not the only subject on which dissension was to arise. The doctrine of the Supper was to occasion it in a still graver form. The human mind, freed from the yoke under which it had groaned for so many ages, availed itself of its freedom; and if Roman Catholicism had its rocks of despotism, Protestantism had cause to fear rocks of anarchy. The characteristic of Protestantism is movement, as that of Rome is immobility.

Roman Catholicism, which possesses in the papacy a means of incessantly establishing new doctrines, does indeed at first appear to have a principle eminently favourable to variations. This it has used to a large extent; and we see Rome, from age to age, producing or ratifying new dogmas. But when once its system was completed, Roman Catholicism became the champion of immobility. Its safety lies here. It is like one of those tottering buildings, from which nothing can be taken away without producing a ruin. Allow the priests of Rome to marry, or do away with the doctrine of transubstantiation, and the whole system is shaken, the whole edifice falls.

It is not so with evangelical Christianity. Its principle is much less favourable to variations, and much more favourable to motion and life. On the one hand, the only source of truth which it recognises is one Scripture, standing alone, always the same from the beginning of the Church to its end; how then could it vary as the papacy has done. But, on the other hand, each Christian must go and draw for himself at this source. Hence arise motion and liberty. Thus evangelical

Christianity, while it is in the nineteenth century what it was in the sixteenth, and also in the first, is at all times full of energy and activity, filling the world with researches, labours, Bibles, missionaries, light, salvation, and life.

It is a great error to rank and almost confound evangelical Christianity with mysticism and rationalism, and impute their vagaries to it. Movement is natural to evangelical Protestantism; it has an antipathy to immobility and death; but it is the movement of health and life that characterises it, and not the aberrations of the man who has lost his senses, or the agitations of disease. We are going to see this characteristic manifested in the doctrine of the Supper. This was to be expected. This doctrine had received divers interpretations in the early days of the Church, and this diversity subsisted, until the period when the doctrine of transubstantiation and the scholastic theology began, at the same time, to exert an ascendancy over the middle ages. This ascendancy having been shaken, the ancient diversity behoved to re-appear.

Zuinglius and Luther, after having been developed apart, the former in Switzerland, the latter in Saxony, were one day to meet in presence of each other. They were animated by the same spirit, and, in many respects, by the same character. Both were full of love for truth and hatred for injustice: both were naturally violent; and in both this violence was tempered by sincere piety. But there was a feature in the character of Zuinglius which carried him farther onward than Luther. He loved liberty not merely as a man, but as a republican, a countrymen of Tell. Accustomed to the decisions of a free state, he did not allow himself to be arrested by considerations before which Luther recoiled. He had, moreover, studied scholastic theology less than Luther, and in this way was less under trammels. Both ardently attached to their inmost convictions, both determined to defend them, and little accustomed to bend before the convictions of others, they were to meet, like two fiery steeds, which rush into battle, and suddenly encounter each other. A practical tendency predominated in Zuinglius, and in the Reformation, of which he was the author; and this tendency was directed to two great results—to simplicity in worship, and to holiness in life. To bring worship into accordance with the wants of the mind, which seeks not external pomp, but things invisible, was the first want of Zuinglius. The idea of a corporal presence of Jesus Christ in the Supper—an idea, the source of all the ceremonies and all the superstitions of the Church, behoved to be abolished. But another longing of the Swiss Reformer led him to the same results. He found that the doctrine of Rome on the Supper, and even that of Luther, pre-supposed a certain magical influence prejudicial to sanctification. He feared that the Christian, in imagining that he received Jesus Christ in the consecrated bread, would not be so zealous in seeking to be united to him by heart-felt faith. “Faith,” said he, “is not knowledge, opinion, imagination, it is a reality. It brings with it a real union in things divine.” Hence, whatever the enemies of Zuinglius may allege, it was not a leaning to rationalism, but a profoundly religious idea, that led him to the adoption of his peculiar views. The result of the labours of Zuinglius coincided with his tendencies. In studying the Scriptures as a whole, as he was accustomed to do, and not merely in detached portions, and in having recourse to the classics, in order to solve any difficulties of expression, he came to be convinced that the word is, in the institution of the Supper, must be taken in the sense of signifies; and, as early as 1523, he wrote to a friend that the bread and wine, in the institution of the Supper, are only what the water is in baptism. “It were vain,” added he, “to plunge him who believes not, a thousand times in water. Faith, then, is the thing essentially required.”

Luther at first set out from principles very much akin to those of the teacher of Zurich. “It is not the sacrament which sanctifies,” said he, “it is faith in the sacrament.” But the extravagances of the Anabaptists, whose mysticism spiritualised every thing, produced a great change in his views. When he saw enthusiasts, who pretended to a particular inspiration, breaking images, rejecting baptism, denying the presence of Christ in the Supper, he was alarmed: he had a kind of prophetical presentiment of the dangers which threatened the Church, if this ultra-spiritualist disposition gained the ascendancy, and he threw himself into a quite different path, like a pilot, who, seeing his bark leaning much over to one side and ready to upset, leans with all his weight on the other side, in order to establish the equilibrium. From this time Luther attached a higher importance to the sacraments. He maintained that they were not only signs by means of which Christians are externallyrecognised, as Zuinglius held, but testimonials of the divine will, fitted to strengthen our faith. More than this, Christ, according to him, had been pleased to impart to believers a full assurance of their salvation; and in order to seal this promise in the most effectual manner, had added his true body in the bread and wine. “In the same way,” said he, “as iron and fire, which, however, are two distinct substances, are blended together in a furnace, so that in each of its parts there is at once iron and fire; in the same way, and à fortiori, the glorified body of Christ exists in all the parts of the bread.”

Thus, on the part of Luther at this period, there was perhaps some return to scholastic theology. He had completely disconnected himself with it in the doctrine of justification by faith; but in the sacrament he abandoned only one point, that of transubstantiation, and kept the other, the corporal presence. He even went the length of saying, that he would rather receive only blood with the pope than receive only wine with Zuinglius. The great principle of Luther was to withdraw from the doctrine and customs of the Church, only when the words of Scripture rendered it absolutely necessary. “Where has Christ ordered the host to be elevated and shown to the people?” asked Carlstadt. “And where has Christ forbidden it?” replied Luther. Here is the principle of the two Reformations. Ecclesiastical traditions were dear to the Saxon Reformer. If he separated from them in several points, it was only after severe struggles, and because it was necessary, first of all, to obey the Word. But when the letter of the Word appeared in harmony with tradition and the usage of the Church, he clung to it with immoveable firmness. Now, this is just what happened in the case of the Supper. He denied not that the word is might be taken in the sense pointed out by Zuinglius. He acknowledged, for instance, that it was necessary so to understand it in the words, “That rock was Christ;” but he denied that it could have this meaning in the institution of the Supper. In one of the later schoolmen, the one whom he preferred to all the others, Occam, he found an opinion which he embraced. Like Occam, he abandoned the constantly repeated miracle, in virtue of which, according to the Romish Church, the body and blood are, on each occasion, after consecration by the priest, substituted for the bread and wine; and, like this doctor, he substituted for it an universal miracle, performed once for all,—that of the ubiquity or omnipresence of the body of Jesus Christ. “Christ, said he, “is present in the bread and wine, because he is present every where, and especially every where he chooses.” The tendency of Zuinglius was quite different from that of Luther. He was less disposed to preserve a certain union with the universal Church, and maintain a connection with the tradition of past ages. As a theologian, he looked to the Scriptures alone, from which he wished to receive his faith freely, and immediately, without troubling himself with what others had previously thought. As a republican, he looked to his community of Zurich. It was the idea of the present Church that engrossed him, not

the idea of the Church of other times. He dwelt particularly on these words of St. Paul, “Because there is but one bread,—we who are many are one body.” And he saw in the Supper the sign of a spiritual communion between Christ and all Christians. “Whoever,” he said, “conducts himself unworthily, becomes guilty towards the body of Christ, of which he forms part.” This idea had a great practical influence; and the effects which it produced on the lives of many persons, confirmed Zuinglius in it.

Thus Luther and Zuinglius had insensibly withdrawn from each other. Perhaps, however, peace would have longer subsisted between them, had not the turbulent Carlstadt, who was coming and going between Germany and Switzerland, set fire to these opposite opinions. A proceeding, taken to maintain peace, had the effect of kindling war. The council of Zurich, wishing to prevent all controversy, prohibited the sale of Carlstadt’s writings. Zuinglius, who disapproved of the violence of Carlstadt, and blamed his mystical and obscure expressions, then thought himself bound to defend his doctrine, whether in the pulpit or before the council, and soon after wrote pastor Albert of Reutlingen a letter, in which he said, “Whether or not Christ speaks of the Sacrament in the sixth chapter of John, it is very clear that he speaks of a mode of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, in which there is nothing corporeal.”3 He then endeavoured to prove that the Supper, by reminding believers, according to Christ’s intention, of his body broken for them, procured for them that spiritual eating, which alone is truly salutary.

Still Zuinglius was as yet very averse to a rupture with Luther. He trembled to think that new dissensions should rend this new society which was then forming in the midst of decayed Christendom. Luther did not feel in the same way. He hesitated not to class Zuinglius with the enthusiasts, with whom he had already broken so many lances. He did not reflect that if images had been removed at Zurich, it was legally and by public authority. Accustomed to the forms of the Germanic States, he had little acquaintance with the procedure of Swiss republics; and he inveighed against the grave Helvetic theologians, as against the Münzers and Carlstadts.

Luther having published his treatise against “the heavenly prophets,” Zuinglius no longer hesitated, and published almost at the same time his Letter to Albert, and his Commentary on True and False Religion, dedicated to Francis I. He here said, “Since Christ, in the sixth chapter of John, attributes to faith the power of imparting eternal life, and uniting the believer with himself in the most intimate manner, what need have we of any thing else? Why should he afterwards have attributed this virtue to his flesh, while he himself declares that his flesh profiteth nothing? The flesh of Christ, in so far as it was put to death for us, is of immense benefit to us: for it saves us from perdition; but in so far as eaten by us does us no good.” The struggle commenced. Pomeranus, Luther’s friend, rushed to battle, and attacked the evangelist of Zurich somewhat too disdainfully. Œcolampadius then began to blush at having so long combated his doubts, and preached doctrines which already wavered in his mind. He took courage, and wrote from Basle to Zuinglius. The dogma of the real presence is the fortress and strong tower of their impiety. So long as they keep this idol, it will be impossible to vanquish them. He then also entered the lists, by publishing a tract on the meaning of our Saviour’s words, “This is my body.” The mere fact of Œcolampadius joining the Reformer produced an immense sensation, not only at Basle, but throughout Germany. Luther was deeply moved at it. Brentz, Schnepff and twelve other pastors of Suabia, to whom Œcolampadius had dedicated his book, and who had almost all been his pupils, felt the greatest pain. “At the very moment of separating from him for a just cause,” said Brentz, in

taking up the pen to answer him, “I honour and admire him as much as it is possible to do. The bond of love is not broken between us, because we are not agreed.” Then he published, with his friends, the famous Syngram of Suabia, in which he replied to Œcolampadius firmly, but charitably and respectfully. “If an emperor,” said the authors of the Syngram, “give a baton to a judge, saying to him, ‘Take! this is the power of judging,’ the baton, doubtless, is only a simple symbol, but these words being added, the judge has not only the symbol of power—he has power itself.” The true Reformed Churches may admit this comparison. The Syngram was received with acclamation; its authors were regarded as the champions of the truth; several theologians, and even laymen, wishing to share in their glory, began to defend the doctrine which was attacked, and made a rush at Œcolampadius.

Strasburg then came forward as a mediator between Switzerland and Germany. Capito and Bucer were friends of peace, and the question in debate was, according to them, of secondary importance; they therefore placed themselves between the two parties, sent George Cassel, one of their colleagues, to Luther, and besought him not to break the bond of brotherhood which united him to the teachers of Switzerland. No where was Luther’s character more strikingly manifested than in this controversy on the Supper. Never did he so fully manifest the firmness with which he kept to what he believed to be a Christian conviction, his fidelity in seeking a foundation for it only in Scripture, the sagacity of his defence, and his animated, eloquent, often over-powering argumentation. But never, also, did he more strikingly manifest the obstinacy with which he adhered to his own views, the little attention which he paid to the reasons of his adversaries, and the uncharitable readiness which led him to attribute their errors to the wickedness of their hearts and the wiles of the devil. “One or other,” said he to the mediator of Strasburg; “the Swiss or we must be the ministers of Satan….” This was what Capito called “the madness of the Saxon Orestes,” and the madness was followed by exhaustion. Luther’s health was affected; one day he fainted away in the arms of his wife and his friends, and he was for a whole week, as it were, “in death and hell.” “He had,” he said, “lost Jesus Christ, and was tossed to and fro by the tempest of despair…. The world was mouldering away, and announcing by prodigies that the last day was at hand.” But the divisions of the friends of the Reformation were to have still more fatal consequences. The Roman theologians triumphed, especially in Switzerland, in being able to oppose Luther to Zuinglius. Still, after three centuries, the remembrance of these divisions furnish evangelical Christians with the precious fruit of unity in diversity. Even then the Reformers, by setting themselves in opposition to each other, showed that the feeling which animated them was not a blind hatred of Rome, and that truth was the first aim of their researches. Herein it must be acknowledged there is something noble. A conduct thus disinterested failed not to bear some fruit, and to force, even from enemies, a feeling of interest and esteem. Nor is this all. We may here perceive that the Sovereign hand which disposes of all events, permits nothing without the wisest design. Luther, nowithstanding of his opposition to the papacy, was, in an eminent degree, conservative. Zuinglius, on the contrary, was inclined to a radical reformation. These two opposite tendencies were necessary. If only Luther and his adherents had appeared in the days of the Reformation, the work would have been too soon arrested, and the reforming principle would not have fulfilled its task. If, on the contrary, Zuinglius only had appeared, the thread would have been too suddenly snapped, and the Reformation would have been isolated from the ages which preceded it.

These two tendencies, which, on a superficial glance, may seem to have existed merely that they might oppose each other, had, on the contrary, a task to accomplish, and we are able to say, after a lapse of three centuries, that they fulfilled their mission.

CHAP. XII The Tockenburg—An Assembly of the People—Reformation—The Grisons—Discussion of Ilantz—Results—Reform at Zurich.

Thus the Reformation had struggles to maintain in every quarter. After combating with the rationalist philosophy of Erasmus, and the fanatical enthusiasm of the Anabaptists, it had still a struggle with itself. But its great struggle ever was with the papacy, and the attack which it had began in the cities of the plain, it now continued on the remotest mountains. On the heights of the Tockenburg, the sound of the gospel had been heard, and three ecclesiastics were prosecuted by order of the bishop on a charge of heresy. “Let them convince us, with the Word of God in their hand,” said Militus, Döring, and Farer, “and we will submit, not only to the chapter, but to the least of the brethren in Jesus Christ; if not, we will not obey any one, not even the man highest in power.” This was indeed the spirit of Zuinglius and the Reformation. Shortly after, a circumstance occurred which inflamed the minds of those living in these high vallies. An assembly of the people had been held on St. Catherine’s day. The citizens were met, and two men of Schwitz, who had come to the Tockenburg on business, were at one of the tables: conversation went on; “Ulric Zuinglius,” exclaimed one of them, “is a heretic and a robber!” Steiger, secretary of state, undertook the Reformer’s defence; the noise drew the attention of the whole assembly. George Bruggman, the uncle of Zuinglius, who was sitting at another table, darted from his seat in a rage, exclaiming, “Certainly it is of Master Zuinglius they are speaking.” All the guests rose and followed him, fearing a scuffle. The tumult increasing, the bailic hastily assembled the council in the open street, and Bruggman was entreated for peace sake to content himself with saying to these men, “If you do not retract, you yourselves are the parties guilty of falsehood and robbery.” “Remember what you have just said, replied the men of Schwitz, “we too will remember it.” They then mounted their horses, and galloped off by the road to Schwitz.2 The government of Schwitz sent a threatening letter to the inhabitants of the Tockenburg. All were in alarm. “Be strong and fearless,” wrote Zuinglius to the council of his native district. “Dont let the lies which are retailed against me give you any uneasiness. There is not a clamourer but who can call me heretic, but do you abstain from insult, disorder, debauchery, and mercenary wars; assist the poor, protect the oppressed, and whatever be the insults poured upon you, put unshaken confidence in Almighty God.”4 The exhortations of Zuinglius were successful. The council still hesitated, but the people assembled in their parishes, and came to an unanimous resolution, that the mass should be abolished, and that they would be faithful to the Word of God. The conquests were not less important in Rhetia, which Salandronius had been compelled to quit, but where Comander boldly preached the gospel. The Anabaptists, it is true, preaching their fanatical doctrines in the Grisons, had at first greatly injured the Reformation. The people had been divided into three parties. Some had thrown themselves into the arms of these new prophets; others, looking on in silent astonishment, were disquieted by the schism. In fine, the partisans of Rome shouted triumph. An assembly was held at Ilantz, in the country of the Grisons, for a discussion: the supporters of the papacy, on the one hand, and the friends of the Reformation on the other, drew together their forces. The vicar of the bishop endeavoured at first to evade the combat. “These discussions occasioning great expense,” said he, “I am ready, in order to cover it, to deposit ten thousand florins; but I demand that an equal

sum be deposited by the other party." "If the bishop has ten thousand florins at his disposal," exclaimed the burly voice of a peasant from amid the crowd, "it is from us he has extorted them; to give as much more to these poor priests would truly be too much." "We are poor people with empty purses," said Comander, pastor of Coire; "scarcely have we the means of buying soup: where should we find ten thousand florins?" Every one laughed at this expedient, and nothing more was said of it.

Among those present were Sebastian Hofmeister and James Amman of Zurich, holding in their hands the Holy Scriptures in Hebrew and Greek. The vicar of the bishop demanded that strangers should be excluded. Hofmeister saw that this was aimed at him, and said, "We have come provided with a Greek and Hebrew Bible, in order that no violence may be done in any manner of way to the Scriptures. However, sooner than prevent the conference, we are ready to withdraw." "Ah," exclaimed the curate of Dintzen, looking at the books of the two Zurichers, "if the Greek tongue and the Hebrew tongue had never entered our country, there would be fewer heresies." "St. Jerome," said another, "translated the Bible for us; we have no need of Jewish books." "If the Zurichers are excluded," said the banneret of Ilantz, "the community will interfere." "Well then," it was answered, "let them listen, but say nothing!" The Zurichers accordingly remained, and their Bible with them.

Then Comander standing up, read the first of the theses which he had published. It was—"The Christian Church springs from the Word of God. It must abide by this Word, and listen only to its voice." He proceeded to prove his proposition by numerous passages of Scripture. "He walked with a sure step," said an eye-witness, "and set down his foot with the tramp of an ox." "We have too much of this," said the vicar. "When among his boon companions listening to the flute," said Hofmeister, "he does not find it too much."4 A man rose from the middle of the assembly and came forward, waving his arms, twinkling with his eyes, and knitting his brows, and apparently out of his senses: he sprang towards Comander, and several thought he was going to strike him. It was a schoolmaster of Coire. "I have put down several questions for you in writing," said he to Comander, "answer them instantly." "I am here," said the Grison Reformer, to defend my doctrine; attack it, and I will defend it: if not, return to your place. I will answer you when I have done." The schoolmaster stood for a moment in suspense. "Very good," he at length said, and resumed his seat.

It was proposed to pass to the doctrine of the sacraments. The Abbot of St. Luke declared it was not without fear he approached such a subject, while the frightened vicar made the sign of the cross. The schoolmaster, who had already desired to attack Comander, began with much volubility to maintain the doctrine of the sacraments, founding on the words, "This is my body." "Dear Berre," said Comander to him, "how do you understand the words, 'John is Elias'?" "I understand," replied Berre, who saw Comander's drift, "that he was truly and essentially Elias." "And why then," continued Comander, "did John Baptist himself say that he was not Elias?" The schoolmaster was silent, and at length said, "It is true." There was a general burst of laughter, even from those who had employed him to speak. The Abbot of St. Luke delivered a long harangue on the Supper, and the conference was closed. Seven priests embraced the evangelical doctrine; full religious freedom was proclaimed, and the Romish ritual was abolished in several churches. "Christ," to use the words of Salandronius, "every where sprang up in these mountains like the tender grass in spring, and the pastors were like living springs which watered these high vallies. The Reformation

made still more rapid strides at Zurich. The Dominicans, Augustins, and Capuchins were compelled to live together—the hell anticipated for these poor monks. Instead of these corrupt institutions, schools, an hospital, and a theological seminary, were founded. Knowledge and charity every where took the place of idleness and selfishness.

CHAP. XIII

Executions—Discussion at Baden—Rules of the Discussion—Riches and Poverty—Eck and Œcolampadius—Discussion—Part taken by Zuinglius—Boasting of the Romans—Insults of a Monk—End of the Discussion.

These victories of the Reformation could not he overlooked. Monks, priests, and prelates, transported with rage, felt that the ground was every where moving from under their feet, and that the Church was ready to give way before unparalleled dangers. The oligarchs of the cantons—the men of pensions and foreign enlistments, became aware that they could no longer delay, if they wished to save their privileges; and at the moment when the Church was in fear and beginning to sink, they offered her their arm of steel. A Stein and a John Hug of Lucerne united with a John Faber, and the civil authority rushed to the assistance of that hierarchical power which utters high sounding words of pride, and makes war on the saints.

Public opinion had long been demanding a discussion. There was no other means of calming the people. The Councils of Zurich had said to the Diet—“Convince us from Scripture, and we will yield to your invitations.” It was every where repeated, “The Zurichers have given you a promise: if you can convince them by the Bible, why don’t you do it? and if you cannot, why don’t you conform to the Bible?” The conferences held at Zurich had exercised an immense influence: it was necessary to oppose them with a conference held in a Romish town, taking all necessary precautions to secure the victory to the papal party.

It is true these discussions had been declared unlawful; but means were found to escape from this difficulty. “The only thing to be done,” it was said, “is to arrest and condemn the pernicious doctrines of Zuinglins.” This being agreed, a stout champion was wanted, and Dr. Eck presented himself. He had no fear. His expression, according to Hofmeister, was, “Zuinglius has doubtless milked more cows than he has read books.”4 The great Council of Zurich sent Dr. Eck a safe conduct to come to Zurich itself; but Eck replied that he would await the answer of the confederation. Zuinglius then offered to debate at St. Gall or Schaffhausen but the Council, founding on an article of the federal compact, which bore, “that every person accused shall be tried in the place where he resides,” ordered Zuinglius to with draw his offer. The Diet at length decreed that a conference should take place at Baden, and fixed it for the 16th May, 1526. This conference was to be important, for it was the result and seal of the alliance which had been made between the ecclesiastical power and the oligarchs of the confederation. “See,” said Zuinglius to Vadian, “what the oligarchs and Faber dare at this hour to undertake.”

Accordingly, the decision of the Diet produced a great impression in Switzerland. It was not doubted that a conference, held under such auspices, would prove unfavourable to the Reformation. It was said at Zurich, “Do not the five cantons most devoted to the pope rule in Baden? Have they not already declared the doctrine of Zuinglius heretical, and employed sword and fire against it? Has not Zuinglius been burned in effigy at Lucerne, after being subject to all

kinds of insult? Have not his writings been given to the flames at Friburg? Is not his death every where longed for? Have not the cantons which exercise sovereign rights in Baden declared that, should Zuinglius set foot on any part whatever of their territory, they would apprehend him? Has not Uberlingen, one of their leaders, said, that his only wish in this world was to hang Zuinglius, were he himself to be the executioner on the last day of his life?3 And has not Dr. Eck been crying for years that heretics must be attacked with fire and sword? What then will be this discussion, and what the issue of it, but just the death of the Reformer!

Such were the fears which agitated the committee appointed at Zurich to examine this affair. Zuinglius, who was a witness of their agitation, rose and said, “You know what was the fate of the valiant men of Stammheim at Baden, and how the blood of the Wirths dyed the scaffold … and we are invited to the very place of their execution.… Let the place of conference be Zurich, Berne, St. Gall, or even Basle, Constance, Schaffhausen; let it be agreed to discuss fundamental points only, employing only the Word of God. Let no judge be set over it; in that case, I am ready to appear.”

Meanwhile fanaticism bestirred herself, and made victims. A consistory, headed by this same Faber who challenged Zuinglius, on 10th May, 1526, (about eight days before the discussion of Baden,) condemned to the flames as a heretic an evangelical minister named John Hügle, pastor of Lindan, who walked to execution singing the Te Deum. At the same time Peter Spengler, another minister, was drowned at Friburg by order of the Bishop of Constance. From all quarters sinister rumours reached Zuinglius. His brother-in-law, Leonard Tremp, wrote him from Berne, “I beseech you, as you value your life, don’t come to Baden. I know that the safe-conduct will be violated.”

It was confidently stated that a plan had been formed to carry him off, gag him, put him into a boat, and carry him to some unknown place. In the view of these menaces and scaffolds, the council of Zurich decreed that Zuinglius should not go to Baden.4 The discussion being fixed for the 19th May, the combatants, the representatives of the cantons, and the bishops, began gradually to arrive. On the part of the Roman Catholics appeared, first of all, the warlike and vain-glorious Dr. Eck: on the part of the Protestants, the modest and gentle Œcolampadius. The latter was well aware of the perils of this discussion. As an old biographer expresses it,—like a timid stag pursued by raging dogs, he had long hesitated. At last he determined to repair to Baden. Previously, however, he put forward the solemn protestation, “I acknowledge no rule of judgment but the Word of God.” At first he had earnestly desired that Zuinglius should share his dangers; but he soon doubted not that if the intrepid teacher had appeared in this fanatical town, the rage of the Roman Catholics firing at his presence would have put them both to death. The first thing done was to determine the laws of the combat. Dr. Eck proposed that the deputies of the Wallenstein should be appointed to pronounce a definitive judgment. This was just to anticipate the condemnation of the Reformation. Thomas Plater, who had come from Zurich to Baden to be present at the conference, was despatched by Œcolampadius to Zuinglius to obtain his opinion. Having arrived at night, he found some difficulty in gaining admission into the Reformer’s house. “Unfortunate disturber,” said Zuinglius to him, rubbing his eyes. “For six weeks now, (thanks to this discussion,) I have not been in bed. … What is your message?” Plater explained the proposals of Dr. Eck. “And who,” replied Zuinglius, “would put these peasants into a condition to comprehend such things? Verily the milking of cows would be more intelligible to them.” On 21st May, the conference commenced. Eck and Faber, accompanied by prelates, magistrates, and doctors, clothed in vestments of damask

and silk, and decked with rings, chains, and crosses, repaired to the church. Eck strutted proudly into a magnificently ornamented pulpit, while the humble Œcolampadius, in mean clothing, had to face his haughty opponent on a platform of rude construction. “The whole time the conference lasted,” says the chronicler Bullinger, “Eck and his people were lodged at the curacy of Baden, making good cheer, leading a gay and scandalous life, and drinking much wine with which the abbot of Wettingen supplied them.3 Eck,” it was said, “bathes at Baden—in wine.” The evangelicals, on the contrary, made a poor appearance, and were laughed at as a band of mendicants. Their mode of life contrasted strikingly with that of the champions of the papacy. The host of the inn of the Pike, where Œcolampadius lodged, being desirous to see what he was doing in his room, stated, that, whenever he looked in, he saw him reading or praying. It must be confessed,” said he, “that he is a very pious heretic.” The discussion lasted eighteen days, and, during the whole period, the clergy of Baden daily made a solemn procession, chanting litanies in order to obtain the victory. Eck was sole speaker in defence of the Romish doctrine. It was still the champion of the Leipsic discussion, with his German accent, his broad shoulders, and powerful lungs, an excellent public crier, with more in his exterior of the butcher than of the divine. He debated, according to his wont, with great violence, trying to wound his opponents by cutting expressions, and sometimes even mincing an oath. But the president never called him to order.

Eck thumps the desk with feet and hands, And roars, and raves, and scolds, and bans.

“What pope and cardinals propound I hold as creed, ay creed most sound.”

Œcolampadius, on the contrary, with a serene, noble, and patriarchal air, spoke so meekly, and, at the same time, with so much ability and courage, that even his adversaries, moved and transported, said, one to another, “Oh, if the tall yellow man were on our side.” His equanimity, however, was occasionally disturbed on seeing the enmity and violence of the hearers. “Oh!” said he, “with what impatience they listen to me; but God is not wanting to his own glory, and this is all that we seek.”

Œcolampadius, having attacked the first thesis of Dr. Eck, which turned on the real presence, Haller, who had arrived at Baden after the commencement of the discussion, entered the lists against the second. Little accustomed to such conferences, of a timid disposition, trammelled by the orders of his government, and embarrassed by the looks of his avoyer, Gaspard Mullinen, Haller had not the proud confidence of his antagonist, but he had more real force. After Haller had finished, Œcolampadius again entered the lists, and pressed Dr. Eck so closely, that he was reduced to the necessity of only appealing to the usage of the Church. “Usage,” replied Œcolampadius, “has only weight in our Switzerland according to the constitution; now, in matters of faith, the constitution is the Bible.” The third thesis, on the invocation of saints, the fourth, on images, and the fifth, on purgatory, were successively discussed. Nobody rose to dispute the truth of the two last theses, which turned upon original sin and baptism.

Zuinglius took an active part in the whole discussion. The Catholic party, who had four secretaries, had forbidden any other person, under pain of death, from taking any thing down in writing. But a student of the Valais, named Jerome Wälsch, who possessed a very retentive memory, fixed what he had heard in his mind, and, hastening home, wrote it down. Thomas Plater, and Zimmerman of Winterthur, daily carried these notes and letters from Œcolampadius to Zuinglius, and brought back the Reformer’s answers. All the gates of Baden were guarded by soldiers, armed with

halberts, and the two messengers were obliged, by divers excuses, to elude the interrogatories of the soldiers, who did not understand why these youths were continually returning to the town. Thus Zuinglius, though absent from Baden in body was present in mind.

He counselled and encouraged his friends, and refuted his enemies. “Zuinglius,” says Oswald Myconius, “laboured more by his meditations, his vigils, and his counsels sent to Baden, than he could have done by debating personally in the midst of his enemies.”

During the whole conference the Roman Catholics kept by an agitation, sent letters in all directions, and shouted victory “Œcolampadius,” exclaimed they, “conquered by Dr. Eck, and stretched out on the arena, has sung a palinode. The reign of the pope is about to be every where re-established.2” These shouts were heard over all the cantons, and the people, ready to believe whatever they hear, credited all these boastings of the partisans of Rome. The discussion being ended, the monk Murner, of Lucerne, who was surnamed, “the tom cat,” came forward and read forty accusations directed against Zuinglius. “I thought,” said he, “that the coward would come and answer: he has not appeared. Very well, by all the laws which govern things human and divine, I declare forty times that the tyrant of Zurich, and all his partisans, are disloyal subjects, liars, perjurers, adulterers, infidels, robbers, blasphemers, true gallows birds, and that every honest man must blush at being in any way connected with them.” Such were the insulting terms which, at this early period, doctors, whom the Roman Catholic Church herself ought to have disclaimed, decorated with the name of “Christian polemics.”

There was great agitation in Baden: the general feeling being that the Roman champions had made the loudest noise, but used the weakest arguments. Œcolampadius and ten of his friends were all who signed the rejection of Eck’s theses, whereas, eighty-four persons, among whom were the presidents of the discussion and all the monks of Wittemberg, adhered to them. Haller had left Baden before the end of the conference. The majority of the Diet then decided that Zuinglius, the head of this pernicious doctrine, having refused to appear, and the ministers who had come to Baden having refused to be convinced, they were all cast out of the universal Church.

CHAP. XIV

Consequences at Basle, Berne, St. Gall, and other places—Diet at Zurich—The Small Cantons—Menaces at Berne—Foreign Aid. But this famous conference, due to the zeal of the oligarchs and clergy, was to prove fatal to both. Those who had then contended for the gospel, on returning to their firesides, were to fill their fellow-citizens with enthusiasm for the cause which they had defended; and two of the most important cantons of the Helvetic alliance were thenceforth to begin to break off all connection with the papacy.

It was on Œcolampadius, a stranger to Switzerland, that the first blows were to fall, and he returned to Basle not without some misgivings. But his disquietude was soon dissipated. His mild sentences had struck impartial witnesses more than the clamour of Dr. Eck, and he was received with acclamation by all pious men. The adversary, it is true, used every effort to exclude him from the pulpit, but in vain; he taught and preached more forcibly than before, and never had the people shown such thirst for the Word.

Similar results followed at Berne. The conference of Baden, which was to have stifled the Reformation, gave it a new impulse in this canton, the most powerful in the whole Swiss

confederation. No sooner did Haller arrive in the capital, than the little council summoned him to appear, and ordered him to celebrate mass. Haller demanded to be heard before the great council; and the people feeling bound to defend their pastor, flocked in crowds. Haller, alarmed, declared that he would sooner leave the town than be the cause of any disturbance. Tranquility being restored, the Reformer said, “If I am required to celebrate this ceremony, I resign my charge: the honour of God and the truth of his holy Word are dearer to my heart than any anxiety as to what I shall eat, or wherewithal I shall be clothed.” Haller spoke these words with deep emotion; the members of the Council were affected; even some of his opponents shed tears. Moderation proved still stronger than force. To give Rome some satisfaction, Haller was deprived of his office as canon, but was appointed preacher. His most violent enemies, Louis and Anthony Diesbach and Anthony Erlach, indignant at this resolution, immediately left the Council and the town, and renounced their right of citizenship. “Berne has had a fall,” said Haller, “but it has risen with more power than ever.” This firmness of the Bernese produced a great impression in Switzerland.3 But the consequences of the conference of Baden were not confined to Berne and Basle. While these things were taking place there, a movement, more or less similar, was taking place in several of the States of the confederation. The preachers of St. Gall, on their return from Baden, preached the gospel: at the end of a conference, the images were removed from the parochial church of St. Lawrence, and the inhabitants sold their most valuable articles of dress, their jewels, their rings, their gold chains, to found houses of charity. The Reformation spoiled, but it was to clothe the poor, and the spoils were those of the Reformers themselves. At Mulhausen, the gospel was preached with new courage. Thurgovia and the Rheinthal always approximated more and more to Zurich. Immediately after the discussion, Zurzach carried off the images of its churches, and the district of Baden almost every where received the gospel.

Nothing can be better fitted than such facts to prove to which party the victory truly belonged. Accordingly Zuinglius, on looking around him, gave glory to God. “We are attacked in many ways,” said he, “but the Lord is stronger not only than menaces, but also than wars themselves. In the town and canton of Zurich there is an admirable agreement in favour of the gospel. We will surmount all difficulties by prayers offered up in faith.” Shortly after addressing Haller, Zuinglius said to him, “Every thing here below follows its destiny. To the boisterous blast of the north succeeds a gentler breeze. After the broiling days of summer, autumn pours its treasures into our lap. And now, after severe combats, the Creator of all things, in whose service we are, opens the way for us into the heart of the enemy’s camp. We are still able to receive Christian doctrine, that dove so long driven off, but which never ceased waiting to spy the hour of its return. Be thou the Noah to receive and save it.…” This same year Zurich had made an important acquisition. Conrad Pellican, guardian of the Franciscan convent at Basle, and professor of theology at twenty-four, had been invited, by the exertions of Zuinglius, to be professor of Hebrew at Zurich. “It is long,” said he on arriving, “since I have renounced the pope, and desire only to live for Jesus Christ.” Pellican, by his energetical talents, became one of the most useful labourers in the work of the Reformation.

Zurich continuing to be excluded from the Diet by the Romish cantons, and wishing to take advantage of the better dispositions manifested by some of the confederates, in the beginning of 1527, summoned a Diet, to be held at Zurich itself. The deputies of Berne, Basle, Schaffhausen, Appenzell, and St. Gall, repaired to it. “We wish,” said the deputies of Zurich, “that the Word of

God which alone leads us to Christ crucified, should alone be preached, alone taught, alone magnified. We abandon all human doctrines, whatever may have been the ancient customs of our forefathers, certain that if they had had the light of the Divine word which we enjoy, they would have embraced it with more respect than we, their feeble descendants, do." The deputies present promised to take the representations of Zurich into consideration.

Thus the breach which had been made in Rome became larger every day. The discussion of Baden was to have repaired all her losses, and thereafter, on the contrary, cantons which had been undecided were disposed to go hand in hand with Zurich. The inhabitants of the plain already inclined to the Reformation: and now she drew closer to the mountains, and invaded them, while the primitive cantons, which were in a manner the cradle, and are still in a manner the citadel of Switzerland, hemmed in by their high Alps, seemed alone firmly to maintain the doctrine of their fathers. These mountaineers, continually exposed to violent tempests, to avalanches, to the overflow of torrents and rivers, have to struggle all their lives against these formidable enemies, and to sacrifice every thing to preserve the meadow that pastures their flocks, and the hut which shelters them from the storm, but which the first inundation sweeps away. Accordingly, a conservative instinct is strongly developed in them, and has for ages been transmitted from generation to generation. To preserve what they have received from their fathers, is the only wisdom recognised in these mountains. These rude Helvetians accordingly struggled against the Reformation, which sought to change their faith and worship, as they struggle still against the torrents which dash down from their snowy peaks, or against the new political ideas which are established at their threshold in the cantons around them. They will be the last to lay down their arms before the double power which is already displaying its signals on all the surrounding hills, and more closely threatening these conservative districts.

Accordingly, at the period of which I speak, these cantons, still more irritated against Berne than against Zurich, and trembling when they saw this powerful State escaping from them, called a meeting of their deputies at Berne itself, eight days after the conference of Zurich. They called upon the council to depose the new teachers, to proscribe their doctrines, and to maintain the ancient and true Christian faith, as it had been confirmed by centuries and confessed by martyrs. "Assemble all the bailiwicks of the canton: if you refuse, we will take it upon ourselves." The Bernese felt irritated, and replied, "We are able enough to speak to our own constituents." This reply only increased the wrath of the Waldstettes and those cantons which had been the cradle of the political liberty of Switzerland, alarmed at the progress which religious liberty was making, began even to look abroad for allies to destroy it. In combating the enemies of enlistments an appeal might be made to enlistments themselves, and if the oligarchs of Switzerland were insufficient, was it not natural to have recourse to the princes their allies? In fact, Austria, which had not been able to maintain its power in the confederation, was ready to interpose for the purpose of then strengthening the power of Rome. Berne heard with dismay that Ferdinand, brother of Charles V, was making preparations against Zurich, and against all the adherents of the Reformation.

Circumstances were becoming more critical. A succession of events more or less unfortunate, the successes of the Anabaptists, the disputes with Luther about the supper, and others besides, seemed to have, in a great measure, compromised the Reformation in Switzerland. The discussion of Baden had disappointed the hopes of the friends of the papacy, and the sword which

they had brandished against their enemies, had broken in their hands; but spite and anger had increased, and a new effort was prepared. Already, even the imperial power began to put itself in motion, and the Austrian bands, which had been forced to flee from the defiles of Morgarten and the heights of Sempach, were ready again to enter Switzerland, with colours flying, to give strength to tottering Rome. The moment was decisive. It was no longer possible to chime in with both parties, and be neither “muddy nor clear.” Berne and other cantons, which had so long been hesitating, behoved to come to a determination. It was necessary to return promptly to the papacy, or rally with new courage under the standard of Christ. A Frenchman, from the mountains of Danphiny, by name William Farel, at this time gave a powerful impulse to Switzerland, determined the Reformation of Romish Helvetia, which was still in a profound sleep, and thus turned the balance throughout the confederation in favour of the new doctrines. Farel arrived on the field of battle like those fresh troops, which at the moment when the fate of arms is still uncertain, rush into the thickest of the fight, and carry the day. He prepared the way in Switzerland for another Frenchman, whose stern faith and powerful genius were to put a finishing hand to the Reformation, and render it a complete work. In this way, by means of these illustrious men, France took rank in the great movement which was agitating Christian society. It is time to turn our eye toward her.

BOOK TWELFTH The French

1500–1526

CHAP. I

Universality of Christianity—Enemies of the Reformation in France—Heresy and Persecution in Dauphiny—A Gentleman’s Family—The Family Farel—Pilgrimage to St. Croix—Immorality and Superstition—William desires to become a Student.

Universality is one of the essential features of Christianity. I, is not thus with religions of human origin. They adapt themselves to certain nations, and to the degree of culture which they have attained. They keep these nations fixed at a certain point, or if by any extraordinary circumstance these nations rise in the scale, religion being left behind thereby becomes useless.

There was an Egyptian, a Greek, a Latin, and even a Jewish religion; Christianity is the only religion for the whole human race. Its point of departure in man is sin—a characteristic which belongs not to a single tribe, but is the inheritance of humanity. Accordingly, satisfying the most universal and the most elevated wants of our nature, the gospel is received as coming from God by the most barbarous tribes, and the most civilised nations. It does not consecrate national peculiarities, as did the religions of antiquity; but neither does it destroy them as modern cosmopolism would do. It does better. It sanctifies, ennobles, elevates them to a holy unity by the new and living principle which it imparts to them. The introduction of Christianity into the world has produced a great revolution in history. Till then there was only a history of particular nations; now there is a history of humanity. The idea of an universal education of the human race, accomplished by Jesus Christ, has become the historian’s compass—the key of history, and the hope of nations. But Christianity not merely acts on all nations, it acts on all periods of their history. At the moment when it appeared, the world was like a torch on the point of being extinguished. Christianity made it revive as a celestial light. At a later period, the barbarians, rushing upon the Roman empire, had

broken down and confounded every thing. Christianity, opposing the cross to this devastating torrent, thereby subdued the wild child of the north, and gave humanity a new form. A corrupting element, however, was already hidden in the religion brought by intrepid missionaries to these rude tribes. Their faith came from Rome almost as much as from the Bible. This element rapidly increased: man was every where substituted for God, (an essential feature in the Romish Church,) and a renovation of religion became necessary. Christianity accomplished it at the period of which we write. The history of the Reformation in the countries, which we have already surveyed, has shown how the new doctrine rejected the extravagances of the Anabaptists and the new prophets, but infidelity is the obstacle which it encounters, especially in the kingdom towards which we now turn. No where had bolder protests been taken against the superstitions and abuses of the Church. No where was there seen a more powerful developement of a certain love of letters, a love which, independent of Christianity, often leads to irreligion. France carried in her bosom at the same time two reformations, the one of man, the other of God. “Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels.” In France, not only had the Reformation to combat infidelity as well as superstition, there was a third enemy which it had not encountered, at least in so powerful a form among the Germanic nations,—I mean immorality. The disorders in the Church were great; debauchery sat upon the throne of Francis I and Catherine de Medicis, and the stern virtues of the Reformers irritated these “Sardanapaluses.” Every where, no doubt, but especially in France, the Reformation behoved to be not only doctrinal and ecclesiastical, but also moral. The violent enemies whom the Reformation thus encountered at the very outset among the French, stamped it with a peculiar character. No where did it dwell so much in dungeons, and resemble primitive Christianity in faith and charity, and the number of its martyrs. If in the countries of which we have hitherto spoken, the Reformation was more glorious by its triumphs in those to which our attention is now to be directed, it was rendered more glorious by its defeats. If elsewhere it can show more thrones and sovereign councils, here it can enumerate more scaffolds and meetings in the wilderness. Whoever knows what constitutes the true glory of Christianity on the earth, and the features which give it a resemblance to its Head, will, with a deep feeling of respect and love, study the history, the often times bloody history, which we are going to relate. The most of the men who have shone on the stage of the world were born in the provinces, and there began to be developed. Paris is a tree which presents to the eye a great deal of blossom and fruit, but a tree whose roots spread far into the bowels of the earth in search of the nourishing juices which these assimilate. The Reformation also followed this law. The Alps, which saw Christian and intrepid men appear in every canton, and almost in every valley of Switzerland, were in France also to throw their gigantic shadows over the childhood of some of the first Reformers. There were ages when they kept the treasure more or less pure in their high valleys, among the inhabitants of the Piedmontese districts of Luzerne, Angrogne, Peyrouse. The truth, which Rome had not been able to attack there, had spread from these valleys along the slopes and at the foot of these mountains in Provence and Danphiny. The year after the accession of Charles VIII, son of Louis XI, a sickly, timid child, Innocent VIII had encircled his brow with the pontifical tiara (1484). He had seven or eight sons by different mothers, and hence, according to an epigram of the time, Rome was unanimous in saluting him by the name of Father.

There was at this time on all the slopes of the Alps of Dauphiny and along all the banks of the Durance, a tinge of ancient Vaudois principles. “The roots,” says an ancient chronicler, “were constantly and every where setting out new saplings.” Bold men termed the Romish Church the

Church of the evil ones, and maintained that it is as profitable to pray in a stable as in a church. The priests, bishops, and legates of Rome sent forth a cry of alarm, and on the fifth of the calends of May, 1487, Innocent VIII, the father of the Romans, launched a bull at these humble Christians. “To arms,” said the pontiff, “and trample these heretics under foot as venomous asps.” At the approach of the legate, followed by an army of eighteen thousand men, and a multitude of volunteers who wished to share the spoil, the Vaudois abandoned their dwellings, and withdrew to the mountains, to caverns, and the clefts of rocks, as birds fly away the moment the tempest begins to grumble. Not a valley, not a wood, not a rock escaped the persecutors; every where in this part of the Alps, and particularly in the direction of Italy, these poor disciples of Christ were tracked like deer. At length the satellites of the pope grew weary, their strength was exhausted, their feet could no longer climb the steep retreats of “the heretics,” and their arms refused to strike. In these Alpine countries, thus agitated by the fanaticism of Rome, about three leagues from the ancient town of Gap, in the direction of Grenoble, not far from the flowery turf which carpets the flat top of the mountain of Bayard, at the bottom of mount Aiguille, and near the Col de Glaize, not far from where the Buzor takes its rise, there was, and still is, a group of houses half hid by trees, and which bears the name of Farel, or, in provincial dialect, Fareau.2 On an extensive terrace raised above the neighbouring huts, there stood one of those houses which are called mansion houses. It was surrounded by an orchard which was continued to the village. There, in those troublous times, lived, as it appears, a noble family of known piety, of the name of Farel. In the year when the papacy displayed its greatest severities in Dauphiny, in the year 1489, was born, in this modest residence, a son, who was named William. Three brothers, Daniel, Walter, and Claude, and a sister, grew up with William and shared his sports on the banks of the Buzon, and at the foot of the Bayard.

There passed William’s childhood and early youth. His father and mother were most devoted servants of the papacy. He says himself, “my father and mother believed everything;” they accordingly brought up their children in all the observances of Rome.

God had endowed William Farel with rare qualities, fitted to give him an ascendancy over others. Of a penetrating intellect, a lively imagination, great sincerity and uprightness, and a greatness of soul which would not allow him, for any consideration, to betray the convictions of his heart, he had, moreover, an ardour a fire, an indomitable courage, an intrepidity which recoiled at no obstacle. But, at the same time, he had the faults which accompany these qualities, and his parents had frequent occasion to check his violence.

William entered with his whole soul into the superstitions views of his credulous family. “I am horrified,” said he, “when I think of the hours, the prayers, and divine services which I have paid, and caused to be paid, to the cross and other such like things.”

Four leagues to the south of Gap, near Tallard, on a mountain which rises above the impetuous waters of the Durance, was a place in high repute, named St. Croix. When William was scarcely seven or eight years of age, his parents resolved to take him on a pilgrimage. “The cross at this place,” said they, “is made of the real wood on which Jesus Christ was crucified.” The family set out, and at length reached the venerated cross, before which they prostrated themselves. After considering the sacred wood and the copper of the cross, made, said the priest, of the basin in which our Lord washed his disciples’ feet, the eyes of the pilgrims were directed to a little crucifix

attached to the cross. “When the devils,” resumed the priest, “make hail and thunder, this crucifix moves so that it seems to detach itself from the cross, as if wishing to rush against the Devil. It also throws out fiery sparks previous to bad weather: did it not do so the whole fruits of the earth would be destroyed.” The pious pilgrims were deeply moved on being told of these great prodigies. “No one,” continued the priest, “knows and sees any of these things, save I and this man …” The pilgrims turned round and saw a man near them of a strange exterior. “His very appearance caused fear,” says Farel. There were white specks on the balls of both his eyes—“whether they were real, or Satan only made a semblance of them.” This extraordinary man whom the unbelieving called “the priest’s sorcerer,” being appealed to by the priest, immediately confirmed his statements.5 A new episode completed the picture, and to superstition added a suspicion of criminal irregularities. “Lo, a young female, who had some other devotion than the cross, carrying an infant under her cloak. Then the priest came forward, and, taking the woman and the child, led them within the chapel. I venture to say, ne′er did dancer take a female and lead her off in better style. But the blindness was such that no regard was paid to this. Had they even acted indecently before us, we should still have deemed it good and holy. It was too clear that the woman, and her gallant of a priest, well knew the miracle, and made it a cover to their intercourse.”

We have here a faithful picture of the religion and manners of France at the commencement of the Reformation. Morality and doctrine were equally poisoned, and a powerful revival was required for both. The greater the value men attached to external works, the farther they were removed from holiness of heart; dead ordinances had every where been substituted for the Christian life, and (strange, yet natural union) the most scandalous profligacy was seen united to the most superstitious devotion. Theft had been perpetrated before the altar, seduction at the confessional, poisoning in the mass, adultery at the foot of a cross: superstition, by destroying doctrine, had destroyed morality.

Still, there were numerous exceptions in Christendom during the middle ages. A faith, even though superstitions, may be sincere. Of this, William Farel is an instance. The same zeal that at a later period carried him to so many places to spread the knowledge of Jesus Christ, now drew him to every place where the church exhibited some miracle, or claimed some adoration. Dauphiny had its seven wonders, which had long worked upon the imagination of its inhabitants. But there were also in the natural beauties with which it is surrounded objects that might well raise their souls to the Creator. The magnificent chain of the Alps, those summits covered with eternal snow, those vast rocks which sometimes throw up their sharp peaks into the air, sometimes extend their broken ridges beyond the clouds, where they seem like some solitary island in the skies; all these sublimities of creation which were then elevating the soul of Ulric Zuinglius, in the Tockenburg, were also speaking powerfully to the heart of William Farel in the mountains of Dauphiny. He was thirsting for life, light, and knowledge: his aspirations were for something great … he asked leave to study. This was a great blow to his father, who thought that a young noble ought to know only his rosary and his sword. At this time the country was ringing with the fame of a young countryman of William Farel, from Dauphiny like himself named Du Terrail, but better known by the name of Bayard, who, at the battle of Tar, on the other side of the Alps, had given a signal display of courage. “Such sons,” it was said, “are like arrows in the hand of a mighty man. Happy the man who has his quiver filled with them.” Farel’s father, accordingly, opposed his son’s inclination for study. But the young man was inflexible. God designed him for nobler contests than those of

Bayard. He continually returned to the charge, and at last the old gentleman yielded.

Farel immediately devoted himself to his task with astonishing ardour. The masters whom he found in Dauphiny were of little use to him, and he had to struggle against the bad methods and trifling of his preceptors. These difficulties only stimulated him, and he had soon surmounted them. His brothers followed his example. Daniel ultimately became a politician, and was employed in some important negotiations concerning religion.3 Gautier gained the entire confidence of the Count of Furstemberg.

Farel, having learned all that could be learned in his province, and still feeling eager for knowledge, turned his eyes to another quarter. The university of Paris had long been renowned over the Christian world. He was desirous to see “this mother of all the sciences, this true light of the Church, which never suffers an eclipse, this pure and polished mirror of the faith which no cloud obscures, and no touch stains.” He obtained permission from his parents, and set out for the capital of France.

CHAPTER II

Louis XII, and the Assembly of Tours—Francis and Margaret—The Literati—Lefevre—His teaching at the University—Lefevre and Farel meet—Doubts and Inquiries of Farel—First awakening—Prophecy of Lefevre—He teaches Justification by Faith—Objections—Irregularities in Colleges—Effects on Farel—Election—Holiness of Life.

One day, in the year 1510, or shortly after, the young stronger from Dauphiny arrived in Paris. The province life had made him an ardent follower of the papacy—the capital was to make him something different. The Reformation in France was not to come forth from a small town, as it did in Germany. All the impetus which agitate the population proceed from the metropolis. At the commencement of the sixteenth century various providential circumstances concurred to make Paris a kind of focus from which a spark of fire might easily escape. The youth from the neighbourhood of Gap, who now arrived, humble and unknown, was to receive this spark into his heart. Several others received it with him.

Louis XII, the father of his people, had just called a convocation of the French clergy at Tours. This prince seems to have anticipated the days of the Reformation; so much so, that, had this great revolution taken place during his reign, all France might perhaps have been Protestant. The assembly of Tours had declared that the king was entitled to make war on the pope, and execute the decrees of the Council of Basle. These decrees were the subject of general conversation in the colleges, as well as in the city and at court, and must have made a deep impression on young Farel’s mind.

Two children were then growing up at the court of France. The one was a young prince of a tall and striking figure, who showed little moderation in his character, and recklessly followed any course that passion dictated. Hence the king was wont to say, “This great boy will spoil all.” This was Francis of Angoulême, Duke of Valois, and cousin to the king. Boisy, his preceptor, however, taught him to honour literature.

Beside Francis was his sister Margaret, two years older than he, “a princess,” says Brantome, “of very great wit and ability, as well natural as acquired.” Accordingly, Louis XII had spared nothing

on her education, and the most learned men in the kingdom hastened to acknowledge her as their patroness. In fact, a body of distinguished characters already surrounded Francis and Margaret of Valois. William Budé, who, at twenty three, given up to his passions, and especially to the chase, living only for his birds, horses, and dogs, had all at once stopped short, sold his equipage, and begun to study with the same ardour which had led him amid his hounds to scour the fields and forests, the physician Cop, Francis Vatable, a wonder to the Jewish masters themselves for the extent of his knowledge of Hebrew, James Tusan, a celebrated Greek scholar, and other literati besides, encouraged by Stephen Poncher, Bishop of Paris, by Louis Ruzé, civil lieutenant, and by Francis of Luynes, and already patronised by the two young Valois, withstood the violent attacks of the Sorbonne, who regarded the study of Greek and Hebrew as the most dreadful heresy. At Paris, as in Germany and Switzerland, the re-establishment of sound doctrine, was to be preceded by the revival of letters. But in France, the hands which thus prepared the materials, were not to erect the edifice.

Among the teachers who then adorned the capital, was remarked a man of very small stature, of mean appearance, and humble origin, whose intellect, learning, and powerful eloquence had an indescribable charm over his hearers. He was named Lefevre, and was born about 1455, at Etaples, a small place in Picardy. He had received only a rude, or as Theodore Beza calls it, a barbarous education; but his genius had supplied the place of teachers, and his piety, learning, and nobleness of character only shone with greater lustre. He had travelled much. It would even seem that the desire of extending his knowledge had taken him to Asia and Africa. As early as 1493, Lefevre, who had taken his degree as doctor in theology, was a professor at the university of Paris. He forthwith obtained an eminent,—in the opinion of Erasmus,—the first place.

Lefevre felt that he had a task to perform. Although attached to the observances of Rome, he proposed to combat the barbarism which prevailed at the university, and began to teach the branches of philosophy with a clearness previously unknown. He laboured to revive the study of languages and of classical antiquity. He went still farther. He became aware that, when a work of revival is in question, philosophy and literature are insufficient. Therefore, leaving scholastics, which alone had for several ages occupied the school, he returned to the Bible, and brought back to Christendom the study of the Holy Scriptures and evangelical knowledge. He did not devote himself to barren researches: he went to the core of the Bible. His eloquence, frankness, and amiable manners, captivated all hearts. Grave, and full of unction in the pulpit, he lived on terms of gentle familiarity with his pupils. Glarean, one of them, writing to Zuinglius, says, “He is exceedingly kind to me. Full of candour and goodness, he sings, plays, and debates with me, and often laughs at the folly of this world.”4 Accordingly a great number of pupils from every country sat at his feet. This man, with all his learning, submitted, with the simplicity of a child, to all the ordinances of the Church. He spent as much time in churches as in his study, so that an intimate connection might have been predicted between the old doctor of Picardy, and the young scholar of Dauphiny. When two natures, so much alike, meet, they draw to each other. In his pious pilgrimages young Farel soon remarked an old man, and was struck with his devoutness. He prostrated himself before the images, and, remaining long upon his knees, prayed with fervour, and devoutly repeated his hours. “Never,” says Farel, “had I seen any singer of mass who sang it with greater reverence.” This was Lefevre. William Farel immediately desired to approach him, and was overjoyed when this celebrated man kindly accosted him. William had gained his object in

coming to the capital. From this time his greatest happiness was to converse with the doctor of Etaples, to hear him and his admirable lectures, and devoutly prostrate himself with him before the same images. Old Lefevre and his young pupil were often seen carefully decking an image of the Virgin with flowers, and far from all Paris, far from pupils and teachers, muttering together by themselves the fervent prayers which they addressed to Mary.2 The attachment of Farel for Lefevre being observed by several, the respect which was felt for the old doctor was reflected on his young disciple. This illustrious friendship brought the stranger of Dauphiny out of obscurity. He soon gained a name for zeal, and several rich and devout persons in Paris entrusted him with different sums for the maintenance of poor students.

Some time elapsed before Lefevre and his pupil came to a clear view of the truth. It was not the hope of a rich benefice, nor a longing for a life of dissoluteness that attached Farel to the pope these vulgarities were not made for such a soul. To him the pop was the visible head of the Church—a sort of god by whose commands souls were saved. If he heard a word uttered against his venerated pontiff, he gnashed his teeth like a raging wolf, and could have wished the thunder to strike the guilty individual, and thereby "completely sink and ruin him."—"I believe," said he, "in the cross, in pilgrimages, in images, vows, and bones. What the priest holds in his hands, puts in the box, encloses, eats, and gives to be eaten, is my only true God. I have no other, either in heaven or on the earth."—"Satan," said he, on another occasion, "had lodged the pope, the papacy, and all that belongs to it, in my heart, so that even the pope had not so much of it in himself."

Thus, the more Farel seemed to seek God, the more his piety languished, and the more superstition increased in his soul; every thing went from bad to worse. He has himself described his state with great energy. "Oh how I am horrified at myself, and my faults, when I think how great and wonderful the work of God in making it possible for man to be delivered from such an abyss." But though he was delivered, it was only by degrees. At first he had read profane authors, but his piety, finding no nurture in them, he began to meditate on the lives of the saints; foolish as he was, these lives made him become still more foolish. He then attached himself to several teachers of the day, but, after coming to them unhappy, he left them miserable. He at length began to study the ancient philosophers, and expected Aristotle would teach him how to be a Christian: his hopes were still disappointed. Books, images, relics, Aristotle, Mary, and the saints, all were useless. This ardent soul passed from one human wisdom to another human wisdom, without ever finding wherewith to appease the hunger which was wasting him.

Meanwhile, the pope allowing the writings of the Old and New Testament to be called the Holy Bible, Farel began to read them, as Luther once did in the cloister of Erfurth, and he stood quite aghast, on seeing that every thing on the earth was different from what the Holy Scriptures enjoin. Perhaps he was on the eve of arriving at the truth, but suddenly double darkness fell upon him, and he was plunged into a new abyss. "Satan suddenly arrived," says he, "in order that he might not lose his possession, and dealt with me according to his custom."3 A fierce struggle between the word of God and the word of the Church then arose in his heart. When he met with any passages of Scripture opposed to the usages of Rome, he held down his eyes, blushed, and durst scarcely believe what he read. "Ah," said he, fearing to fix his eyes on the Bible, "I don't well understand such things. I must give these Scriptures another meaning than they seem to have: I must keep to the interpretation of the Church and the view of the pope!"

One day when he was reading the Bible, a doctor having entered, rebuked him sharply. “No man,” said he, “should read the Holy Scriptures till he has learned philosophy, and finished his course of arts.” This was a preparation which the apostles had not demanded; but Farel believed it was. “I was,” says he, “the unhappiest of men, shutting my eyes that I might not see.”

Thenceforth there was in the young Dauphinist a revival of Romish fervour. The legends of the saints excited his imagination. The more severe the monastic rules were, the greater his inclination for them. Carthusians dwelt in gloomy cells in the midst of woods. He visited them with respect, and took part in their abstinences. “I employed myself entirely night and day,” says he, “in serving the devil, according to the man of sin—the pope. I had my Pantheon in my heart, and so many intercessors, so many saviours, so many gods, that I might well have been taken for a popish register.” The darkness could not become greater, the star of the morning was soon to rise, and it was at Lefevre’s word that it was to appear. In the doctor of Etaples there were already some rays of light: a feeling within told him that the Church could not remain in the state in which it then was; and often, at the very moment when he was returning from mass, or rising up from before some image, the old man turned to his young pupil, and, grasping his hand, said to him with a grave tone, “My dear William, God will renovate the world, as you shall see.” Farel did not perfectly understand these words. Lefevre, however, did not confine himself to mysterious expressions. A great change which then took place in himself, was to produce a similar change in his pupil. The old doctor was engaged in a work of vast labour. He was carefully collecting the legends of the saints and martyrs, and arranging them according to the order of their names in the Kalendar. Two months were already printed, when one of those rays which come from above beamed upon his soul. He could not withstand the disgust which childish superstitions begot in a Christian heart. The grandeur of the word of God made him sensible of the wretchedness of these fables. They now appeared to him nothing better than “sulphur to kindle the fire of idolatry.” He abandoned his task, and throwing away the legends, turned with affection to the second volume. The moment when Lefevre, quiting the marvellous tales of the saints, laid his hand upon the word of God, is the commencement of a new era in France, and the beginning of its Reformation. In fact, Lefevre on returning from the fables of the Breviary began to study the Epistles of St. Paul. The light grew rapidly in his heart, and he immediately put his pupils in possession of that knowledge of the truth, which we find in his Commentaries. Strange to the school and to the age were those doctrines which were then heard in Paris, and which the press diffused over the Christian world. We easily conceive that the young scholars who listened to them were struck, moved, changed, and that thus, even before the year 1512, the dawn of a new day was prepared for France. The doctrine of justification by faith, which at one blow overthrew the subtilties of the schoolmen, and the observances of the papacy, was openly announced in the bosom of the Sorbonne. “It is God alone,” said the doctor, and the halls of the University must have been astonished when they re-echoed these strange words, “It is God alone, who by his grace through faith justifies unto eternal life. There is a righteousness of works, and there is a righteousness of grace; the one comes from man, the other from God; the one is earthly and transient, the other is divine and eternal; the one is the shadow and the sign, the other is the light and the truth; the one gives the knowledge of sin in order that we may flee from death, the other gives knowledge of grace that we may obtain life.”2

“What then,” it was asked, on hearing doctrines which contradicted those of four previous centuries, “was there ever a single man justified without works?”—“A single man,” replied Lefevre, “innumerable men. How many among people of bad lives have ardently desired the grace of baptism, having only faith in Christ, and have if they died immediately after, entered the mansions of the blessed without works!”—“But some will say, if we are not justified by works, it is in vain for us to do them.” The doctor of Paris replied, and perhaps the other Reformers would not have entirely approved of the reply; “Certainly not it is not in vain. If I hold a mirror turned toward the sun, it receives the sun’s image. The more it is polished and cleaned, the more brilliant the image is, but if it is soiled the brilliancy is lost. It is the same with justification in those who lead an impure life.” Lefevre in this passage, as St. Augustine in several, perhaps does not distinguish sufficiently between justification and sanctification. The doctor of Etaples reminds us somewhat of the bishop of Hippo. Those who lead an impure life, have never had justification, and consequently they cannot lose it. But perhaps Lefevre meant, that when the Christian falls into some fault, he loses the impression of his salvation, not salvation itself. In that case there is nothing to object to his doctrine.

Thus a new life and a new doctrine had penetrated the university of Paris. The doctrine of faith, which a Pothinus and an Irenæus preached of old in Gaul again resounded. Thenceforth there were two parties and two classes of people in this great school of Christendom. The lessons of Lefevre, the zeal of his scholars formed a very striking contrast with the scholastic lectures of the greater part of the teachers, and the fickle giddy lives of the greater part of the students. In colleges, to learn to play parts in comedy, to deck in putting on grotesque dresses, and acting farces in the streets, than in studying to become acquainted with the oracles of God. These farces often attacked the honour of grandees, princes, and the king himself. The parliament interposed about the time of which we speak, calling the principals of several colleges before it, and forbidding these indulgent masters to allow such comedies to be performed in their houses. But these disorders were suddenly corrected by a more powerful dissuasive than the decrees of Parliament. Jesus Christ was taught. Rumour was loud on the benches of the university, and the students began to occupy themselves almost as much with evangelical doctrines, as with the subtleties of the school, or with comedies. Several of those whose lives were not the most irreproachable, stood out for works, and perceiving that the doctrine of faith condemned their conduct, maintained that St. James was opposed to St. Paul. Lefevre determined to defend the treasure which he had discovered, and demonstrated the agreement of the two apostles. “Does not St. James say (chap. i,) that every good and perfect gift cometh from above? Now who denies that justification is the perfect gift, the crowning grace?… When we see an individual breathe, we regard it as a sign of life. Thus works are necessary but only as signs of a living faith, which justification accompanies. Do Collyriiums or purifications give light to the eye? No; it is the power of the sun. Very well; these purifications and these collyriiums are our works. The only ray which the sun darts from above is justification itself.”3 At these lectures, Farel was an eager listener. This doctrine of salvation by grace had soon an indescribable charm for him. Every objection gave way, all struggle ceased. No sooner had Lefevre broached the doctrine, than Farel embraced it with his whole soul. He had had enough of toils and wrestlings to know that he could not save himself. Accordingly, as soon as he saw in the word, that God saves gratuitously, he believed. “Lefevre,” says he, “drew me off from my false idea of merit, and taught me that every thing comes by grace: this I believed as soon as it was told me.” Thus by a sudden and decisive conversion like that of

St. Paul, was brought to the faith, this Farel who as Theodore Beza expresses it, not being deterred by threatenings, or insults, or blows, won for Jesus Christ, Montbelliard, Neufchatel, Lausanne, Aigle, and lastly Geneva.5

Meanwhile, Lefevre continuing his lectures and taking pleasure like Luther, in employing contrasts, and paradoxes, which cover great truths, extolled the grandeur of the mystery of redemption. “Ineffable exchange, exclaimed he, innocence is condemned and the guilty is acquitted; blessing is cursed, and he who was cursed is blest; life dies and death receives life; glory is covered with confusion, and he who was confounded is covered with glory.” The pious doctor penetrating still farther, perceived that all salvation emanates from the love of God. “Those who are saved,” said he, “are so by election, by grace, by the will of God, and not by their own will. Our election, our will, our works, are without efficacy; the election of God alone is most powerful. When we are converted, our conversion does not make us the elect of God, but the grace, the will, the election of God convert us.”2 But Lefevre did not stop at doctrines. While he rendered glory to God, he demanded obedience from man, and urged the obligations flowing from the high privileges of the Christian. “If thou art of the Church of Christ, thou art of the body of Christ, thou art filled with the divinity; for the fulness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily.” Oh! if men could comprehend this privilege, how carefully they would maintain purity, chastity, and holiness, and account all the glory of the world disgrace in comparison of the inward glory which is hidden from the eye of sense.

Lefevre felt that the teacher of the Word holds a high office, and he exercised it with unshaken fidelity. The corruption of the period, and particularly that of the clergy, excited his indignation, and was made the subject of severe lectures. “What a shame,” said he, “to see a bishop entreating people to drink with him, making gaming his only study, handling the dice and cornet, taking up his time with birds and dogs, constantly hunting and shouting after beagles and hares, entering houses of debauchery. … O, men, more deserving of punishment than Sardanapalus himself!”

CHAP. III

Farel and the Saints—The University—Conversion of Farel—Farel and Luther—Other Disciples—Date of the Reformation in France—The different Reformation spontaneous—Which is the first?—Place due to Lefevre.

Thus spake Lefevre. Farel listened, thrilled with delight, received all, and threw himself into the new path suddenly opened before him. There was, however, a point of his old creed which, as yet, he was unable to yield; this was the Saints and the Invocation of them. The best intellects often have these remains of darkness, and retain them after their illumination. Farel listened with astonishment, when the illustrious doctor declared that Christ alone was to be invoked. “Religion,” said Lefevre, “has only one foundation, one aim, one head, Jesus Christ, who is blessed for ever. He alone trode the wine-press; and therefore we do not take our name from St. Paul, Apollos, or St. Peter. The cross of Christ alone opens heaven, and alone shuts the gate of hell.” On hearing these words, there was a great struggle in Farel’s soul. On the one hand he saw the multitude of the saints with the Church; on the other, Jesus Christ alone was his Master. Sometimes he leant to the one side, and sometimes to the other. It was his last error and his last combat; he hesitated, he still felt attached to the venerated men, at whose feet Rome falls prostrate. At length the decisive blow was given from on high. The scales fell from his eyes. Jesus alone appeared worthy of adoration. “Then,” says he, “the papacy was entirely overthrown: I began to detest it as diabolical,

and the holy word of God had the first place in my heart."

Public events hastened the progress of Farel and his friends. Thomas De Vio, who, at a later period, had a wrestle with Luther at Augsburg, having in one of his works advanced that the pope was absolute monarch of the Church, Louis XII laid the work before the university, in the month of February, 1512. James Allman, one of the youngest doctors, a man of profound genius and an indefatigable student, in a full assembly of the faculty of theology, and amid great applause, read a refutation of the assertions of the cardinal.

What impression must not such addresses have produced on Lefevre's young scholars! Could they hesitate, when the university seemed impatient of the papal yoke? If the main body began to move, must not they hasten on in front as pioneers? "It was necessary," says Farel, "that the papacy should fall in my heart by little and little; for it did not come down at the first stroke." He contemplated the abyss of superstition into which he had been plunged. Arrested on its banks, he once more, with uneasiness, surveyed all its depths, and recoiled with a feeling of terror. "Oh, how much I am horrified at myself and my faults!" he exclaimed.2 "O Lord," continued he, "if my soul had served thee with a living faith as thy faithful servants have done; if it had prayed and honoured thee as much as my heart did the mass, and served this magic morsel, giving it all honour!" Thus the youth of Dauphiny deplored his past life, and repeated, with tears, like St. Augustine of old, "Too late have I known, too late have I loved thee."

Farel had found Jesus Christ, and having arrived in port, was happy to rest, after long tempests. "Now," said he, "every thing presents itself in a new light.4 The Scriptures are made clear, the Prophets are opened, the Apostles shed great light upon my soul. A voice, hitherto unknown, the voice of Christ my Shepherd, my Master, my Teacher, speaks to me with power."6 He was so changed, that instead of the murderous heart of a ravening wolf, he returned, he said, calmly as a meek and lovely lamb, with a heart entirely withdrawn from the pope, and devoted to Jesus Christ.

Escaped from this great evil, he turned towards the Bible, and began the diligent study of Greek and Hebrew.9 He constantly read the Holy Scriptures, and always with deeper affection, God enlightening him from day to day. He still continued to attend the old worship in the churches. But what did he find in it? Innumerable cries and chants, and words pronounced without meaning. Accordingly, often in the midst of the multitude, who were thronging towards an image or an altar, he exclaimed, "Thou alone art God: thou alone art wise: thou alone art good.11 Nothing is to be taken from thy holy law, nothing added to it; for thou art the Lord alone, who willest and oughtest to command."

Thus, in his eyes, all men and all teachers fell from the heights on which his imagination had placed them; he no longer saw any thing in the world but God and his word. The persecutions which the other teachers of Paris employed against Lefevre, lost them his good opinion. But shortly Lefevre himself, his beloved guide, was nothing to him but a man. He always loved and revered him, but God only became his master. Of all the Reformers, Farel and Luther, perhaps, are those whose spiritual developments we know best, and who had to endure the greatest conflicts. Keen and ardent, men of attack and battle, they had to maintain violent struggles before they obtained peace. Farel is the pioneer of the Reformation in Switzerland; he throws himself into the thicket; he takes his axe and hews down the secular forests. Calvin comes at a later period, as does Melancthon, from whom, no doubt, he differs in regard to disposition, but with whom he

shares the character of theologian and organiser. These two men, the one in the graceful, the other in the stern class of character, somewhat resemble the lawgivers of antiquity. They build up, constitute, and make laws in the countries which the two previous Reformers had gained. Still, if Luther and Farel have some features in common, it must be acknowledged that the latter is only an inferior resemblance. Besides his superior genius, Luther had, in every thing which concerned the Church, a moderation, a wisdom, a knowledge of the past, a comprehensiveness of view, and even an organising power, which exist not to the same degree in the Reformer of Dauphiny.

Farel was not the only young Frenchman in whom new light then arose. The doctrines, which proceeded from the mouth of the illustrious doctor of Etaples, were working in the minds of the multitude who followed his lessons. In his school were formed brave soldiers, who on the day of battle were to fight on to the very foot of the scaffold. They listened, compared, and discussed, arguing keenly on both sides. It is not improbable, that among the small number of scholars who defended the truth, was young Peter Robert Olivetan, born at Noyon, towards the end of the fifteenth century, who, at a later period, translated the Bible into French, after the translation of Lefevre; and appears to have been the first to bring the doctriues of the gospel under the notice of a young kinsman, also a native of Noyon, and afterwards the most distinguished leader of the Reformation.

Thus, before 1512, at a time when Luther had not yet acquired any distinction in the world, and was setting out to Rome on a concern of monks, at a period when Zuinglius had not even begun to devote himself zealously to sacred literature, and was crossing the Alps with the confederates to fight for the pope, Paris and France heard the delivery of those vital truths, out of which the Reformation was to spring, and minds fitted to propagate them were receiving them with holy avidity. Hence, Theodore Beza, speaking of Lefevre of Etaples, hails him as the individual, “who courageously began the revival of the pure religion of Jesus Christ;” and he remarks that, “in the same way as the school of Isocrates was anciently seen to furnish the best orators, so, from the audience of the doctor of Etaples, proceeded several of the most distinguished men of their age and of the Church.”2 The Reformation in France, therefore, was not a foreign importation. It had its birth on the French soil; it germinated in Paris: it had its first roots in the university itself, which formed the second power in Roman Christendom. God placed the principles of the work in the honest hearts of men of Picardy and Dauphiny, before its commencement in any other country. We have seen that the Swiss Reformation was independent of the German Reformation. The French Reformation was, in its turn, independent of both. The work began at once in these different countries without any communication with each other; as in a battle, all the different forces composing the army move at the same instant, though the one does not tell the other to march, because one and the same command, proceeding from the commander-in-chief, is heard by all. The time was accomplished, the people were prepared, and God began the renovation of his Church in all quarters at once. Such facts demonstrate that the great revolution of the sixteenth century was a Divine work.

If regard is had only to dates, it must be acknowledged that the honour of commencing the work belongs neither to Switzerland nor to Germany, although these two countries only have hitherto claimed it. The honour truly belongs to France. This is a fact which we purpose to establish, because it seems to have been hitherto overlooked. Without dwelling on the influence which Lefevre exerted, directly or indirectly, over several individuals, and in particular, perhaps over

Calvin himself, let us attend to that which he had over one of his pupils, over Farel, and to the energetic activity which this servant of God thenceforth displayed. After this, how can we resist the conviction, that even though Zuinglius and Luther should never have appeared, there would have been a movement of Reform in France? It is impossible, no doubt, to calculate what would have been its extent; it must even be acknowleged that the rumour of what was going on beyond the Rhine and the Jura, animated, and at a later period quickened, the pace of the French Reformers. Still, they were the first whom the blast of the heavenly trumpet in the sixteenth century awoke, and they were the first who appeared equipped and arrayed on the field of battle.

Nevertheless, Luther is the great workman of the sixteenth century, and, in the most extensive sense, the first Reformer. Lefevre is not a complete Reformer, like Calvin, Farel, and Luther. He is of Wittemberg and Geneva, but has also a tinge of the Sorbonne: he is the first Catholic in the Reform movement, and the last of the reformed in the Catholic movement. He remains to the last a kind of go-between—a somewhat mysterious mediator, designed to remind us, that though there is apparently an impassable abyss between the old and the new things, there is still a connection between them. Repulsed and persecuted by Rome, he is still attached to Rome by a feeble thread, which he is unwilling to break. Lefevre of Etaples has a place of his own in the theology of the sixteenth century. He is the link which connects ancient with modern times—the individual in whom the transition is made from the theology of the middle ages to the theology of the Reformation.

CHAP. IV

Character of Francis I—Beginning of Modern Times—Liberty and Obedience—Margaret of Valois—The Court—Briçonnet, Count of Montbrun—Lefevre applies to the Bible—Francis I and his “Sons”—The Gospel brought to Margaret—A Conversion—Adoration—Character of Margaret.

Thus the whole university was in motion. But the Reformation in France was not to be merely the work of learned men. It was to be established among the grandees of the world, and even at the court of the king.

Young Francis of Angoulême, cousin-german of Louis XII, and his son-in-law, had succeeded him. His beauty, his address, his bravery, his love of pleasure, made him the first chevalier of his time. He aspired, however, to something higher: he wished to be a great and even a good king, provided every thing could bend to his sovereign will. Valour, love of letters, and gallantry: these three words sufficiently express the character of Francis and the spirit of his age. At a later period, two other illustrious kings, Henry IV, and in particular Louis XIV, presented the same features. These princes wanted what the gospel gives; and although the nation has never been without elements of holiness and Christian elevation, it may be said that these three great monarchs of modern France stamped their own character on their subjects, or rather, their own character was a faithful representation of the character of their subjects. Had the gospel entered France through the most illustrious of the Valois, it would have given to the nation what it has not—a spiritual tendency, a Christian holiness, an understanding in divine things, and would thus have made it complete in that which contributes most to the power and greatness of kingdoms.

Under the reign of Francis I, France and Europe passed from the middle ages to modern times. The new world, which was in embryo when this prince mounted the throne, then grew up and

entered into possession. Two classes of men exercised an influence over the new society. On the one hand arose the men of faith, who were at the same time the men of wisdom and holiness, and close beside them the writers of the court, the friends of worldliness and disorder, who, by the licentiousness of their principles, contributed as much to the corruption of manners, as the former class did to their reformation. Had not Europe, in the days of Francis I, seen the Reformer arise, and had she, by a severe judgment of Providence, been given up to infidel innovators, it was all over both with her and with Christianity. The danger was great. For some time, these two classes of combatants the adversaries of the pope, and of Jesus Christ, were confounded together. Both calling for liberty, seemed to make use of the same arms against the same enemies. Amid the turmoil of the battle-field, an inexperienced eye might have been unable to distinguish between them. Had the Reformers allowed themselves to be hurried along by the Literati, all was lost. The enemies of the hierarchy passed rapidly to the extreme of impiety, and were pushing Christian society into a frightful abyss. The papacy itself contributed to this dreadful catastrophe, by its ambition and disorders hastening the destruction of those remains of truth and life which had continued in the Church. But God raised up the Reformation, and Christianity was saved. The Reformers who had cried ‘Liberty!’ shortly after shouted ‘Obedience!’ The very men who had overturned the throne on which the Roman pontiff delivered his oracles, prostrated themselves before the word of God. The separation was now precise and decisive: even war was declared between the two divisions of the army. The one had wished liberty only for themselves, the other had claimed it for the word of God. The Reformation became the most formidable enemy of this infidelity, for which Rome often manifests some degree of indulgence. The Reformers, after restoring liberty to the Church, restored religion to the world. Of the two gifts, the latter was at this time the more necessary. For a time, the friends of infidelity hoped to count among their number Margaret of Valois, Duchess of Alençon, whom Francis loved exceedingly, always, as Brantôme says, calling her his little pet. The same tastes and the same talents existed in the brother and the sister. Margaret, handsome like Francis, joined the mild virtues which captivate to the strong qualities which form great characters. In the world, at festivities, at the court of the king, as well as at that of the emperor, she shone as a queen, charmed, astonished, and conquered all hearts. Passionately fond of literature, and endowed with rare talents, she retired to her study, and there gave herself up to the pleasures of thinking, writing, and acquiring knowledge. But her strongest wish was to do good and prevent evil. When ambassadors, after being received by the king, went to pay their respects to Margaret, “they were,” says Brantôme, “exceedingly delighted, and carried back glowing descriptions of her to their country.”2 This celebrated princess was always of the strictest morals, but while many people placed strictness in word, and freedom in act. Margaret did the contrary. Irreproachable in her conduct, she was not perfectly so in respect of her writings. In place of being surprised at this, perhaps the wonder ought rather to be, that one so corrupt as Louisa of Savoy, had a daughter so pure as Margaret. While journeying over the country in the train of the court, she employed herself in depicting the manners of the time and, in particular, the corruption of priests and monks. Brantôme says, “I have heard it told by my grandmother, who always travelled with her in her sedan, how she and her maid of honour held the writing-desk.” Such, according to some, was the origin of the Heptameron; but highly-distinguished modern critics are convinced that Margaret was a stranger to this collection, sometimes more than frivolous, and that Despériers, valet de chambre to the queen, was its author.4 This Margaret, so beautiful, so talented, and living in the heart of a polluted atmosphere, was to be one of the first

who was to be carried along by the religious movement which then began to agitate France. But, in the midst of a court so dissolute, and the licentious tales which amused it, how could the Duchess of Alençon be reached by the Reformation? Her elevated soul felt wants which the gospel alone could satisfy: grace acts every where, and Christianity, which even before an apostle had appeared in Rome, had adherents in the house of Narcissus and in the court of Nero, soon penetrated, at its revival, to the court of Francis I. Some ladies of the court addressed the princess in the language of faith, and the sun which was then rising in France shed some of its earliest rays on an illustrious head, by which they were immediately reflected on the Duchess of Alençon.

Among the most distinguished nobles of the court was William de Montbrun, son of Cardinal Briçonnet of St. Malo, who had entered the Church after he became a widower. Count William, who was passionately attached to literature, also took orders, and became successively bishop of Lodeva and of Meaux. Sent twice to Rome as ambassador, he returned to Paris without having been seduced by the charms and pomp of Leo X When he returned to France, the movement was universally spread. Farel, master of arts, was teaching in the celebrated college of Cardinal Lemoine, one of the four principal houses of the theological faculty of Paris, and equal in rank to the Sorbonne. Two country men of Lefevre, Arnaud and Gerald Roussel, and others besides, enlarged this circle of free and noble spirits. Briçonnet, who had just quitted the festivities of Rome, was astonished at what had taken place in Paris during his absence. Thirsting for knowledge, he renewed his old relations with Lefevre, and shortly after passed precious hours with the doctor of Sorbonne, Farel, the two Roussels, and their other friends. Full of humility, this illustrious prelate was willing to be instructed by the humblest individuals, but above all by our Lord himself. “I am in darkness,” said he, “waiting for the interposition of divine grace, of which I have deprived myself by my demerits.” His spirit was, as it were, dazzled by the lustre of the gospel. He dared not to look up on its unparalleled refulgence. “All eyes united,” he adds, “are insufficient to receive the light of this sun.”3

Lefevre had referred the bishop to the Bible; he had shown him as it were, the guiding thread which always conducts to the original truths of Christianity, to which it was antecedent to all schools, sects, ordinances, and traditions; he had shown him the powerful means by which the religion of Jesus Christ is renewed. Briçonnet read the Scriptures. “The sweetness of divine food is so great,” said he, “that the longing of the mind for it becomes insatiable; the more it is tasted, the more it is desired.” The simple and mighty truths of salvation filled him with rapture; he found Christ, he found God himself. “What vessel,” he exclaimed, “is capable of receiving the full amount of inexhaustible sweetness? But the lodging is enlarged according to the desire which is felt to receive the good guest. Faith is the chamber which alone can lodge him, or to speak more properly, which makes us lodge in him.” At the same time the good bishop was grieved to see this doctrine of life, which the Reformation was restoring to the world, in so little esteem at court, in the city among the people; and he exclaimed, “O singular, most worthy, and by my fellows little relished innovation!…”

Thus did evangelical sentiments pave a way for themselves amidst the giddy, dissolute, and literary court of Francis I. Several individuals who belonged to it, and enjoyed the full confidence of the king, as John Du Bellay, Budé, Cop, the court physician, and even Petit, the king’s confessor, seemed favourable to the sentiments of Briçonnet and Lefevre. Francis, who was fond of letters, and invited into his domains learned men who were inclined to “Lutheranism,” and who “expected,”

says Frasmns, “thus to adorn and distinguish his reign more magnificently than he could have done by trophies, pyramids, or the most gorgeous buildings,” was himself influenced by his sister, Briçonnet, and the Literati of his court and university. He attended the discussions of the learned—took pleasure in hearing their conversation at table, and called them “his sons.” He prepared the way for the Word of God, by founding chairs for the study of Hebrew and Greek. Accordingly, Theodore Beza, on placing his portrait at the head of those of the Reformers, says, “O pious beholder, shudder not at the view of his adversary. Must not a share in this honour belong to him who, after banishing barbarism from the world, firmly fixed in its place three languages and sound literature, to form as it were porticos to the new edifice which was soon to be raised?” But at the Court of Francis I, there was an individual in particular who seemed prepared for the evangelical influence of the doctor of Etaples and the bishop of Meaux. Margaret, undecided and wavering in the midst of the dissolute society around her, sought support, and found it in the Gospel. Turning towards the new truth which was re-animating the world, she enhaled it with delight as an emanation from heaven. Some ladies of her court informed her of what was taught by the new teachers. She obtained their works and small treatises, called, in the language of the times, “Tracts.” She heard the expressions “Primitive Church, pure Word of God, worship in spirit and in truth, Christian liberty which shakes off superstition and human traditions, and attaches itself to none but God.” Shortly after, this princess became personally acquainted with Lefevre, Farel, and Roussel: she was struck with every thing about them,—their zeal, their piety, and their manners, but her principal guide in the way of faith was the bishop of Meaux, with whom she had long been intimate.

Thus was accomplished amid the brilliant court of Francis I, and the dissolute family of Louisa of Savoy, one of those conversions of the heart which, in every age, are produced by the Word of God. Margaret afterwards embodied in verse the different movements of her soul at this important era in her life. By this means we are able to discover some traces of the path which she then traversed. We see that she was deeply penetrated with a conviction of sin, and that she bewailed the levity with which she had treated the scandals of the world. She exclaims—

What depth of punishment can possibly suffice E′en for a tenth part of the guilt which on me lies? This corruption of which she had so long been unconscious, every where met her view, now that her eyes were opened.

Within, well do I feel I have the root;

Without are branch, and flower, and leaf, and fruit.

Still, amid the alarm which she felt at the state of her soul, she discovered that the God of peace had drawn near to her. My God, to me thou hast drawn nigh, Although a naked worm am I.

Ere long the love of God in Christ was shed abroad in her heart.

“My Father, then, … but who? yea the Eternal, Always unseen, immutable, immortal, Who will forgive by grace each sin of mine;

Therefore, O Lord, I cast me as a criminal Before thy sacred feet, O sweet Emanuel; Have pity then on me, Father divine.

Thou art the altar, thou the sacrifice—

Thou didst for us what doth indeed suffice, Since God declares,'tis pleasing in his eyes."

Margaret had found faith, and her soul became enraptured with holy transport,—

"Word divine! Christ Jesus! Lord!

Only Son of the Eternal God— The first and last, and all-renewing Bishop and King, in might triumphing, From death, by death delivering.

Man is by faith made son of God, And just and pure, kind like his Lord.

Man is by faith made free from stain; And man by faith in Christ doth reign, By faith I Christ possess, all riches gain." From this period a great change had been effected in the Duchess of Alençon—

"Myself poor, ignorant, impotent, In Christ am rich, wise, and puissant."

Still the power of evil was not destroyed. She felt in her soul a disagreement, a struggle which astonished her—

"Noble in mind, yet nature's slave, Offspring of heaven, child of the grave;

Throne of God, yet vessel of sin;

Immortal, rottenness within, Nourished by God, on earth I feed, Fleeing bad, yet loving evil deed.

Reason I love, yet justice shun, And till my course on earth is done, In strife like this my days must run."

Margaret, seeking for some natural emblem which might express the wants and affections of her soul, took, says Brantome, that of the flower of the marigold, "which, by its corolla and leaves, has the greatest affinity with the sun, and follows it wherever it goes." She added the following device:—

'Non inferiora secutus'—

'I follow not the things below.'

"To testify," adds the courtly writer, "that she directed all her actions, thoughts, wishes, and affections to this great Sun, which was God; on this account she was suspected of Luther's religion." In fact, the princess soon experienced the truth of the words, that "All who will live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." Margaret's new opinions were spoken of at court, and caused a great explosion. What! even the king's sister belong to those people! It might have been thought for some time that it was all over with Margaret. She was denounced to Francis I. But the king, who was very fond of his sister, affected to think there was nothing in it, while Margaret's own character gradually weakened opposition. Every one loved her; for, says Brantome, "She was very good, mild, gracious, charitable, of easy access, a great almsgiver, despising no one, and gaining all hearts by the good qualities which she had in her."

Amid the corruption and levity of this age, the mind rests with delight on this choice soul which the grace of God could reach under all this vanity and worldly grandeur. But her character as woman did not allow her to go farther. If Francis I had had the convictions of his sister, he would doubtless

have carried them fully out. The timid heart of the princess trembled before the wrath of her king. She was continually agitated between her brother and her Saviour, unwilling to sacrifice either the one or the other. She cannot be regarded as a Christian who had fully attained to the liberty of the children of God, but is a perfect type of those superior minds so numerous in all ages, especially among females, who, while powerfully drawn towards heaven, are, however, unable to disengage themselves entirely from earthly ties.

Still, as she is, she is one of the remarkable characters of history. Neither Germany nor England presents us with a Margaret of Valois. The star is, no doubt, somewhat dimmed, but there is a surpassing softness in its light, and even at the time of which I am now speaking, this light is easily discerned. It was not till a late period, when the angry look of Francis I betokened mortal hatred to the gospel, that his sister in alarm put a veil upon her faith. At present she lifts her head in the midst of this corrupt court, and appears in it as a bride of Jesus Christ. The respect which was paid to her, the high opinion entertained of her intellect and her heart, pleaded the cause of the gospel before the Court of France better than any preacher could have done. This mild female influence gave access to the new doctrine. Perhaps to this period may be traced the leaning of the French nobility to Protestantism. Had Francis also followed his sister—had the whole nation been thrown open to Christianity, the conversion of Margaret might have proved the salvation of France. But while the nobility received the Gospel, the throne and the people still adhered to Rome. It was ultimately a great misfortune to the Reformation to have had Condés and Navarres in its bosom.

CHAPTER V

Enemies of the Reformation—Louisa—Duprat—Concordat at Bologna—Opposition of the Parliament and the University—The Sorbonne—Beda—His character—His Tyranny—Berquin, the most learned of the nobles—The Leaders of the Sorbonne—Heresy of the three Magdalenes—Luther Condemned at Paris—The Sorbonne addresses the King—Lefevre quits Paris for Meaux.

Thus the gospel was already making illustrious conquests in France. In Paris, Lefevre, Briçonnet, Farel, Margaret, joyfully yielded to the movement which was beginning to shake the world. Francis I himself at this time seemed more attracted by the charms of literature, than repulsed by the severity of the gospel. The friends of the word of God were cherishing the fondest hopes: they were thinking that the heavenly doctrine would circulate without opposition throughout their native land, when a formidable opposition was formed at the Sorbonne and the Court. France, which was, during three centuries, to signalise herself in the cause of Roman Catholicism by her persecutions, rose up with pitiless severity against the Reformation. If, in the seventeenth century it was a bloody victory, in the sixteenth it was a fearful struggle. Nowhere, perhaps, did the Reformed Christians find more merciless foes than on the very spots where they raised the standard of the gospel. In Germany, the enemy manifested his rage in other States, and in Switzerland he manifested it in other Cantons; but in France, the parties met face to face. A dissolute female, and an avaricious minister then stood at the head of a long list of enemies of the Reformation.

Louisa of Savoy, the mother of the king and of Margaret, notorious for her amours, despotic in her wishes, and surrounded by a female Court whose licentiousness was the commencement of a long series of immoralities and scandals in the Court of France, naturally arrayed herself against

the word of God. She was the more to be dreaded in consequence of the almost unlimited influence which she always possessed over her son. But the gospel found a still more formidable adversary in Louisa's favourite, Anthony Duprat, for whom she procured the appointment of chancellor of the kingdom. This man, whom a contemporary historian calls the most vicious of all bipeds, was still more avaricious than Louisa was dissolute. Having at first enriched himself at the expense of justice, he afterwards wished to enrich himself, at the expense of religion, and entered into orders that he might obtain possession of the richest benefices.

Luxury and avarice were thus the characteristics of these two personages, who being both devoted to the pope, sought to hide the scandals of their life in the blood of heretics.

One of their first acts was to deliver the kingdom to the ecclesiastical domination of the pope. The king, after the battle of Marignan, met with Leo X at Bologna, where was concluded the famous Concordat, in virtue of which, these two princes shared between them the spoils of the Church. They deprived Councils of their supremacy in order to give it to the pope, and churches of the appointment to bishopricks and benefices to give it to the king. Then Francis I, holding up the train of the pontiff's mantle, appeared in the cathedral church of Bologna, to ratify the negotiation. He felt the injustice of the Concordat, and turning to Duprat, whispered in his ear, "There is enough in it to damn us both." But what cared he for his salvation? All he wanted was money and an alliance with the pope. The Parliament offered a vigorous resistance to the Concordat. The king caused its deputies to wait for several weeks at Amboise, till one day, as he rose from table, he ordered their attendance, and then said to them, "There is a king in France, and I don't understand that a senate exists in it as at Venice." Thus saying, he ordered them to depart before sunset. Evangelical liberty had nothing to hope from such a prince. Three days after, Trémouille, the grand chamberlain, appeared in parliament, and ordered that the Concordat should be registered. The university was now agitated. On the 18th March, 1518, a solemn procession, all the students and bachelors attending in their gowns, walked to the church of St. Catherine des Eeoliers, to supplicate the Diety for the preservation of the liberties of the Church and of the kingdom. "Then were seen colleges closed, and scholars in armour walking over the town in large bands, threatening, and sometimes maltreating personages of note, while engaged, by command of the king, in publishing and executing the said Concordat."5 At last, however, the university tolerated its execution, but without revoking the enactments by which it had declared its opposition, "and thereupon," says Correro, the ambassador of Venice, "the king began liberally to distribute bishopricks on the solicitation of the ladies of the court, and give offices to his soldiers; so that a traffic in bishopricks and offices was carried on at the court of France, in the same way as at Venice a traffic is carried on in pepper and cinnamon."

While Louisa and Duprat were preparing to destroy the gospel by the destruction of the liberties of the Gallican Church itself, in another direction a fanatical and powerful party was formed against the Bible. Christian truth has always had two great enemies—the dissoluteness of the world, and the fanaticism of priests. Scholastic Sorbonne and a licentious court were to go hand in hand against the confessors of Jesus Christ. In the early days of the Church, infidel Sadducees and hypocritical Pharisees were the bitterest enemies of Christianity, and they are so at all times. The darkness of the School soon sent forth the most pitiless adversaries of the gospel. At their head was Noel Bedier, commonly called Beda, a Picard by birth, and syndic of the Sorbonne, who has been described as the greatest bawler and the most factious spirit of his time. Trained in the dry

sentences of scholastics, having grown up among the theses and antitheses of the Sorbonne, venerating every distinction of the School far more than the word of God, he was transported with rage against those whose audacious mouths dared to utter other doctrines. Of a restless spirit, unable to give himself any repose, always longing for new pursuits, he was the plague of all who were near him. Trouble was his element; he seemed made to create storms; when he had no opponents, he attacked his friends. An impetuous quack, he made the town and the university echo with ignorant and violent declamations against literature, against the innovations of the time, and against all who were not at his beck eager enough in suppressing them. Several laughed when they heard him, but others gave credit to the speeches of the blustering orator, while the violence of his character secured him a tyrannical ascendancy in the Sorbonne. He behoved ever to have some opponent to contend with, some victim to drag to the scaffold. Accordingly, he had found heretics before they actually existed, and had demanded that Merlin, Vicar-General of Paris, should be burnt for having attempted to justify Origen. But when he saw the new teachers appear, he bounded like the wild beast which suddenly comes upon a prey which it can easily devour. “In our Beda are three thousand monks,” said the prudent Erasmus.

Still his very excesses injured his cause. “What!” said the wisest men of the age, “is it on such an Atlas that the Romish Church is to repose? What causes the fire but the follies of Beda?” In fact, the same blustering oratory which struck terror into the feeble-minded, disgusted generous minds. At the court of Francis I, was a gentleman of Artois, named Louis Berquin, who was then about thirty years of age, and unmarried. The purity of his life, his profound knowledge, which procured him the title “of the most learned of the nobility,”3 the frankness of his disposition, his tender care of the poor, and the unbounded attachment which he showed to his friends, distinguished him among his equals. The rites of the Church, fasts, feasts, and masses, had not a stricter observer;5 in particular, he manifested a perfect horror at every thing that was called heresy. It was a marvellous thing to see so much devotion at the court.

It seemed impossible that any thing could dispose such a man in favour of the Reformation. There were, however, two features in his character which were destined to bring him to the gospel. He had a thorough disgust at every thing like dissimulation, and as he never wished to wrong a single individual, so he could not bear to see any body wronged. Hence the tyranny of Beda and other fanatics, their trickery and persecution, filled him with indignation; and, as he did nothing by halves, wherever he went, in the city and at the court, “even among the most distinguished of the kingdom,” he inveighed with the utmost vehemence against the tyranny of these doctors, and attacked, “even in their hives,” says Theodore Beza, “those odious hornets which were at that time the terror of the world.7 Nor was this enough. Opposition to injustice led Berquin to enquire after truth. He felt a desire to know that Holy Scripture, so much loved by the men against whom Beda and his partizans were raging, and no sooner did he begin to read, than it won his heart. Berquin was immediately brought into communication with Margaret, Briçonnet, Lefevre, and all who loved the Word, and from converse with them derived the purest enjoyment. He felt that he had some other thing to do than to oppose the Sorbonne. He could have wished to make all France acquainted with the convictions of his own soul. He accordingly began to write and translate into French several Christian works. It seemed to him that every one ought to acknowledge and embrace the truth as promptly as he himself had done. The impetuosity which Beda displayed in the cause of human traditions, Berquin displayed in the service of the word of God. Younger than

the syndic of Sorbonne, less prudent, less able, his strength lay in a noble eagerness for truth. They were two powerful wrestlers, about to try which could throw down the other. But Berquin had something else in view than to give Bed a fall. Accordingly Theodore Beza says, “that France would perhaps have found in Berquin another Luther, could he have found in Francis I another Elector.”

Numerous obstacles were to trammel his efforts. Fanaticism ever meets with followers: it is a fire which increases as it goes. The monks and ignorant priests followed in the train of the syndic of the Sorbonne. An esprit de corps reigned in this company under the direction of certain intriguers and fanatics who knew adroitly how to avail themselves of the nonentity or vanity of their colleagues, in order to make them share in their enmities. At each sitting these leaders were the only spokesmen, over-awing the others by their violence, or reducing feeble and moderate men to silence. No sooner did they make a proposal than they exclaimed with threatening accents, “Now we shall see who they are that belong to the faction of Luther.” Did any one give utterance to equitable sentiments, Beda, Leconturier, Duchesne, and their whole band, seemed horrified, and exclaimed all at once, “It is worse than Luther.” This manœuvre was successful. The timid, who like better to live in peace than to dispute, those who are ready to abandon their own sentiments for their individual advantage, those who do not understand the simplest questions, those, in fine, who are always driven from their position by clamour, were dragged along by Beda and his tribe. Some remained mute, others shouted, all gave implicit submission to the power which a proud and tyrannical spirit exercises over vulgar souls. Such was the condition of this company, which was regarded as so venerable, and which was then the most impassioned enemy of evangelical Christianity. A glance at the most celebrated bodies would often be sufficient to set a just value on the war which they wage against truth.

Thus the university which, under Louis XII, had applauded the attempts at independence by Allmain, again plunged all at once into fanaticism and servility under Duprat and Louisa of Saxony. If we except the Jansenists, and some other teachers, we nowhere find a true and noble independence in the Gallican clergy. All they have done has been to oscillate between servility towards the court and servility towards the pope. If, under Louis XII or Louis XIV, there was some appearance of liberty, it was because their master of Paris was then contending with their master of Rome. This explains the sudden change to which we have just referred. The university and the bishops ceased to remember their rights and their duties the moment the king ceased to demand it of them.

Beda had long been irritated against Lefevre. The fame of the doctor of Picardy enraged his fellow-countryman and offended his pride. He could have wished to shut Lefevre’s mouth. Once already had Beda attacked the doctor of Etaples; and, little skilled as he was in discerning evangelical doctrines he had attacked his colleague on a point which, strange as it may seem, well nigh brought Lefevre to the scaffold. Lefevre had maintained that Mary, the sister of Lazarus, Mary Magdalene, and the woman that was a sinner, of whom St. Luke speaks (Luke 17:1-37), were three different individuals. The Greek fathers had distinguished between them, but the Latin fathers had confounded them. This dreadful heresy of the three Magdalenes, set Beda, and all his host, in motion. Christendom was aroused. Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, one of the most distinguished prelates of that age, wrote against Lefevre, and the whole Church decided against an opinion now received by all Roman Catholics. Lefevre, who had been previously condemned

by the Sorbonne, was prosecuted as a heretic by the Parliament, when Francis I, who was delighted at the opportunity of striking a blow at the Sorbonne and humbling monkery, rescued him from the hands of his persecutors.

Beda, indignant at being deprived of his victim, determined to take his measures better next time. Luther's name was beginning to make a noise in France. The Reformer, after the Leipsie discussion with Dr. Eck, had agreed to submit to the decision of the universities of Erfurth and Paris. The zeal which the university had displayed against the Concordat doubtless made him hope that he would find impartial judges in its bosom. But times had changed; and the more decision the faculty had shown against the encroachments of Rome, the more it was bent on displaying Rome's orthodoxy. Beda thus found it quite inclined to enter into his views. On the 20th January, 1520, the censor of the French nation purchased twenty copies of Luther's conference with Dr. Eck for the purpose of distributing them among the members of the company who were to report on this affair. More than a year was employed in the investigation. The Reformation of Germany was beginning to make an immense sensation in France. The universities which were then institutions of true catholicity, and which were attended by crowds of students from all the countries of Christendom, brought Germany, France, Switzerland, and England into closer and readier connection in regard to theology and philosophy, than is the case at the present day. The noise which Luther's work had made at Paris, strengthened the hands of the Lefevres, Briçonnets, and Farels. Each of his victories animated them with courage. Several of the doctors of Sorbonne were struck with the admirable truths which they found in the writings of the monk of Wittemberg. Candid confessions were made; but, at the same time, fierce opposition was aroused. "All Europe," says Crevier, "were anxiously awaiting the decision of the university of Paris." The struggle seemed doubtful; but, at last, Beda carried the day. In April, 1521, the university decided that Luther's works should be publicly committed to the flames, and that their author should be compelled to recant. Nor was this enough. Indeed, the disciples of Luther had crossed the Rhine still more rapidly than his writings. "In a short time," says the jesuit Maimbourg, "the university was filled with strangers, who, because they knew a little of Hebrew, and a good deal of Greek, acquired a reputation, insinuated themselves into the houses of persons of quality, and used an insolent liberty in interpreting the Bible." The faculty named a deputation to present its complaints to the king.

Francis I, caring little for the quarrels of theologians, continued his round of amusements, and conducting the gentlemen and ladies of the court of his mother and sister from chateau to chateau, gave himself up to all sorts of dissipation, far away from the annoying gaze of the citizens of his capital. He thus travelled over Brittany, Anjou, Guienne, Angoumois, and Poiton, claiming the same service in villages and forests as if he had been at Paris in the Chateau des Tournelles. There were tournays, combats, masquerades, sumptuous entertainments, tables covered with dainties, "by which," says Brantôme, "those of Lucullus were far surpassed." For a moment, however, he interrupted the round of his pleasures to receive the grave deputies of the Sorbonne. But he saw only learned men in those whom the faculty denounced to him as heretics. Would a prince, who boasted that he had taken the kings of France out of leading strings, lower his head before some fanatical doctors? "I am not willing," replied he, "that those people be molested. To persecute those who teach, would be to prevent men of talent from coming into the kingdom." The deputation retired in a rage. What was to be the result? The evil was increasing from day to day;

already men were beginning to call heretical opinions “sentiments of men of genius;” the devouring flame was spreading into the most secret recesses. The conflagration would blaze, and throughout France the edifice of faith would tumble with a crash.

Beda and his faction, unable to obtain scaffolds from the king, had recourse to more hidden persecution. There was no kind of annoyance to which the evangelical doctors were not subjected. There were constantly new reports and new denunciations. Old Lefevre, tormented by these ignorant zealots, sighed for repose. The pious Briçonnet, who ceased not to express his veneration for the doctor of Etaples, offered him an asylum. Lefevre left Paris, and repaired to Meaux. This was a first advantage gained over the gospel, and it was thenceforth seen that if the faction could not succeed in gaining the aid of the civil power, it had a secret fanatical police, by means of which it could surely attain its end.

CHAP. VI

Briçonnet visits his Diocese—Reformation—The Reformers Prosecuted at Paris—Philibert of Savoy—Correspondence of Margaret and Briçonnet.

Thus Paris began to take part against the Reformation, and trace the first lines of that enclosure which was destined for nearly three centuries to hedge in the capital from the reformed worship. God had been pleased that the first rays of the Reformation should appear in Paris, but men immediately exerted themselves in extinguishing them; the spirit of the Sixteen was already fermenting in the metropolis, and other towns of the kingdom were about to welcome the light which the capital spurned away.

Briçonnet, on returning to his diocese, had displayed the zeal of a Christian and a bishop. He had visited all his parishes, and assembling the deans, curates, vicars, church-wardens, and the principal parishioners, had made himself acquainted with the doctrine and lives of the preachers. At the collecting season, he was told, the Franciscans of Meaux began their course; a single preacher went over several parishes in one day, repeating the same sermon at each place, not in order to nourish the souls of his hearers, but to fill his belly, his purse, and his convent. The wallet once filled, the end was attained, the preachers concluded, and the monks did not again appear in the churches till another begging season arrived. The only business of these shepherds is to clip the wool off their flocks.2 On the other hand, the curates, for the greater part, spent their incomes at Paris. “Oh!” said the pious bishop on finding a presbytery which he came to visit empty, “are not those traitors who thus abandon the warfare of Christ?” Briçonnet resolved to remedy these evils, and convened a meeting of all his clergy on 13th October, 1519. But these worldly priests, who cared little for the remonstrances of their bishop, and for whom Paris had so many charms, took advantage of a custom, in virtue of which they could present one or more vicars to feed their flocks in their absence. Out of one hundred and twenty-seven vicars, Briçonnet found only fifteen whom he approved.

Worldly curates, imbecile vicars, monks who thought only of their belly. Such was the condition of the Church. Briçonnet denied the use of the pulpit to the Franciscans, and persuaded that the only method of filling his bishopric with good ministers, was to form them himself, he determined on founding a school of theology at Meaux, and placing it under pious and learned teachers. It was necessary to find them. They were furnished by Beda. In fact, this fanatical man and his company

gave themselves no rest, and complaining bitterly of the toleration of the government, declared that they would make war on the new doctrines with it, without it, or against it. It was in vain that Lefevre had quitted the capital. Did not Farel and his friends remain? Farel, it was true, did not mount the pulpit, for he was not a priest, but at the university, in the town, with the professors, priests, students, and citizens, he boldly maintained the cause of the Reformation. Others animated by his example, were always becoming more open in spreading the word of God. Martial Mazurier, a celebrated preacher and president of the college of St. Michael, used no disguise in painting the disorders of the times in the darkest yet truest colours, and it seemed impossible to withstand the power of his eloquence. The rage of Beda and his theological partisans knew no bounds. “If we tolerate these innovators,” said he, “they will gain possession of the whole body, and it will be all over with our lectures, our traditions, our places, and the respect shown to us by France and all Christendom.” The theologians of the Sorbonne proved the strongest. Farel, Mazurier, Gerard Roussel, and his brother Arnaud, soon saw their activity every where paralysed. The bishop of Meaux urged his friends to come and join Lefevre, and these excellent men hounded by the Sorbonne, and hoping that, beside Briçonnet, they might be able to form a holy phalanx for the triumph of the truth, accepted the invitation of the bishop and repaired to Meaux. Thus the gospel light gradually withdrew from the capital where providence had kindled its first rays. This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men have loved the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil. It is impossible not to perceive, that Paris at this time drew down upon itself the judgment which these words of our Saviour express.

Margaret of Valois deprived successively of Briçonnet, Lefevre, and their friends, felt uneasy when she saw herself alone in the midst of Paris, and the licentious court of Francis I. She was on intimate terms with Philibert of Savoy, a young princess, her mother’s sister. Philibert, whom the king, in order to seal the Concordat, had given in marriage to Julian the Magnificent, brother to Leo X, had after her marriage gone to Rome, where the Pope, overjoyed at the illustrious alliance, had expended a hundred and fifty thousand ducats in giving her sumptuous fetes. In 1516, Julian, when in command of the army of the Pope, died, leaving his widow at the age of eighteen. She became attached to Margaret, who by her talents and her virtues had great influence on all around her. The grief of Philibert opened her heart to the voice of religion. Margaret imparted to her whatever she read, and the widow of the lieutenant general of the Church began to relish the soothing doctrine of salvation. But Philibert was too inexperienced to support her friend Margaret who often felt humbled in thinking of her great weakness. If the love which she bore to the king, and the fear she had of displeasing him, led her into some act contrary to her conscience, she was immediately troubled in her soul, and turning again in sadness toward the Lord, she found in him, a master, a brother, more merciful and more soothing to her heart than Francis himself. At such a time she thus addressed her Saviour.

O gentle brother! who when thou mightest chide Thy erring sister, call’st her to thy side; For murmur, injury, and great offence, Dost give her grace and love, as recompence.

Too much, alas! yea far too much, my brother, In me is no desert of such a treasure.

Margaret, seeing all her friends retiring to Meaux, turned a sad look towards them amid the festivities of the Court. Every one seemed to abandon her. Her husband, the duke D’Alençon, was setting out for the army: her young aunt Philiberte, for Savoy. The duchess turned towards

Briçonnet, and thus wrote him:

“Monsieur De Meaux,—Knowing that only one is necessary, I address myself to you, praying you to supplicate heaven to guide, agreeably to its holy will, M. D’Alençon, who, by command of the king, is setting out as a lieutenant-general of the army, which, I fear, will not be disbanded without war. And thinking that, independent of the public good of the kingdom, you have a good title in whatever touches his salvation and mine, I ask your spiritual aid. To-morrow my aunt sets out from Nemours for Savoy. I am obliged to occupy myself with many things which give me many fears. Wherefore, if you know that master Michael could undertake a journey, it would give me a consolation which I ask only for the glory of God.”

Michael D’Arande, whose assistance Margaret requested, was one of the members of the evangelical society of Meaux who, at a later period, exposed himself to many dangers in preaching the gospel. The pious princess was alarmed when she saw the formidable opposition which was rising and increasing against the truth. Duprat and the men in power, Beda and those of the Sorbonne, filled her with dismay. Briçonnet, in order to strengthen her, says in his reply, “War is what our gracious Saviour says in the gospel he had brought upon the earth; it was also fire … great fire, by which the terrestrial is transformed into the divine. I desire with all my heart to aid you, Madam; but, from my own nothingness, expect no more than the will. Whoso hath faith, hope, and love, has all that is necessary, and has no need of aid or assistance … God is all in all, and out of him is nothing to be found. In contending, have a stout heart … and love unspeakable…. The war is carried on through love. Jesus demands the heart: unhappy the man who is estranged from him. He who fights in person is certain of victory. He often falls who fights by others.” The Bishop of Meaux began himself to know what it is to fight for the word of God. Theologians and monks, indignant at the asylum which he gave to the friends of the Reformation, violently accused him; so that his brother, the Bishop of St. Malo, came to Paris to examine the affairs. Margaret was so much the more touched by the consolation which Briçonnet offered her, and replied with an offer of her assistance.

Writing him, she says, “If in any thing you think I can be of service to you or yours, rest assured that any trouble I may take will be my comfort. May eternal peace be given you, after those long wars which you carry on for the faith, and in which you desire to die.

“Ever your daughter, Margaret.”

It is to be lamented that Briçonnet did not die in the struggle. Nevertheless he was then full of zeal. Philiberte of Nemours, respected by all for her sincere devotion, her liberality towards the poor, and the great purity of her manners, read with keen and increasing interest, the evangelical writings sent her by the Bishop of Meaux. “I have all the tracts which you sent me,” wrote Margaret to Briçonnet, “my aunt of Nemours has had her share. I will send her the last, for she is in Savoy at the marriage of her brother, which is no small loss to me; wherefore, I pray you to have pity on me in my solitude.” Unhappily, Philiberte did not live long enough to declare decidedly in favour of the Reformation. She died in 1524, at the castle of Virieu le Grand, in Bugey, at the age of twenty-six. This was a sad blow to Margaret. Her friend, her sister, she who could entirely understand her, was taken from her. Perhaps, there was only one other death, that of her brother, at which she felt greater agony than now.4 So many tears bedew my eyes, They veil my view of earth and skies, And like a spring incessant rise.

Margaret feeling how weak she was in resisting grief and the seductions of the court, begged Briçonnet to exhort her to the love of God. The bishop replied, “Our mild and gracious Lord, who wills, and who alone can do what he powerfully wills, is, in his infinite goodness, visiting your heart, exhorting it to love him with its own self. No other than he, madam, has power to do so: you must not expect light from darkness, nor heat from cold. By attracting he inflames, and by inflaming enlarges the heart, inducing it to follow him. Madam, you ask me to have pity upon you because you are alone. I do not understand this statement. He who lives in the world and has his heart in it remains alone. Excess and evil are companions. But she whose heart is asleep to the world, and awake to the meek and gracious Jesus, her true and faithful husband, is truly alone, living necessarily in Him alone, and yet is not alone, because not abandoned by Him who fills and keeps all. Pity I cannot and must not have for such solitude, which is more to be esteemed than the whole world, from which I am assured that the love of God has saved you, so that you are no longer its child. Madam, remain alone in Him alone who was pleased to suffer a painful and ignominious death and passion.

“Madam, recommending myself to your good graces, I beg you will be pleased no longer to use expressions similar to those in your last. Of God alone are you the daughter and spouse; no other father must you claim.… I exhort and admonish you to be to him as good a daughter as he is a good Father, … and though you should not be able to attain to this, I beg he would be pleased to increase your strength that you may wholly love and serve him.”

Nothwithstanding of these words, Margaret was not yet comforted. She bitterly regretted the spiritual guides of whom she had been deprived; the new pastors whom it was sought to impose upon her in order to gain her back, had not her confidence, and after all that the bishop said she felt herself alone in the midst of the court. All around her seemed dark and desert. In a letter to Briçonnet, she says—“Just as a sheep in a strange land, wandering unacquainted with its pasture, not knowing the new shepherds, naturally raises its head to get a view of the nook where the chief shepherd was wont to give it sweet nurture, am I constrained to beg your charity. Come down from the high mountain, and, among all this people estranged from the light, look in pity on the blindest of all the flock.

Margaret.” The Bishop of Meaux, in his answer, continuing the figure of a wandering sheep, proceeds to represent the mysteries of salvation under the figure of a forest. “The sheep,” says he, “going into the forest, being led by the Holy Spirit, is forthwith enraptured with the richness, beauty, straightness, length, breadth, depth, and height, the invigorating and odoriferous fragrance of this forest; and after looking all around, sees only Him in all, and all in Him; and, moving along with rapid step, finds it so pleasant that the journey is like life, joy, and consolation.”4 The bishop next represents the sheep vainly seeking the extremity of the forest (a figure of the soul trying to fathom the mysteries of God) falling in with high mountains which it attempts to climb, but everywhere finds “infinitude, inaccessible and incomprehensible.” Then he shows her the path by which the soul in quest of God surmounts these difficulties; he shows her how the sheep in the midst of mercenaries finds “the nook of the Great Shepherd.” “By means of faith,” says he, “it begins the flight of contemplation;” everything is made smooth, everything is explained, and it begins to sing, “I have found him whom my soul loveth.”

Thus spoke the bishop of Meaux. At this time, burning with zeal, he wished to see France renewed by the gospel. Often, in particular, his mind turned to the three great personages who seemed to preside over the destinies of his countrymen. He thought that if the royal family was enlightened, the whole people would be so; and that the priests, aroused to jealousy, would at length quit their death-like state. “Madam,” wrote he to Margaret, “I pray God most humbly, that he would be pleased by his goodness, to kindle a fire in the hearts of the king, madam, and yourself, so that you three may burn with a brilliant flame which will enkindle the rest of the kingdom, and specially that order by the coldness of which all others are frozen.”

Margaret did not share these hopes. She speaks neither of her brother nor her mother; it was a subject which she dared not touch; but replying to the bishop, in January, 1522, (her heart dulled by the indifference and worldliness which surrounded her,) she says to him, “The time is so cold, the heart so frozen”—and she signs—“Your frozen, thirsty, and famishing daughter.

“Margaret.” This letter did not discourage Briçonnet, but it made him enter into himself, and there feeling how much he who wished to quicken others stood in need of being quickened, he commended himself to the prayers of Margaret and Madame de Nemours. “Madam,” wrote he with great simplicity, “I beg you by your prayers to awaken a poor slumberer.”

Such, in 1521, were the views exchanged at the court of the king of France—strange views, doubtless, which, after a lapse of more than three centuries, a manuscript of the Royal Library of Paris has revealed. Was this influence of the Reformation in so high a quarter advantageous to it, or was it hurtful? The arrow of truth penetrated to the court, but perhaps only served to awaken the slumbering ferocious beast, to stir up its rage, and make it pounce with greater fury on the humblest of the flock.

CHAP. VII

First beginnings of the Church of Meaux—The Scriptures in French—The Tradesmen and the Bishop—Evangelical Harvest—The Epistles of St. Paul sent to the King—Letevre and Roma—The Monks before the Bishop—The Monks before the Parliament—Briçonnet yields. In fact, the time was approaching when the storm was to burst on the Reformation. Previously, however, it was to shed some additional seeds and reap some grain. This town of Meaux, made famous a century and a half afterwards by the sublime defender of the Gallican system against the despotic pretensions of Rome, was destined to become the first town in France in which a renovated Christianity was to establish its empire. It was at this time the field on which the cultivators were bestowing labour and seed, and where they were already laying down some sheaves. Briçonnet, less asleep than he said he was, animated, inspected, and directed everything. His fortune equalled his zeal; never did man make a nobler use of his wealth, and never did such noble devotedness seem destined from the outset to bear such excellent fruit. Transported to Meaux, the pious teachers of Paris thenceforth acted with new freedom. There was an emancipation of the Word, and the Reformation in France moved rapidly forward. Lefevre forcibly expounded that gospel with which he would fain have filled the world. “It is necessary,” said he, “that kings, princes, nobles, people, all nations, think only of Jesus Christ, and aspire to him. Each priest must resemble the angel that St. John saw in the Apocalypse, flying through the midst of heaven, holding in his hand the eternal gospel, and carrying it to every people, tongue, and kindred, and nation. Come pontiff, come kings, come generous hearts.… Nations awaken to the light of the

gospel, and breathe life eternal?2 The word of God is sufficient."

Such, in fact, was the motto of this school,—"The Word of God is sufficient." The whole Reformation is comprehended in this sentence. "To know Christ and his word," said Lefevre, Roussel, Farel, "is the alone living, the alone universal theology. He who knows this, knows all." The truth produced a deep impression in Meaux. First separate meetings were held, next conferences, and at last the gospel was preached in the churches. But a new exertion which was made gave a still more formidable blow to Rome.

Lefevre wished to enable the Christians of France to read the Holy Scriptures. On the 30th October, 1522, he published the French translation of the four Gospels; and on the 6th November, that of the other books of the New Testament. On the 12th October, Collin, at Meaux, published a volume containing the whole of the books thus translated; and in 1525, a French version of the Psalms. Thus began in France almost at the same time as in Germany, the preaching and dissemination of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue—a procedure which was three centuries afterwards to be carried to so great an extent over the whole world. In France, as on the other side of the Rhine, the Bible had a decisive influence. Experience had taught many Frenchmen that when they sought to know divine things, doubt and obscurity appeared on every side. How many moments, and perhaps years, in their lives, during which they have been tempted to regard the most certain truths as illusions! We must have light from above to illumine our darkness! Such was the sigh of many souls at the period of the Reformation. With such desires, many received the sacred books from the hands of Lefevre. They were read in families and in the closet; and conversations on the Bible became frequent; Christ appeared to their long bewildered spirits as the sun and centre of all revelations. There was no more need of demonstrations to prove to them that the Scriptures were from the Lord. This they knew, for it had transformed them from darkness to light.

Such was the progress by which distinguished individuals in France arrived at the knowledge of God. But there were other methods more simple, and if the thing be possible, more vulgar, by which many of the people attained to the truth. The population of Meaux consisted almost entirely of mechanics and people trading in wool. "In many," says a chronicler of the sixteenth century, "was engendered so ardent a desire to know the way of salvation, that artisans, carders, spinners, and combers, employed themselves while engaged in manual labour, in conversing on the word of God, and deriving comfort from it. In particular, Sundays and festivals were employed in reading the Scriptures and enquiring after the good-will of the Lord."

Briçonnet was delighted at seeing piety thus substituted for superstition in his diocese. "Lefevre, aided by the reputation of his great learning," says a contemporary historian, "was able by his plausible discourse so to cajole and circumvent master William Briçonnet as to have him entirely devoted to him, so much so that it has never since been possible to purge the town and diocese of Meaux of this mischievous doctrine, even to this day, when it has marvellously increased. It is a great pity that this good bishop, who, till then, had been so devoted to God and the Virgin Mary, should have been so perverted."

Still all were not so entirely devoted as the Franciscan whom we have just quoted, represents. The town was divided into two parties. On the one side were the monks of St. Francis and the friends of the Romish doctrine; on the other, Briçonnet, Lefevre, Farel, and all who loved the new doctrine.

An individual in ordinary life, named Leclerc, was one of the most servile adherents of the monks; but his wife and two sons, Peter and John, had eagerly received the gospel. John, who was a carder of wool, soon distinguished himself among the new Christians. James Pavanne, a young scholar of Picardy, “a man of great sincerity,” whom Briçonnet had attracted to Meaux, showed great zeal for the Reformation. Meaux had become a focus of light. Persons who had occasion to visit it often heard the gospel and brought it back to their homes. The Holy Scriptures were searched, not in the town only, but also, says a chronicler, “several of the villagers did likewise, so that that diocese began to exhibit an image of the renovated Church.” The environs of Meaux being covered with rich crops at the season of harvest, great numbers of labourers flocked to it from the surrounding countries. When reposing at noon from their fatigues, they conversed with the inhabitants of the district, who spoke to them of other crops and other harvests. Several peasants from Thiérache, and especially from Landouzy, after they returned home persevered in the doctrine which they had heard, and shortly after there was formed in that place an evangelical church, which is one of the oldest in the kingdom. “The fame of this great boon circulated over France,” says the chronicler.2 Briçonnet himself preached the gospel from the pulpit, and endeavoured everywhere to disseminate what he calls “that infinite, sweet, cheerful, true, and only light, which dazzles and illumines every creature who receives it, and which, in illuminating, dignifies him with the filial adoption of God.” He prayed his flock not to lend an ear to those who wished to turn them aside from the word. “Even,” said he, “should an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, do not listen to him.” Sometimes he was seized with melanchely thoughts. He was not sure of himself. He recoiled in dismay when thinking of the fatal effects which might result from his unfaithfulness, and, forewarning his people, said to them—“Should even I, your bishop, change my discourse and doctrine, do you beware of changing with me.” At the time nothing gave intimation of such a disaster. “Not only was the word of God preached,” says the chronicler, “it was practised; all works of charity and love were practised, manners were reformed, and superstitions brought into disrepute.”2

Always full of the idea of gaining the king and his mother, the bishop sent to Margaret “the Epistles of St. Paul, translated and magnificently illuminated,” begging her very humbly to present it to the king; “This from your hands,” added he, “cannot but be agreeable. It is a royal dish,” continued the good bishop, “nourishing without corrupting, and curing all diseases. The more we taste it, the more we hunger for it, with uncloying and insatiable appetite.”

What dearer message could Margaret receive?… She thought the moment favourable. Michael d’ Arande was at Paris, detained by command of the queen mother, for whom he was translating portions of the Holy Scriptures. But Margaret would have wished Briçonnet himself to present St. Paul to her brother, and wrote to him, “You would do well to come here, for you know the confidence which the king and she place in you.”5

Thus the word of God was at this time (1522, 1523) placed under the eyes of Francis I, and Louisa of Savoy. They were brought into contact with that gospel which they were at a later period to persecute. It does not appear that the Word made any salutary impression upon them. The Bible was then making much noise, and a feeling of curiosity made them open it; but it was no sooner opened than shut.

Margaret herself had difficulty in struggling with the worldliness which surrounded her on every side. Her affection for her brother, the obedience which she owed to her mother, and the flattery which she received at court, all seemed to conspire against the love which she had vowed to Jesus Christ. Christ was single against a number. The soul of Margaret, assailed by so many foes, and stunned by the noise of the world, sometimes turned aside from its Lord. Then recognising her fault, the princess shut herself up in her chamber, and giving herself up to grief, sent forth sounds very different from those jovial strains with which Francis and the young nobility associated in his debaucheries and festivities, caused the palace to resound.

Left you I have my pleasure to follow;

Left you I have for a choice most hollow;

Left you I have—but ah! whither to go?

Away where nought is but eursing and woe.

Left you I have a friend constant and true, And then, to conceal your love from my view, Have leagued with all that is hostile to you.

Then Margaret, turning towards Meaux, wrote in her anguish, “I return to you, to M. Fabry, (Lefevre) and all your band, begging you to obtain from ineffable mercy by your prayers, an awakening for a poor drooping slumbering creature … from her deep and deadly lethargy.”

Thus Meaux had become a focus of light. The friends of the Reformation gave themselves up to flattering illusions. Who could oppose the gospel if the power of Francis I paved the way for it? The corrupting influence of the court would then be changed into a holy influence, and France acquire a moral force which would make her the benefactress of the nations. On the other hand the friends of Rome became alarmed. Among the most distinguished of those at Meaux was a Jacobin monk named De Roma. One day when Lefevre, Farel, and their friends were conversing with him and some other adherents of the papacy, Lefevre could not refrain from expressing his hopes. “The gospel,” said he, “is already gaining the hearts of the grandees and people, and soon diffusing itself over all France, it will every where bring down the inventions of men.” The old doctor had become animated, his eyes which had become dim sparkled, his trembling voice was again full toned. One would have said it was old Simeon thanking the Lord for having seen his salvation. The friends of Lefevre shared his emotion, and his opponents were dumb with astonishment.… All at once De Roma started up, and with the voice of a tribune of the people, exclaimed, “Then I and all the other monks will preach a crusade: we will stir up the people; and if the king permits the preaching of your gospel, we will make his own subjects chase him from his own kingdom.”

Thus a monk dared to enter the lists with a royal knight. The Franciscans applauded the words. The future predicted by the old doctor must not be allowed to be realised. Already the friars are day after day returning with diminished alms. The alarmed Franciscans spreading themselves among families, exclaimed “These new teachers are heretics; the holiest observances they attack, the most sacred mysteries they deny!…” Then becoming more emboldened, the most irritated of them come forth from their cloisters, repair to the episcopal palace, and being admitted to the presence of the prelate, exclaim, “Crush this heresy, or the plague which already devastates this town of Meaux will soon spread over the kingdom.”

Briçonnet was concerned, and for a moment at a loss how to deal with this attack; but he yielded not; he had too much contempt for these coarse monks and their selfish clamour. He mounted the pulpit, justified Lefevre, and called the monks Pharisees and hypocrites. Still this opposition produced trouble and an internal struggle in his soul; he tried to reassure himself by reflecting that these spiritual combats were necessary. “By this battle,” said he, in his somewhat mystical language, “we reach a death, quickening and, at the same time, mortifying life; in living, we die, in dying, we live.” The path would have been safer, if hastening towards the Saviour, like the apostles, when tossed by the winds and waves, he had exclaimed, “Master, save us, we perish.” The monks of Meaux, furious at being repulsed by the bishop, resolved to carry their complaints to a higher quarter. They had a power of appeal. If the bishop will not yield, they can compel him. Their leaders set out for Paris, and came to an understanding with Beda and Duchesne. They hastened to the Parliament, and there denounced the bishop and the heretical teachers. “The town,” said they, “and the whole neighbourhood are affected with heresy, and it is the episcopal palace itself that sends forth the polluted streams.”

Thus, the cry of persecution against the gospel began to be heard in France. The priestly and the civil power, the Sorbonne and the Parliament, took up arms, arms that were to be dyed in blood. Christianity had taught that there are duties and rights anterior to all civil associations, had emancipated religious thought, founded liberty of conscience, and produced a great revolution in society; for antiquity, which saw the citizen every where, and man nowhere, had made religion simply an affair of state. But no sooner had these ideas been given to the world than the papacy had corrupted them. For the despotism of the prince, it had substituted the despotism of the priest. It had often even stirred up the prince and the priest against the Christian people. A new emancipation was required, and it took place in the sixteenth century. In all places where the Reformation was established, it broke the yoke of Rome, and religious thought was again set free. But there is in human nature such a love of domineering over the truth, that among many Protestant nations the Church disengaged from the arbitrary power of the priest, is in our days on the point of again falling under the yoke of the civil power, and doomed, like its ruler, to vibrate incessantly between these two despotisms, to pass ever and anon from Caiaphas to Pilate, and Pilate to Caiaphas.

Briçonnet, who was held in high estimation at Paris, easily justified himself. But it was in vain he sought to defend his friends. The monks were not willing to return to Meaux empty handed. If the bishop is to escape, his brethren must be sacrificed. Of a timid character, not much disposed to abandon his riches and his rank for Jesus Christ, already alarmed and filled with sadness, false counsels led him still further astray. It was suggested to him that, if the evangelical doctors quitted Meaux, they could carry the Reformation elsewhere. An agonising struggle took place in his heart. At length worldly prudence prevailed; he yielded, and on the 12th April, 1526, issued an injunction, depriving these pious teachers of liberty to preach. This was Briçonnet’s first fall.

Lefevre was the person principally aimed at. His commentary on the four Gospels, and especially his “epistle to Christian readers,” which preceded it, had increased the rage of Beda and his band. They denounced the work to the faculty. “Does he not presume,” said the blustering syndic, “to recommend the reading of the Holy Scriptures to all the faithful? Do we not read in it that whoso loves not the word of Christ is not a Christian; and that the word of God is sufficient for eternal life?” In this accusation Francis I saw only a cabal of theologians. He named a commission, and

Lefevre, having justified himself before it, came off from the attack with the honours of war.

Farel, who had fewer protectors at Court, was obliged to quit Meaux. It appears that he at first repaired to Paris, and that having attacked the errors of Rome without reserve, he could no longer remain, but was obliged to retire into Dauphiny, whither his heart was bent on carrying the gospel.

CHAP. VIII

Lefevre and Farel Persecuted—Difference between the Lutheran and Reformed Churches—Leclerc puts up his Pancartes—Leclerc Branded—Zeal of Berquin—Berquin before the Parliament—Francis I saves him—Apostacy of Mazurier—Fall and Grief of Pavanne—Metz—Chatelain—Peter Toussaint becomes attentive—Leclerc breaks Images—Condemnation and Torture of Leclerc—Martyrdom of Chatelain—Flight.

Lefevre intimidated, Briçonnet beginning to backslide, Farel constrained to flee!—this was a first victory. The Sorbonne already thought themselves masters of the movement. The doctors and monks were congratulating themselves on their triumph. This however, was not enough: blood had not flowed. They accordingly set to work, and blood—since blood it must have—was soon to gratify the fanaticism of Rome. The evangelical Christians of Meaux, seeing their leaders dispersed, sought mutually to edify each other. John Leclerc, a carder of wool, whom the discourses of the teachers, the reading of the Bible and of several religious books, had instructed in Christian doctrine, was distinguished by his zeal and his readiness in expounding Scripture. He was one of those men whom the Spirit of God2 fills with courage, and soon places at the head of a religious movement. The church of Meaux was not long in regarding him as its pastor. The idea of an universal priesthood, an idea to which the first Christians were so much alive, had been restored in the sixteenth century, by Luther. But this idea seemed then to remain theoretical in the Lutheran church, and became a living reality only in the Reformed churches. The Lutheran churches (and in this they agree with the Anglican church) seemed to hold a middle place between the Church of Rome and the Reformed Church. Among the Lutherans everything proceeded from the pastor or the priest, and nothing was good in the church that did not come organically through its heads. But the Reformed Churches, while holding the divine institution of the ministry, which some sects overlook, approximated nearer to the primitive condition of the apostolic communities. From the period of which we speak, they recognised and proclaimed, that Christian flocks were not simply to receive what the priest gives; that the members of the church, as well as its leaders, possess the key of the treasury from which these draw their instructions, since the Bible is in the hands of all; that the grace of God, the spirit of faith, wisdom, consolation, and light, are not given to the pastor merely; that each is called to use the gift which he has received, for the common advantage; that often even a certain gift necessary for the edification of the church may be refused to the minister and granted to a member of his flock. Thus the passive state of the churches was exchanged for a state of general activity. It was in France especially that this revolution was accomplished. In other countries the Reformers are almost without exception pastors and doctors. But in France the men of learning are in close union with the men of the people. There God takes for his first workmen a doctor of the Sorbonne and a carder of wool.

Carder Leclerc now began to go from house to house confirming the disciples. But not stopping at these ordinary labours, he wished to see the edifice of the papacy crumbling to pieces, and France, from amid its ruins, turning with a shout of joy towards the gospel. His somewhat

immoderate zeal reminds us of that o' Hottinger at Zurich, and Carlstadt at Wittemberg. He accordingly drew up a proclamation against the Antichrist of Rome, in which he announced that the Lord was about to destroy it by the breath of his mouth. Then he boldly posted up his "Pancartes" on the very gate of the cathedral. Forthwith all was confusion around the ancient edifice. The faithful were astonished, the priests enraged. What! a man employed in carding wool to attack the pope?… The Franciscans were beside themselves, and demanded that this once, at least, a dreadful example should be made. Leclerc was thrown into prison. His trial was concluded in a few days, under the very eyes of Briçonnet, who was obliged to see and endure it all. The carder was condemned to be beaten with rods three days in succession through the streets of the town, and then branded on the forehead. Shortly after, this sad spectacle was exhibited. Leclerc, with his hands tied and back bare, was led through the streets, and the executioners let fall upon his body those blows which he had brought upon himself by attacking the bishop of Rome. An immense crowd followed the procession, the course of which might have been traced by the blood of the martyr. Some uttered cries of rage against the heretic; others, by their silence even, gave him unequivocal marks of their tender compassion; a female with eye and tongue encouraged the poor sufferer. It was his mother. At length, on the third day, after the bloody procession was finished, Leclerc was taken to the ordinary place of execution. The executioner prepared the fire, heated the iron, the impress of which was to be burnt into the evangelist, and approaching him, branded him in the forehead as a heretic. A cry was heard, but it proceeded not from the martyr. His mother, who was present at the frightful spectacle, torn with grief, had a violent struggle within herself. The enthusiasm of faith was struggling in her heart with the love of the mother, and she exclaimed in a voice which made all her adversaries tremble, "Live Jesus Christ and his ministers." Thus this Frenchwoman of the sixteenth century fulfilled the command of the Son of God—"He who loves son more than me is not worthy of me." Such boldness at such a moment deserved exemplary punishment; but the Christian mother had filled the priests and soldiers with amazement. All their fury was restrained by an arm more powerful than their own. The crowd giving way with respect, allowed the mother of the martyr, with lingering pace, to regain her humble dwelling. Even the monks and town-officers stood motionless as she passed. "Not one of her enemies," says Beza, "dared to lay a hand upon her." Leclerc having been released, retired to Rosay in Brie, a small town, six leagues from Meaux, and afterwards repaired to Metz, where we shall again meet with him. The enemy triumphed. "The cordeliers having reconquered the pulpit, scattered about their lies and silly tales as usual." But the poor mechanics of the town, deprived of the hearing of the Word at regular meetings, "began to assemble in secret," says our chronicler, "after the example of the sons of the prophets, in the time of Ahab, and the Christians of the primitive church; and according as opportunity offered, met one day in a house, and another day in some cave, or occasionally, also, in a vineyard or forest. Then he of their number who was best read in the Holy Scriptures, exhorted them. This done, they prayed together with great courage, supporting themselves with the hope that the gospel would be received in France, and that the tyranny of Antichrist would come to an end."3 No power is capable of arresting the truth.

Still one victim was not sufficient. The first victim of persecution was a worker in wool; the second was a gentleman of the court. It was necessary to strike terror into the nobles as well as the people. The doctors of the Sorbonne at Paris were not the persons to allow themselves to be outstripped by the Franciscans of Meaux. Berquin, "the most learned of the nobles," had continued to gain new courage from the Scriptures, and after attacking "the hornets of the Sorbonne" in some

epigrams, had openly accused them of impiety.

Beda and Duchesne, who had not ventured to reply in their usual style to the witty sallies of a gentleman of the king, changed their view of the matter as soon as they discovered that these attacks were backed by serious convictions. Berquin had become a Christian, and his destruction was resolved. Beda and Duchesne, having seized some of his translations, found matter in them sufficient to burn more than one heretic. “He maintains,” said they, “that it is unbecoming to invoke the Virgin in place of the Holy Spirit, and to call her the source of all grace. He attacks the custom of calling her our hope, our life, and says that these titles are applicable only to the Son of God.” There was more than this. Berquin’s study was like a bookseller’s shop, from which corrupting books were circulated all over the kingdom. In particular, the Common Places of Melancthon, written with so much elegance, made a deep impression on the literati of France. The pious gentleman living only amid folio volumes and tracts, had from Christian charity, became a translator, corrector, printer, and bookseller…. It was necessary to arrest this formidable torrent at its very source.

Accordingly one day when Berquin was quietly at his studies in the midst of his beloved books, his house was suddenly surrounded by armed police, who knocked violently at the gate. It was the Sorbonne and its agents, who, fortified with the authority of the Parliament, came to pay him a domiciliary visit. Beda, the formidable syndic, was at their head, and never did inquisitor better fulfil his duty: he made his way with his satellites into the library of Berquin, declared the mission with which he said he was entrusted, and ordering his people to have an eye upon Berquin, commenced his search. Not a book escaped his piercing glance; and by his orders an exact inventory of the whole was taken. Here a treatise of Melancthon, there a writing of Carlstadt! Here heretical books translated from Latin into French by Berquin, there others of his own composition. All the works which Beda seized with the exception of two, were filled with Lutheran errors. He left the house with his booty, more elated than ever general was with the spoils of conquered nations. Berquin saw that a violent storm was about to burst upon his head, but his courage failed not. He despised his adversaries too much to fear them. Meanwhile Beda lost no time. On the 13th May, 1523, the Parliament issued a decree, bearing that all the books seized at the house of Berquin should be submitted to the Theological Faculty. The opinion of the company was not long delayed. On the 25th June they condemned the works to the fire as heretical, with the exception of the two which we have mentioned, and ordered Berquin to abjure his errors. The Parliament sanctioned the decision. The gentleman appeared before this formidable body. He knew that a scaffold was probably behind; but like Luther at Worms he stood firm. In vain did the Parliament order him to recant. Berquin was not one of those who “fall away” after being “made partakers of the Holy Ghost.” “He who is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.” Every fall proves that the conversion was only apparent or partial. The conversion of Berquin was real. He answered firmly to the court before which he appeared. The Parliament, more severe than the Diet of Worms had been, ordered its officers to apprehend the accused and carry him to the Conciergerie. This was on the 1st August, 1523. On the 5th August the Parliament remitted the heretic into the hands of the bishop of Paris, in order that this prelate might take cognisance of the affair, and assisted by doctors and counsellors, pronounce due sentence on the culprit. He was transferred to the prison of the officiality.

Thus Berquin passed from tribunal to tribunal, from prison to prison. Beda, Duchesne, and their company kept hold of their victim: but the court had always a grudge at the Sorbonne, and Francis was more powerful than Beda. There was a feeling of indignation among the nobility. Did these monks and priests forget what the sword of a gentleman was worth? “Of what is he accused?” said they to Francis. “For blaming the custom of invoking the Holy Spirit. But Erasmus and many others also blame this. And for such trifles must an officer of the king be put in prison? The blow is aimed at letters, true religion, the nobility, chivalry, the very crown.” The king was pleased once more to provoke an outcry from all the company. He gave letters of liberation to the council, and on the 8th August an officer presented himself at the prison of the officiality bearing an order from the king to set Berquin at liberty.

It was a question whether the monks would yield. Francis who had foreseen that some difficulty might be made, had said to the officer entrusted with his orders, “If you meet with resistance, I authorise you to break open the door.” These words were clear. The monks and the Sorbonne yielded, swallowing the affront; and Berquin, set at liberty, appeared before the king’s council, and was acquitted. Thus Francis had humbled the church. Berquin imagined that under his reign France might be emancipated from the papacy, and had thoughts of renewing the war. With this view he entered into correspondence with Erasmus, who immediately recognised in him a good man.2 But “remember,” said the philosopher, who was always timid and temporising, “that it is unnecessary to provoke the hornets; peacefully enjoy your studies. Above all, do not mix me up with your affair; that would not be useful either to me or to you.”4 This refusal did not discourage Berquin: if the most powerful genius of the age withdraws, he will trust in God, who never fails. The work of God is to be done with men or without them. “Berquin,” says Erasmus himself, “was somewhat like the palm tree: he stood up and showed a bold front to whosoever sought to terrify him.” This was not the case with all who had received the gospel doctrine. Martial Mazurier had been one of the most zealous preachers. He was charged with having preached very erroneous doctrines, and even with having committed certain acts of violence, while he was at Meaux.” “This Martial Mazurier, being at Meaux,” says a manuscript of this town, which we have already quoted, “going to the church of the reverend fathers, the Cordeliers, and seeing the statue of St. Francis standing at the outside of the door of the convent, where at present a St. Roche is placed, threw it down and broke it.” Mazurier was seized, and sent to prison,7 when he suddenly fell into profound reveries, and deep anguish. It was the morality rather than the doctrine of the gospel, that had drawn him into the ranks of the Reformers, and morality left him without strength. Terrified at the scaffold which awaited him, thinking that in France the victory would be decidedly in favour of the Romish party, he easily convinced himself that he should gain more influence and honour by returning to the papacy. He therefore recanted, and caused doctrines to be preached in his parish the opposite of those which he was accused of having taught: at a later period connecting himself with the most fanatical doctors, and in particular with the celebrated Ignatius Loyola, he showed himself one of the most ardent supporters of the papal cause. From the days of the Emperor Julian, apostates, after their faithlessness, have always proved the most pitiless enemies of the doctrines which they had for a time professed.

Mazurier soon found an opportunity of exercising his zeal. Young James Pavanne had also been cast into prison. Martial hoped that by causing his fall he might hide his own. The youth, amiable manners, learning, and integrity of Pavanne excited a strong interest in his favour, and Mazurier

imagined that he would himself be less guilty if he could drag Master James into similar guilt. He repaired to his dungeon, and began his manœuvres. He pretended to have gone farther than he in the knowledge of the truth. “You err, James,” he often repeated to him, “you have not seen the bottom of the sea: you know only the surface of the waves and billows.” Sophisms, promises, threats, nothing was spared. The unhappy youth seduced, agitated, shaken, at last yielded to these perfidious attacks, and publicly recanted his pretended errors the day after Christmas 1524. But from that time a spirit of despondency and grief from the Almighty was upon Pavanne. His sighs were incessant. “Ah,” repeated he, “nothing remains to me but a life of bitterness.” Sad reward of faithlessness!

There were however, among them who received the word of God in France, men of a more intrepid spirit than Pavanne and Mazurier. Towards the end of 1523, Leclerc had quitted Metz and gone into Lorraine, where, says Theodore Beza, he had followed the example of St. Paul at Corinth, who, while making tents, persuaded both Jews and Greeks. Leclerc, while following his trade of wool-carder, taught the people of his own class. Several among them had been truly converted. Thus this humble artisan laid the foundations of a church which afterwards became celebrated.

Leclerc was not alone at Metz. Among the ecclesiastics of the town was an Augustin monk of Tournay, a doctor of theology, named John Châtelain, who had been brought to the knowledge of God, by his intercourse with the Augustins of Antwerp. Châtelain had gained the respect of the people by the austerity of his manners,5 and the doctrine of Christ preached by him in his chasuble and stole, had appeared to those inhabitants of Metz less strange, than when it came to them from the poor artisan who quitted the comb with which he was carding wool, to explain a translation of the gospel in French.

Evangelical light, thanks to the zeal of these two men, was beginning to be diffused throughout the town. A very devout female of the name of Toussaint, of burgher parentage, had a son called Peter, to whom, when amusing himself beside her, she often addressed grave words. Every where, at this time, even in the houses of the citizens, something extraordinary was expected. One day the child, occupying himself with the diversions of his age, was riding through his mother’s room on a long staff. She was conversing with some friends on religious matters, and said to them with emotion, “Antichrist will soon come in great power, and destroy those who shall have been converted by the preaching of Elias.” These words, which were often repeated, struck the child, who called them to mind at a later period. Peter Toussaint was full grown at the time when the doctor of theology and the wool-carder were preaching the gospel at Metz. His parents and friends, astonished at his youthful genius, hoped to see him one day occupying a distinguished place in the Church. One of his uncles, his father’s brother, was primicier of Metz. This was the first dignity in the chapter.2 Cardinal John of Lorrain, son of Duke René, who had a large establishment, had a great love for the uncle and nephew. The latter, notwithstanding of his youth, had just obtained a canonicate, when he began to give attention to the gospel. Might it not be that the preaching of Châtelain and Leclerc was that of Elias? Already, indeed, Antichrist was everywhere arming against it. But what then? “Let us,” said he, “lift our heads toward the Lord, who will come and will not tarry.” The gospel doctrine made its way into the first families of Metz. A person of considerable rank, the Chevalier d’ Esch, an intimate friend of the primicier, had just been converted. The friends of the gospel were delighted. “The knight, our good master, …”

repeated Peter; “if however,” added he, with a noble candour, “it is lawful to have a master on earth.”5

Thus Metz was on the eve of becoming a focus of light when the imprudent zeal of Leclerc suddenly arrested its slow but sure progress, and raised a storm which well nigh ruined this rising Church. The great body of the lower classes continued to practise their old superstitions, and Leclerc’s heart was grieved when he saw the city given up to idolatry. A great festival was at hand. About a league from the town was a chapel containing images of the virgin, and the most celebrated saints of the country, and to whom on a certain day all the inhabitants of Metz were accustomed to make a pilgrimage in order to worship the images, and obtain the pardon of their sins. The eve of the festival having arrived, the pious and intrepid soul of Leclerc was violently agitated. Has not God said, “Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works; but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images”? Leclerc thought that this command of God was addressed to him, and, without consulting either Chatelain or Esch, or any of those who he might have suspected would oppose his scheme, in the evening, at nightfall, he went out of the town, and repaired to the chapel. There, seated in solemn silence beside these statues, he spent some time in meditation. He might indeed flee away; but … to-morrow, within a few hours, a whole city, bound to worship God only, would be prostrated before these blocks of wood and stone. A struggle similar to that which so often took place in the breasts of the primitive Christians, now took place in the soul of the wool-carder. What matters it that these images are those of male and female saints, and not those of the gods and goddesses of Paganism? Does not the worship which the people pay to these images belong to God only? Like Polyeuctes beside the idols of the temple, his heart shudden and his courage is inflamed:

Ne perdons plus de tems, le sacrifice est prêt, Allons-y du vrai Dieu soutenir l’intérêt, Allons fouler aux pieds ce fondre ridicule, Dont arme un bois pourri ce peuple trop crédule;

Allons en eclairer l’avenglement fatal, Allons briser ces dieux de pierre et dè métal;

Abandannons nos jours à cette ardeur céleste, Faisons triompher Dieu … qu’il dispose du reste. In fact, Leclerc stands up, approaches the images, lifts them, breaks them, and indignantly scatters the fragments before the altar. He doubted not that it was the Spirit of the Lord which inspired him to do so, and Beza is of the same opinion. After this Leclerc returned to Metz, which he re-entered at day-break, being perceived by some persons at the moment when he was going through the gate of the town.4

Meanwhile, every thing was in motion in the ancient city. The bells were ringing, the trades assembled, and the whole town, headed by the canons, the priests, and the monks, went out in procession, repeating prayers and singing hymns to the saints whom they were going to worship, with crosses and banners in full display, while instruments of music responded to the chant of the faithful. At length, after walking more than an hour, the procession reached the place of pilgrimage. But what was the astonishment of the priests when presenting themselves, with the censer in their hand, they see the images which they came to worship mutilated, and their remains strewing the ground. They start back in dismay, and publicly announce the act of sacrilege. All at once the hymns cease, the instruments are mute, the colours are lowered, and the whole multitude are indescribably agitated. The canons, curates, and monks, strive to inflame the minds of the people, urging them to make a search for the culprit, and demand his death. The cry is heard from all

sides, “Death, death to the perpetrator of the sacrilege!” They return to Metz precipitately and without order.

Leclerc was known to all: he had repeatedly called images idols. Besides, had he not been seen at day-break on his way back from the chapel? Being apprehended, he immediately confessed the crime, and urged the people to worship God only. But this language increased the fury of the multitude, who would on the instant have dragged him to death. When taken before the judges, he boldly declared that Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, ought alone to be worshipped. He was condemned to be burnt alive, and was led off to the place of execution.

Here a dreadful scene awaited him. The cruelty of his persecutors prepared every thing that could add to the horrors of his execution. Near the scaffold they were heating pincers to minister to their rage. Leclerc, calm and firm, stood unmoved amid the savage yells of the monks and people. They began by cutting off his right thumb; then, seizing the hot pincers, they pulled off his nose; then, still using the same instrument, they laid hold of both his arms, and, after breaking them in several places, seized him by the breast. While the cruelty of his enemies was thus venting itself upon his body, his mind was at peace.3 Solemnly and with loud voice, he repeated the words of David, “Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men’s hand. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not. They have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not. They have hands, but they handle not, neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. O Israel, trust thou in the Lord, he is their help and their shield.” His enemies, on seeing such strength of soul, were amazed, while believers felt strengthened. The people who had manifested so much rage, were astonished and moved.2 After these tortures, Leclerc was burnt at a slow fire, as his sentence bore. Such was the death of the first martyr for the gospel in France. But the priests of Metz were not satisfied. In vain had they tried to shake Chatelain. “He is deaf like the adder,” they said, “and refuses to hear the truth.” He was seized by the people of the Cardinal of Lorraine, and carried to the castle of Nommeny.

There he was degraded by the officials of the bishop, who took off his vestments, and scratched his finger with a bit of glass, saying, “By this scratching we deprive you of the power of sacrificing, consecrating, and blessing, which you received by the laying on of hands.” Afterwards, putting a layman’s dress upon him, they remitted him to the secular power, which condemned him to be burnt alive. The pile was soon prepared, and the minister of Christ was consumed by the flames. “Lutheranism, nevertheless, spreads in all the district of Metz,” say the authors of the History of the Gallican church, while approving greatly of these severities. From the moment the storm had burst upon the Church of Metz, there was great distress in the house of Toussaint. His uncle, the primicier, without taking any active part in the persecutions of Leclerc and Chatelain, shuddered when the thought of his nephew belonging to these people. The alarm of his mother was greater still. There was not a moment to be lost; all who had lent an ear to the gospel were threatened in their liberty and their life. The blood the inquisitors had shed, only increased their thirst, and new scaffolds were about to be erected. Peter Toussaint, the Chevalier d’ Esch, and several others, quitted Metz in all haste, and took refuge in Basle.

CHAP. IX

Farel and his brothers—Farel driven from Gap—He preaches in the fields—Chevalier Anemond of Coct—The Minorite—Anemond quits France—Luther to the Duke of Savoy—Farel quits France.

Thus the storm of persecution raged at Meaux and at Metz. The north of France repudiated the God, and for a time the gospel withdrew. But the Reformation only changed its place. The south eastern provinces became the theatre of it.

Farel, who had taken refuge at the foot of the Alps, there displayed great activity. To him it was a small matter to enjoy domestic happiness in the bosom of his family. The rumour of what had taken place at Meaux and at Paris, had inspired his brothers with a kind of terror; but an unknown power attracted them to the new and unknown truths with which William entertained them. With the impetuosity of his zeal he urged them to be converted to the gospel, and David, Walter, and Claude, were at length gained to the God whom their brother preached. They did not at the first moment abandon the worship of their ancestors; but when persecution arose they boldly sacrificed friends, goods, and country for liberty to worship Jesus Christ.2 The brothers of Luther and Zuinglius appear not to have been as decidedly converted to the gospel. The French reformation had from the beginning a more friendly and domestic character.

Farel did not confine himself to his brothers; he announced the truth to his relatives and friends at Gap, and in its neighbourhood. It would even appear, if we can credit a manuscript, that, availing himself of the friendship of certain ecclesiastics, he preached the gospel in several churches; but other authorities assure us that at this time he did not mount the pulpit. Be this as it may, the doctrine which he professed made a great noise. The multitude and the clergy wished to put him to silence. “A new and strange heresy!” said they. “Can it be that all pious observances are vain? He is neither monk nor priest. He has no right to act the preacher.”4

All the civil and ecclesiastical powers of Gap were soon united against Farel. He was evidently an agent of the sect which was everywhere spoken against. “Let us,” it was said, “cast far from us this firebrand of discord.” Farel was summoned to appear, treated harshly, and violently banished from the town.

He did not, however, abandon his native district. Did not the fields, the villages, and the banks of the Durance, the Guisanne, and the Isere contain many souls which had need of the gospel? And if he there ran some risk of danger, did not those forests, and caves, and steep rocks which he had so often visited in his youth, offer him an asylum? He began to go up and down the country, preaching in houses and amid lonely pastures, taking shelter in woods and on the brinks of torrents. It was a school in which God was training him for other labours. “Crosses, persecutions, and the machinations of Satan, of which I had been forewarned, have not been wanting,” said he, “they are far too strong for me to withstand them, but God is my father; he has furnished, and will furnish, me with all the strength I require.3 A great number of the inhabitants of these districts received the truth from his mouth. Thus the persecution which had driven Farel from Paris and from Meaux, spread the Reformation throughout the provinces of the Saône, the Rhone, and the Alps. In all ages this scripture is fulfilled, “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.”

Among the French who were then gained to the gospel, was a gentleman of Dauphiny, Chevalier Anemond of Coct, a younger son of auditor de Coct, lord of Chastelard. Quick, ardent, easily

moved, pious hearted, an enemy of relics, processions, and the clergy, Anemond received the evangelical doctrine with great readiness, and soon was entirely devoted to it. He could not endure forms in religion, and would willingly have abolished all the ceremonies of the church. To him the religion of the heart, internal adoration, alone was true. “Never,” said he, “has my spirit found any rest in externals. A summary of Christianity is contained in these words, “John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit: there must be a new creature.”

Coct, who had all the vivacity of a Frenchman, spoke and wrote sometimes in Latin, and sometimes in French. He read and quoted the Donat, Thomas Aquinas, Juvenal, and the Bible. He spoke in short sentences, and passed abruptly from one idea to another. Always in motion, wherever a door appeared open to the gospel, or a celebrated doctor was to be heard, there he was to be found. By his warm-heartedness he gained the love of all with whom he was brought into connection. “He is a man of distinguished truth and learning,” said Zuinglius, at a later period, “but he is still more distinguished for his piety and affability.” Anemond is a kind of type of many Frenchmen of the Reformation. Vivacity, simplicity, zeal amounting to imprudence, such were some of the characteristics of his countrymen who embraced the gospel. In the other extreme of the French character we find the grave figure of Calvin, who forms a striking contrast to the fickleness of Coct. Calvin and Anemond are the two opposite poles, between which all the religious world in France vibrates. No sooner had Anemond been instructed by Farel in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, than he himself sought to gain souls to this doctrine of spirit and life. His father was dead: his elder brother, of a harsh and haughty temper, repulsed him with disdain. Laurence the youngest of the family, and who had a great affection for him, seemed only, partially, to comprehend him. Anemond seeing himself repulsed by his own family, turned his activity elsewhere.

Till now the revival of Dauphiny had been confined to laymen. Farel, Anemond, and their friends, longed to see a priest at the head of the movement. At Grenoble there was a curate, a minorite, named Peter de Sebville, an eloquent preacher, and an honest good hearted man, who consulted not with flesh and blood, and whom God was gradually drawing to himself. Sebville soon perceived that there was no infallible teacher but the word of God, and abandoning doctrines supported only by human testimony resolved in spirit to preach the word “clearly, purely, holily.”4 These three words express the whole Reformation. Coct and Farel were delighted when they heard this new preacher of grace raise his eloquent voice in their province, and they thought that their presence would thenceforth be less necessary. The more the revival extended, the more violent the opposition became. Anemond, desirous to know Luther and Zuinglius and the countries in which the Reformation had commenced, and indignant at seeing the truth repulsed by his fellow-citizens, resolved to bid adieu to his country and his family. Having made a will disposing of his property, (which was then in possession of his eldest brother, lord of Chatelard,) in favour of his brother Laurence, he quitted Dauphiny and France, and hastening with his usual impetuosity from the south over countries then difficult to pass, he crossed Switzerland, and scarcely stopping at Basle, arrived at Wittemberg beside Luther. This was shortly after the second Diet of Nuremberg. The French gentleman accosted the Saxon doctor with his ordinary vivacity. He spoke enthusiastically of the gospel, and with earnestness explained the plans which he had formed for the propagation of the truth. Saxon gravity smiled at the southern imagination of the knight, and Luther, though he had some prejudices against the French character, was won and carried away

by Anemond. He was moved to think how this gentleman had come for the gospel from France to Wittemberg.2 “Or a surety,” said the Reformer to his friends, “this French knight is an excellent, learned, and pious man.” The young gentleman produced the same impression on Zuinglius and Luther.

Anemond seeing what Luther and Zunglius had done, thought that if they would take possession of France and Saxony, nothing could resist them, and hence when he could not persuade them to go thither, he urged them to consent at least to write. In particular, he begged Luther to address a letter to Duke Charles of Savoy, brother of Louisa and Philibert, uncle of Francis I and Margaret. “This prince,” said he to the doctor, “takes a great interest in piety and true religion, and likes to talk of the Reformation with some persons of his court. He is fitted to comprehend you, for his motto is ‘Nihil deest timentibus Deum.’ This motto is also yours. Struck at alternately by the Empire and by France; humbled, grieved, always in danger, his heart is in want of God and his grace. All he requires is a powerful impulse. Were he gained to the gospel, he would have an immense influence over Switzerland, Savoy, and France. Do write him.”

Luther was wholly German, and would have found himself ill at ease out of Germany. Still animated by a truly catholic spirit, he gave his hand as soon as he saw brethren—wherever there was a word to be delivered, he took care to have it heard. Occasionally he wrote on the same day to the extremities of Europe, the Low Countries, Savoy, and Livonia.

“Certainly,” replied he to Anemond’s request, “the love of the gospel in a prince is a rare gift, and an inestimable jewel.” He addressed a letter to the duke, which was probably carried by Anemond as far as Switzerland.

“Will your highness pardon me,” wrote Luther, “if I, a humble and despised individual, dare to address you, or rather will your Highness be pleased to impute this boldness to the glory of the gospel? For I cannot see this splendid luminary rise and shine in any quarter, without exulting with joy…. My desire is, that my Lord Jesus may win many souls by the example of your most serene Highness. Wherefore I wish to tell you of our doctrine…. We believe that the commencement of salvation, and the sum of Christianity, is faith in Christ, who by his blood alone, and not by our works, has expiated sin, and destroyed the dominion of death. We believe that this faith is a gift of God, and that it is created by the Holy Spirit in our hearts, and not found by our own exertion. For faith is a living thing, which begets man spiritually, and makes him a new creature.”

Luther next proceeded to the consequences of faith, and showed how we cannot possess it unless the scaffolding of false doctrines and human works which the church had so laboriously reared, were forthwith thrown down. “If grace,” said he, “is gained by the blood of Christ, it is not by our own works. Wherefore all works and cloisters are useless, and these institutions must be abolished as being against the blood of Jesus Christ, and leading men to confide in their own works. Incorporated with Jesus Christ, it now only remains for us to do that which is good, because having become good trees, we ought to testify it by good fruits.

“Gracious Lord and Prince,” says Luther in concluding, “may your Highness, who has begun so well, continue to spread this doctrine not by the power of the sword, which would do harm to the gospel, but by calling into your states teachers who preach the Word. It is by the breath of his mouth that Jesus will destroy Antichrist, in order that, as Daniel expresses it, he may “be broken

without hand." (Daniel 8:25) Therefore, most serene Prince, may your Highness revive the spark which has begun to burn in you. May a fire come forth from the house of Savoy, as of old from the house of Joseph. May all France be as stubble before the fire: may it burn, and crackle, and purify, so that this illustrious kingdom may bear in truth the name of most Christian kingdom, which till this hour it owes only to the torrents of blood shed in the service of Antichrist!"

Such was Luther's effort to spread the gospel in France. It is not known what effect the letter produced upon the Prince; but it does not appear that he ever showed any desire so detach himself from Rome. In 1522 he prayed Adrian VI to be godfather to his first son, and at a later period the pope promised the second a cardinal's hat. Anemond after attempting to see the court and Elector of Saxony, for which purpose he had received a letter from Luther, returned to Basle more determined than ever to sacrifice his life for the gospel. In his ardour he wished he were able to shake all France. "All that I am," said he, "and all that I shall be; all that I have, and all that I shall have, I wish to devote to the glory of God.2 At Basle Anemond found his countryman Farel. Anemond's letters had produced in him an eager desire to see the Reformers of Switzerland and Germany. Farel moreover required a sphere of activity, in which he could more freely display his powers. He therefore quitted that France which had nothing but scaffolds to give to the preachers of the pure gospel. Taking by roads and concealing himself in the woods, he succeeded, though with difficulty, in escaping the hands of his enemies. He frequently lost his way. "By my powerlessness in these petty things," saith he, "God means to teach me what my powerlessness is in great things." At length in the beginning of 1524, he arrived in Switzerland. It was here he was to spend his life in the service of the gospel, and it was at this time that France began to send into Helvetia those generous evangelists who were to establish the Reformation in Romane Switzerland, and give it a new and powerful impulse throughout the Confederation, and the whole world.

CHAP. X

Catholicity of the Reformation—Friendship of Farel and Œcolampadius—Farel and Erasmus—Altercation—Farel calls for a Discussion—Theses—Scripture and Faith—Discussion. A fine feature in the Reformation is its catholicity. Germans come into Switzerland—Frenchmen go into Germany—at a later period Englishmen and Scotchmen repair to the Continent, and teachers from the Continent to Great Britain. The Reformation of the different countries began almost independently of each other; but no sooner do they begin than they shake hands. There is but one faith, one spirit, one Lord. I think it was not well done hitherto to write the history of the Reformation only for one country. The work is one, and Protestant churches, from their origin, form one body, "fitly joined together." At this time a French church, saved from the scaffold, was formed at Basle by several refugees from France and Lorraine. They had spoken about Lefevre, Farel, and the events at Meaux, and hence when Farel arrived in Switzerland he was already known as one of the most devoted champions of the gospel.

He was immediately introduced to Œcolampadius, who had been for some time returned to Basle. Seldom have two more opposite characters met. Œcolampadius, charmed by his mildness, Farel carried away by his impetuosity; but from the first moment these two men felt united for ever. It was the second union of a Luther and a Melancthon. Œcolampadius received Farel into his house, gave him a modest chamber, a frugal table, and introduced him to his friends. The learning, piety,

and courage of the young Frenchman, soon won all hearts. Pellican, Imeli, Wolfhard, and other ministers of Basle, felt strengthened in the faith by his energetic discourses. Œcolampadius was at this time in very low spirits. “Alas!” said he to Zuinglius, “I speak in vain, and see not the least ground for hope. Perhaps I should have had more success among the Turks.”2 … “Ah!” added he with a deep sigh, “I blame nobody but myself.” But the more he saw of Farel, the more his heart revived and the courage which was thus imparted to him became the basis of an imperishable affection. “Oh my dear Farel,” said he to him, “I hope the Lord will make our friendship immortal! and if we cannot be united here below, our joy will only be the greater when we meet beside the Saviour in heaven.” Pious and touching thoughts! The arrival of Farel was evidently assistance sent to Switzerland from above. But while this Frenchman was delighted with Œcolampadius, he recoiled coldly, and with a noble disdain, from a man at whose feet all the nations of Christendom did homage. The prince of scholars—he from whom a word and a look were objects of ambition—the master of the age, Erasmus, was disregarded by Farel. The young man from Dauphiny had refused to go and do homage to the old sage of Rotterdam, because he despised the men who are never more than half-way on the side of truth, and who, while aware of the dangers of error, are full of deference for those who propagate it. Thus in Farel was seen that decision which became one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Reformation in France and French Switzerland, and which has sometimes been stigmatised as rudeness, exclusiveness, intolerance. A discussion had taken place in regard to the commentaries of Lefevre, between the two greatest doctors of the period, and there never was a party where those present did not either take part with Erasmus against Lefevre, or for Lefevre against Erasmus. Farel had not hesitated to take part with his master. But what had especially excited his indignation was the cowardice of the philosopher of Rotterdam in regard to evangelical Christians. Erasmus shut his door against them. Very well. Farel won’t knock at it. This cost him but a small sacrifice, convinced, as he was, that Erasmus wanted the basis of all true theology, piety of heart. “The wife of Frobenius,” he said, “has more theology than he.” Indignant at Erasmus for having written to the pope, stating how he ought to proceed in order “to extinguish the fire raised by Luther,” he declared loudly that Erasmus wished to stifle the gospel.2

Young Farel’s independence irritated the illustrious scholar. Princes, kings, doctors, bishops, popes, reformers, priests, men of the world, all considered themselves happy in coming to pay him their tribute of admiration. Luther himself had showed some deference for his person, and this exiled stranger from Dauphiny presumed to brave his power. This insolent freedom gave more chagrin to Erasmus than the homage of the whole world gave him joy. Accordingly he omitted no opportunity of discharging his bad humour at Farel: besides, in attacking so decided a heretic, he washed himself, in the eyes of the Roman Catholics, of the suspicion of hesesy. “Never,” said he, “have I seen a more false, virulent, and seditious man. His heart is full of vanity, his tongue full of malice.”4 But the wrath of Erasmus did not stop at Farel: it broke out against all the French refugees at Basle whose frankness and decision had annoyed him. They showed that they had little respect of persons. When the truth was not frankly professed, they cared little for the man, how great soever his genius might be. They perhaps wanted somewhat of the mild temper of the gospel, but their fidelity had in it something of the strength of the old prophets. We love to meet with men who refuse to bend to what the world worships. Erasmus, astonished at this proud disdain, complained to everybody. Writing to Melancthon he says, “What! shall we reject pontiffs, and bishops, only to have more cruel tyrants, scabbed madmen, for such France has sent us?”

“Some Frenchmen,” wrote he to the pope’s secretary in presenting him with his book on Free Will, “are still madder than the Germans themselves. They have always in their months these five words—Gospel, Word of God, Faith, Christ, Holy Spirit—and yet I doubt not it is the spirit of Satan that impels them.” Instead of Farellus he often wrote Fallicus, thus designating one of the frankest men of his age by the epithet of cheat or deceiver. The spirit and wrath of Erasmus were at their height, when he was told that Farel had called him a Balaam. Farel thought that Erasmus, like that prophet, allowed himself, perhaps without knowing it, to be seduced by presents to speak against the people of God. The learned Dutchman, unable to contain himself, resolved to call the audacious Frenchman to account: and one day when Farel was talking on Christian doctrine with several friends, Erasmus, bluntly interrupting him, said, “Why do you call me Balaam.” Farel, astonished at first at the bluntness of the question, soon recovered himself, and replied that it was not he who had so called him. Pressed to name the culprit, he mentioned Du Blet of Lyons, like himself a refugee at Basle.3 “It may be he is the person who said it,” replied Erasmus, “but it was you who taught him to say it.” Then ashamed at having lost his temper, he quickly turned the conversation. “Why,” said he to Farel, “do you maintain that the saints are not to be invoked? Is it because the Holy Scriptures do not command it?” “Yes,” said the Frenchman. “Very well,” replied the scholar, “I challenge you to prove by Scripture that it is necessary to pray to the Holy Spirit.” Farel made this simple and true reply, “If he is God he must be invoked.” “I left off the discussion,” says Erasmus, “for it was drawing to night.”5 Thenceforth every time that the name of Farel came under his pen, it was to reproach him as a hateful being, to be shunned at all hazards. The letters of the Reformer, on the contrary, are full of moderation in regard to Erasmus. Even in the hottest temperament, the gospel is milder than philosophy. At Basle, the Reformed doctrine had already many friends in the Council and among the people, but the professors of the University combated it with all their might. Œcolampadius and Stor, pastor of Liestal, had maintained theses against them. Farel thought it his duty in Switzerland also to make a public profession of the great principle of the Evangelical school of Paris and Meaux—the sufficiency of the Word of God. He asked permission of the University to maintain theses, “rather,” he added modestly, “that I may be corrected if I am wrong, than to teach others.” The University refused.

Farel then addressed the Council, and the Council announced that a Christian man named William Farel, having by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit prepared certain articles conformable to the gospel, permission was given him to maintain them in Latin. The University prohibited every priest and student from appearing at this discussion, but the Council issued a contrary order. The following are some of the thirteen propositions which Farel posted up:—

“Christ has given us the most perfect rule of life: no man is entitled to take from it or to add to it.

“To be guided by other precepts than those of Christ, leads directly to impiety.

“The true ministry of priests is to devote themselves to the administration of the Word: they have no higher office.

“To deprive the glad tidings of Christ of their certainty, is to destroy them.

“He who hopes to be justified by his own power and his own merits, erects himself into a God.

“Jesus Christ, whom all things obey, is our polar star, and the sole star which we ought to follow.”

Thus this “Frenchman” presented himself at Basle. A mountaineer of Dauphiny, brought up in Paris at the feet of Lefevre, came to this celebrated University of Switzerland, under the eye of Erasmus, and boldly expounded the great principles of the Reformation. Two ideas were contained in Farel’s theses. The one was the duty of returning to the Holy Scriptures; the other the duty of returning to faith; two things which the papacy, in the famous bull of Unigenitus, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, has decidedly condemned as heretical and impious, and which, closely connected with each other, in fact overturn the system of the papacy. If faith in Christ is the beginning and end of Christianity, it is to the word of Christ we must attach ourselves, and not to that of the Church. More than this: if faith unites souls, where is the necessity for an external bond of union? Do crosses, bulls, and tiaras constitute this sacred unity? Faith unites in a spiritual and true unity all those in whose hearts it fixes its abode. Thus vanished at one blow the triple delusion of meritorious works, human traditions, and a spurious unity. This is the whole of Roman Catholicism. The discussion commenced in Latin. Farel and Œcolampadius explained and proved their articles, repeatedly challenging their opponents to reply, but none of them appeared. The sophists (so Œcolampadius styles them) made a great bluster, but hidden in their obscure retreats. Accordingly the people began to despise the cowardice of the priests, and to detest their tyranny.2

Thus Farel obtained a place among the defenders of the Reformation. People were delighted to see a Frenchman combining so much learning and piety. The greatest triumphs were anticipated. “He is strong enough by himself alone,” it was said, “to destroy all the Sorbonne.” His candour, sincerity, and frankness, gained all hearts.4 But in the midst of his activity, he forgot not that it was in his own soul his mission behoved to commence. The mild Œcolampadius, and the ardent Farel, entered into a, paction in virtue of which they bound themselves to exercise humility and meekness in their ordinary conversation. These intrepid men knew how to train themselves for peace even on the very battle field. The impetuosity of a Luther and a Farel were however necessary virtues. Some effort must be made, when the end in view is to displease the world, and renovate the Church. The men of our day too often forget a truth which the meekest men of that day recognised. “Some,” said Œcolampadius to Luther in introducing Farel to him, “some could wish that this zeal against the enemies of the truth were more moderate; but I cannot help seeing in this very zeal an admirable virtue, which, if seasonably displayed, is no less necessary than gentleness.” Posterity has-confirmed the judgment of Œcolampadius. In the month of May, 1524, Farel, with some friends from Lyons, visited Schaffhausen, Zurich, and Constance. Zuinglius and Myconius gave a glad welcome to this exile of France. Farel remembered it all his days. On his return to Basle he found Erasmus and his other enemies at work, and received orders to quit the town. In vain did his friends loudly testify their disapprobation of such an abuse of power. He behoved to quit the soil of Switzerland, which was hereafter doomed to great disasters. “Such,” said Œcolampadius, “is the way in which hospitality is understood by us, true sons of Sodom.”

Farel, while at Basle, had continued upon intimate terms with Chevalier d′Esch, who resolved to accompany him. They accordingly set out furnished with letters to Capito and Luther, to whom the doctor of Basle recommended Farel as “the William who had laboured so much in the work of God.” At Strasburg, Farel formed an intimate friendship with Capito, Bucer, and Hedio, but he appears not to have gone as far as Wittemberg.

CHAP. XI

New Campaign—Calling of Farel to the Ministry—An advanced post—Lyons an Evangelical Focus—Sebville at Grenoble—Conventicles—Preaching at Lyons—Maigret in Prison—Margaret intimidated.

God usually removes his servants from the field of battle to bring them back stronger and better armed. Farel and his friends in Meaux, Lyons, and Dauphiny, driven from France by persecution, had become imbued, in France and Germany, with the spirit of the oldest Reformers: and now like an army at first scattered by the enemy, but instantly rallied, they were about to turn round and march forward in the name of the Lord. These friends of the gospel did not only reappear on the frontiers; in France itself they resumed courage, and prepared to renew the attack. The trumpets now sounded the reveillé: the soldiers buckled on their armour, and formed themselves in bands to multiply their blows: the leaders were preparing for the onset—the watchword "Jesus, his word and his grace"—more powerful than the flourish of martial music at the moment of battle, filled men's hearts with equal enthusiasm. All was ready in France for a second campaign, which was to be signalised by new victories, and by new and greater reverses.

Montbeliard at this time demanded a labourer. Duke Ulric of Wittemberg, young, violent, and cruel, dispossessed of his estates in 1519, by the Suabian league, had taken refuge in this county, the only one of his dominions remaining to him. He saw the Reformers in Switzerland: his misfortunes proved salutary, and he felt a relish for the gospel. Œcolampadius informed Farel that a door was opened in Montbeliard, and Farel hastened secretly to Basle.

Farel had not regularly entered the ministry, but at this period we find in him all that was necessary to constitute a minister of the Lord. He did not throw himself into the service of the church thoughtlessly and of his own accord. "Looking at my littleness," he says, "I should not have dared to preach, waiting until my Lord should send a fitter person. But God gave me a triple call. He was no sooner arrived at Basle than Œcolampadius, touched with the wants of France, besought him to devote himself to it. "See," said he to him, "how little Jesus Christ is known by all who speak the French language. Will ye not give them some instruction in their mother tongue, that they may the better understand the Holy Scriptures?"2 At the same time he received a call from the people of Montbeliard, and the prince consented. Was not this triple call from God?…. "I did not think," says he, "it could be lawful for me to resist. According to God I obey."4 Concealed in the house of Œcolampadius, struggling with the responsibility which was offered to him, yet obliged to yield to the clear manifestation of the will of God, Farel accepted the charge, and Œcolampadius commended him to it, calling on the name of the Lord, and giving his friend counsels full of wisdom. "The more you are inclined to violence," said he to him, "the more ought you to exercise yourself in gentleness—temper your lion courage with dove-like gentleness."6 Farel answered this appeal with all his soul.

Thus Farel, of old an ardent follower of the ancient church, was going to become a servant of God in the new Church. If Rome demands, to the validity of an ordination, the laying on of the hands of a bishop descended by uninterrupted succession from the apostles, it is merely because she places human tradition above the word of God. In every church where the authority of the Word is not absolute, it is necessary to have recourse to another authority. And then, what more natural than to look to the most venerated ministers of God, for what they know not how to find in God himself? If they speak not in the name of Jesus Christ, is it not something at least to speak in the

name of St. John and St. Paul? He who speaks in the name of antiquity, is stronger than the rationalist who speaks only in his own name. But the Christian minister has a still higher authority: he preaches not because he descends from St. Chrysostom and St. Peter, but because the word which he announces descends from God himself. The idea of succession, how respectable soever it may appear, is only a human system substituted for the system of God. In the ordination of Farel there was no human succession. Nay more, there was not in it a thing which is necessary in the Lord's flocks, among whom everything must be done in order, God being not a God of confusion. He had no ordination by the Church. But extraordinary times justify extraordinary things. At this memorable period God himself interposed. By marvellous dispensations he consecrated those whom he called to the renovation of the world, and this consecration is well worth that of the Church. There was in Farel's ordination the infallible word of God given to a man of God to carry it to the world—the call of God and the people, and the ordination of the heart. Perhaps there is not a minister of Rome or Geneva who has been more legitimately ordained to the holy ministry. Farel set out for Montbeliard accompanied by D′Esch.

Farel was thus placed as an advanced post. Behind him were Basle and Strasburg, to support him by their counsels and printing presses. Before him stretched the provinces of Franche-Comté, Burgundy, Lorraine, Lyonnais, and the rest of France, where men of God were beginning to struggle against error in the midst of profound darkness. He immediately began to preach Christ, and to entreat the faithful not to allow themselves to be turned from the Holy Scriptures by threats or guile. Farel was at Montbeliard like a general on a height, with a piercing eye taking in the whole field of battle, urging those who are actually engaged, rallying those whom the impetuosity of the attack has thrown into disorder, and by his own courage inflaming those who remained behind. Erasmus immediately wrote to his Roman Catholic friends that a Frenchman escaped from France was making a great disturbance in those regions.2

Farel's lessons were not in vain. One of his countrymen writing to him says, "Everywhere we see men springing up and spending their labour and their whole life in doing what they can to extend the gospel of Jesus Christ." The friends of the gospel blessed the Lord that the Sacred Word was daily shining throughout Gaul with a brighter lustre.4 The enemy was alarmed. "The faction," wrote Erasmus to the bishop of Rochester, "is every day extending more and more, being propagated in Savoy, Lorraine, and France." For some time Lyons seemed to be the centre of the evangelical movement within the kingdom, as Basle was beginning to be out of it. Francis I, going into the South on a campaign against Charles V, had arrived there with his mother, his sister, and his court Margaret had with her several individuals devoted to the gospel.

"All others she left behind," says a letter of this period. While Francis I sent through Lyons 6000 troops, and 1500 lances of French nobility, to join 14,000 Swiss, in order to repel the invasion of Provence by the imperialists—while this great city resounded with the noise of arms, the trampling of horses, and the sound of trumpets, the friends of the gospel were marching to more peaceful conquests. They wished to attempt at Lyons what they had been unable to accomplish at Paris. It might be that away from the Sorbonne and the Parliament, the word of God would have greater freedom. It might be that the second city of the kingdom was destined to become, with regard to the gospel, the first. Was it not here that, nearly four centuries before, worthy Peter Waldo began to spread the Divine word? He had at that time shaken France. Now that God had fully prepared the emancipation of his church, might not larger and more decisive success be anticipated?

Accordingly the men of Lyons, though it is true they were not in general, as in the twelfth century, the “poor,” began boldly to wield “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

Among the persons about Margaret was her almoner, Michel d′Arande. The Duchess caused the gospel to be publicly preached in Lyons. Master Michel preached it loudly and purely to a large audience, attracted partly by the interest which the glad tidings excited wherever they are published, and partly also by the respect in which the preaching and the preacher were held by the beloved sister of the king.

Anthony Papillon, a man of very cultivated mind, an elegant scholar, a friend of Erasmus, and “the first in France well-learned in the gospel,” also accompanied the princess. He had at Margaret’s request translated Luther’s work on monastic vows, “which brought him into much trouble with those Parisian vermin,” says Sebville.4 But Margaret had protected this learned man when attacked by the Sorbonne, and had procured him the office of First Master of Requests to the Dauphin, with a place in the Great Council. He aided the gospel not less by his devotedness than by his prudence. A merchant named Vaugris, and especially a gentleman named Anthony Du Blet, a friend of Farel, were at the head of the Reformation in Lyons. The latter, possessed of great activity, served as a link to connect the Christians scattered over those districts and placed them in communication with Basle. While the warriors of Francis I only passed through Lyons, the spiritual soldiers of Jesus Christ stopped there with Margaret. Allowing the former to carry war into Provence and the plains of Italy, they began in Lyons itself to fight the battle of the gospel. But they did not confine themselves to Lyons. They looked all around them. The campaign commenced in several quarters at once. The Christians of Lyons, by their words and their labours, encouraged all who confessed Christ in the surrounding provinces. They did more. They sent and preached it where it was not yet known. The new doctrine ascended the Saône, and an evangelist trod the rough and narrow streets of Maçon. Michel d′Arande himself, almoner to the king’s sister, went thither in 1524, and, by the aid of Margaret’s name, obtained liberty to preach in this town, which, at a later period, was to be full of blood, and whose leaps were to pass into a by-word.

After climbing in the direction of the Rhone, the Christians of Lyons, ever on the out-look, climbed in the direction of the Alps. At Lyons there was a Dominican named Maigret, who had been obliged to quit Danphiny where he had preached the new doctrine with decision. He urgently asked that some one should go and encourage his brethren of Grenoble and Gap. Papillon and Du Blet went. A violent storm had just burst on Sebville and his preaching. The Dominicans had moved heaven and earth. Furious at seeing so many evangelists, Farel, Anemond, Maigret, escape them, they would fain have annihilated those within their reach.3 They had accordingly called for the apprehension of Sebville. The friends of the gospel in Grenoble were in dismay. Must Sebville also be taken from them? Margaret interceded with her brother. Several of the most distinguished persons of Grenoble, among others, the King’s advocate, avowed or secret friends of the gospel, exerted themselves in behalf of the evangelical cordelier, and at length their united efforts rescued him from the fury of his enemies. But if Sebville’s life was safe, his mouth was shut. “Be silent,” he was told, “or the scaffold awaits you.” Writing to Anemond de Coct, he says, “Silence is imposed upon me under pain of death.” These menaces of the enemy alarmed even those of whom the best had been hoped. The king’s advocate, and other friends of the gospel, now showed nothing but coldness: several returned to the Romish ritual, pretending to worship God in the secrecy of their heart, and to give the external rites of Catholicism a spiritual

meaning—a sad delusion, which leads from infidelity to infidelity. No hypocrisy can thus be justified. The unbeliever by means of his system of myths and allegories, will preach Christ from the Christian pulpit: and the follower of some abominable superstition among the heathen will be able, with a little intellect, to find in it the symbol of a pure and elevated idea. In religion the first thing is truth. Some of the Christians of Grenoble, among them Amedeus Galbert, and a cousin of Anemond, continued firm in the faith.2 These pious men met in secret with Sebville sometimes at the house of one or other of them, and talked together of the gospel. They repaired to some distant retreat, or went during the night to the house of a brother. They hid themselves to pray to Jesus Christ, as robbers do to commit crimes. More than once the humble assembly was disturbed by false alarms. The enemy connived at their secret conventicles, but they had sworn that the faggot would do justice to whoever should dare to discourse publicly of the word of God.

It was in these circumstances that Messires Du Blet and Papillon arrived at Grenoble. Seeing that Sebville's mouth was shut, they exhorted him to come and preach Christ at Lyons. The Lent of the following year was to present a favourable occasion for preaching it to a numerous crowd. Michael d′Arande, Maigret, and Sebville prepared to fight at the head of the gospel phalanxes. Every preparation was thus made for a brilliant manifestation of the truth in the second city of France. The rumour of this evangelical Lent spread as far as Switzerland. "Sebville is set free, and will preach this Lent, at St. Paul's at Lyons," wrote Anemond to Farel. But a great disaster, carrying affliction into every part of France, prevented this spiritual combat. It is in peace that the gospel makes its conquests. The defeat of Pavia, which took place in the month of February, frustrated this bold plan of the Reformers.

Meanwhile, without waiting for Sebville, Maigret, at Lyons, preached salvation by Christ alone, notwithstanding of the keen opposition of priests and monks. In these discourses there was no longer any question as to the worship of creatures, the saints, the virgin, and the power of the priests. The great mystery of godliness, "God manifest in the flesh," was alone proclaimed. The ancient heresies of the paupers of Lyons, it was said, have reappeared in a worse form than ever. Notwithstanding of this opposition, Maigret continued his ministry. The faith which animated his soul expressed itself in powerful language. It is of the nature of truth to embolden the heart which has received it. However Rome was to prevail at Lyons as at Grenoble. In presence of Margaret, Maigret was arrested, dragged along the streets, and cast into prison. Vaugris, a merchant, who at this time left the town on a journey into Switzerland, spread the news as he passed along. They produced astonishment and despondency. One idea, however, calmed the fears of the Reformed: "Maigret is seized," it was said; "but Madam d' Alençon is there, thank God!" This hope was soon disappointed. The Sorbonne had condemned several of the propositions of this faithful minister. Margaret, whose situation was always becoming more difficult, saw at once an increase in the hardihood of the friends of the Reformation, and in the hatred of its powerful enemies. Francis I began to feel impatient at the zeal of the evangelists. He saw in these fanatics what he deemed it right to suppress. Margaret, thus suspended between her desire of being useful to her brethren, and her inability to save them, sent an intimation to them not to throw themselves into new dangers, seeing that she would write no more to the king in their favour. The friends of the gospel thought that this resolution was not irrevocable, "God give her grace," said they, "to say and write only what is necessary to poor souls."3 But if this human resource fails them, Christ remains. It is good for the soul to be left without help in order that it may lean on Christ alone.

CHAP. XII The French at Basle—Encouragement of the Swiss—Fear of disunion—Translations and Printing Presses at Basle—Bibles and Tracts circulated in France.

Meantime the efforts of the friends of the gospel were paralysed. The great were beginning to be hostile to Christianity. Margaret was afraid: dreadful news were about to cross the Alps, and blow after blow to throw the kingdom into mourning, leaving only one thought—to save the king, to save France. But if the Christians of Lyons were arrested in their labours, were there not at Basle soldiers who had escaped from the battle, and were ready to begin anew. The exiles of France have never forgotten her. Driven from their country for nearly three centuries by the fanaticism of Rome, we see their latest descendants carrying to the towns and fields of their fathers the treasures of which the pope deprives them. At the moment when the soldiers of Christ in France, in despondency, threw down their arms, the refugees of Basle prepared for the combat. Seeing the monarchy of St. Louis and Charlemagne tottering in the hands of Francis I, will they not feel called to asplre to a kingdom which cannot be moved?"

Farel, Anemond, d' Esch, Toussaint, and their friends, formed in Switzerland an evangelical society with the view of delivering their country from spiritual darkness. Letters were received from all quarters informing them that the thirst for the word of God was growing in France. It was necessary to take advantage of this—to water and sow seed during seed time. Œcolampadius and Oswald Myconius ceased not to encourage them in it. They gave their hand, and inspired them with their faith. The Swiss schoolmaster, in January 1525, wrote to the French knight: "Banished as you are from your country by the tyranny of antichrist, your very presence in the midst of us proves that you have acted with courage in the cause of the gospel. The tyranny of the Christian bishops will soon make the people regard them only as liars. Remain firm. The time is not distant when we shall enter the haven of rest, whether tyrants strike us or be themselves struck, and then all will be well with us, provided we be faithful to Jesus Christ."

These encouragements were precious to the French refugees; but a blow proceeding from these same Christians of Switzerland and Germany who sought to strengthen them, tore their hearts to pieces, Scarcely escaped from the faggot, they were in dismay when they saw the evangelical Christians beyond the Rhine disturbing the repose which they enjoyed by lamentable dissensions. The discussion on the Supper had begun. Moved and agitated, feeling strongly how much need there was of charity, the French would have given every thing to effect a reconciliation between these divided spirits. This became their ruling thought. At the period of the Reformation, none had so much need of Christian unity as they. Of this, at a later period, Calvin was a proof. "Would to God," said Peter Toussaint, "that I were able, with all my blood, which indeed is not worth much, to purchase peace, concord, and union in Jesus Christ." The French, possessed of a clear and ready judgment, immediately perceived that this new discussion would arrest the work of the Reformation. "Every thing would go on much better than at present if we were agreed. There are many people who would willingly come to the light, but when they see these divisions among the clergy, they know not what to do." The French were the first who thought of taking steps for reconciliation. "Why," they wrote to Strasburg, "not send a Bucer, or some other learned man, to Luther? The longer we wait, the greater the dissension will become." These fears only increased. At length, seeing their efforts useless, these Christians, in grief, turned their eyes away from Germany, and fixed them earnestly on France.

France, the conversion of France, thenceforth exclusively engrossed the heart of these generous men, whom history, which has inscribed on her pages the names of so many individuals vainly puffed up with their own glory, has not even mentioned. Thrown upon a foreign land, they there flung themselves upon their knees, and daily, in the solitude of their retreat, invoked God in behalf of the land of their fathers. Prayer! Such was the power by which the gospel was spread over the kingdom, and the great instrument to which the Reformation owed her conquests. But these Frenchmen were not only men of prayer; never did an evangelical army number soldiers more ready to devote their persons in the hour of battle. They saw the importance of diffusing the Holy Scriptures and pious books in their country, still immersed in the darkness of superstition. A spirit of enquiry circulated over the whole kingdom; it was necessary to give it wings. Anemond, always prompt in action, and Michael Bentin, another refugee, resolved to unite their zeal, their talents, their means, and their labours. Bentin wished to establish a printing press at Basle, and the knight, in order to turn to profit the little that he knew of German, proposed to translate the best works of the Reformation into French. In the joy which their project inspired, they exclaimed, “Would to God that France were completely filled with gospel volumes, so that everywhere in the cottages of the poor, and the palaces of the great, in cloisters and presbyteries, and in the inner sanctuary of the heart, a powerful testimony might be borne to Jesus Christ.”

Such an enterprise required friends, and the refugees had nothing. At this time Vaugris was at Basie, and Anemond, on his departure, sent by him a letter to the brethren of Lyons, several of whom were rich in worldly goods, and who, though oppressed, were always faithful to the gospel. He asked them to send him some assistance. But this was not enough. The French wished to establish several presses in Basle, which working night and day might inundate France with the word of God.2 At Meaux and Metz, and other places besides, were men rich enough and powerful enough to aid in this enterprise. No man could address Frenchmen with so much authority as Farel. To him, therefore, Anemond turned.

It does not appear that the knight’s scheme was realised; but the work was done by others. The presses of Basle were constantly employed in printing French books. These were sent to Farel, who was unremitting in introducing them into France. One of the first productions sent by this Religious Tract Society was the Exposition of the Lord’s Prayer by Luther. The merchant Vaugris, wrote Farel, “We sell the tract of the Pater at four deniers of Basle, by retail; but wholesale we sell 200 for two florins, which is not so much.” From Basle, Anemond sent Farel all the useful books which appeared there, or arrived from Germany; one of these was a Treatise on the Training of Christian Ministers, and another on the Education of Children. Farel examined these writings. He composed, translated, or procured others to translate into French. He appeared to be at once all action, and all study. Anemond urged on and superintended the press; and these epistles, these prayers, these books, all these flying sheets were the means of regenerating the age. While dissipation came forth from the throne, and darkness from the steps of the altar, these unobserved writings sent over the nation rays of light and seeds of holiness. But it was the word of God, above all, that the evangelical merchant of Lyons demanded in the name of his countrymen. This people of the sixteenth century, hungering for intellectual food, were to receive in their own tongue those ancient monuments of the first ages of the world, and enhale the new breath of primitive humanity, together with those holy oracles of gospel times in which the fulness of the Christian revelation is displayed. Vaugris wrote to Farel, “I pray you, if it be possible, to get a translation of the New

Testament by some man able to make it. It would be a great boon to France, Burgundy, and Savoy. And if it was necessary to have a French letter (printing types,) I would cause it to be procured from Paris or Lyons. If good ones can be got at Basle, so much the better."

Before this time the books of the New Testament in French, but in detached parts, had been published by Lefevre at Meaux. Vaugris wished that some one would revise the whole, and superintend a complete edition. Lefevre undertook the task, and published it, as we have already said, on the 12th October, 1524. An uncle of Vaugris, named Conrard, a refugee at Basle, immediately procured a copy of it. On the 18th November, Chevalier de Coct, at the house of a friend, saw the book, and was overjoyed. "Haste and get it reprinted," said he, "for I doubt not that a very great number will be disposed of."

Thus the word of God was presented to France in opposition to the traditions of the Church, which Rome still ceases not to offer to her. "How is it possible," asked the Reformers, "to distinguish between what is human in tradition, and what is divine, unless by the Scriptures of God? The sentences of Fathers, the decretals of the heads of the Church cannot be the rules of our faith. They show us what was the opinion of those ancient teachers; but the word alone informs us what is the truth of God. We must make every thing submit to Scripture."

Such was the principal means by which these writings were diffused. Farel and his friends entrusted the books to some dealers or hawkers, simple and pious men, who, bearing their precious burden, went from town to town, village to village, and house to house, in Franche-Comté, Lorraine, Burgundy, and the neighbouring provinces, knocking at every door. These books were given them at a low price, "in order that they might feel desirous to sell them." Thus, as early as 1524, there was in Basle for the benefit of France, a Bible and Religious Tract Hawking Society. It is an error to suppose that these take their date from our age. In their essential idea they go back not only to the period of the Reformation, but to the first ages of the Church.

CHAP. XIII

Progress at Montbeliard—Opposition and Disturbance—Toussaint quits Œcolampadius—The day of the Bridge—Death of Anemond—Successive Defeats. The attention which Farel gave to France did not make him overlook the places in which he lived. Having arrived at Montbeliard, towards the end of July, 1524, he had there scarcely sown the seed, than, as Œcolampadius expresses it, the first-fruits of the harvest began to appear. Farel, quite delighted, wrote of it to this friend. "It is easy," replied the teacher of Basle, "to introduce some dogmas into the ears of the hearers, but to change the heart is God's own work."

Chevalier de Coct, delighted with the news, repaired, with his ordinary vivacity, to Peter Toussaint. "I set out, to-morrow, on a visit to Farel," said he hastily. Toussaint, who was more calm, wrote to the evangelist of Montbeliard: "Take care; the cause that you maintain is a great cause; it must not to defiled by human counsels. The powerful promise you their favour, their assistance, mountains of gold…. But to trust in these things is, to desert Jesus Christ and walk in darkness." Toussaint was finishing his letter when the Chevalier entered. He took it, and set out for Montbeliard.

He found the whole town in great agitation. Several of the great in alarm, and eyeing Farel disdainfully, said, "What does this poor wretch mean? Would to God he had never come! He cannot remain here, for he would involve us all in his ruin." These nobles, who had taken refuge at

Montbeliard with the duke, feared that the noise which the Reformation everywhere made would draw upon them the attention of Charles V, and Ferdinand, who would chase them from their last asylum. But Farel met with the greatest resistance from the clergy. The guardian of the Franciscans of Besançon had hastened to Montbeliard, and had formed a plan of defence with the clergy of the place. On the following Sunday, Farel had scarcely begun his sermon when they interrupted him, calling him a liar, and a heretic. Immediately the whole assembly was in a stir. They rose up, and called for silence. The duke hastened up, caused both the guardian and Farel to be apprehended, and ordered the former either to prove his accusations, or to retract them. The guardian preferred the latter alternative, and an official report was published on the whole affair. This attack aroused Farel still more. He thought himself thenceforth bound to show no delicacy in unmasking these selfish priests; and drawing the sword of the word, he dealt vigorous blows. He was more disposed to imitate Jesus, when he drove the money-changers from the temple, and overthrew their tables, than when the prophetical spirit bore this testimony to him: “He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any one hear his voice in the streets.” Œcolampadius was alarmed. In these two men were perfect types of two diametrically opposite characters, and yet both worthy of admiration. “You have been sent,” wrote Œcolampadius to Farel, “to draw men gently to the truth, and not to drag them with violence; to bring glad tidings, and not to curse. Physicians have recourse to amputation, only when other remedies are useless. Conduct yourself as a physician, and not as an executioner. I do not hold it enough for you to be mild towards the friends of the word. You must also gain its enemies. If the wolves are driven away from the sheepfold, let the sheep at least hear the voice of the Shepherd. Pour oil and wine into wounds, and conduct yourself as an evangelist, and not as a tyrant.” The noise of these doings spread over France and Lorraine, and alarm began to be felt in the Sorbonne and by the Cardinal, at this union of the refugees in Basle and Montbeliard. It was wished to break up an alliance that gave uneasiness; for error knows no greater triumph than to win over deserters. Already, Martial Mazurier and others had given the Gallican papacy the joy produced by shameful defection; but if they could succeed in seducing one of these confessors of Christ, who had taken refuge on the banks of the Rhine, after having suffered much for the name of the Lord, how great a victory to the pontifical hierarchy! She accordingly prepared her batteries, and singled out the youngest as the object of attack. The primicier, the Cardinal of Lorraine, and all who belonged to the numerous circles which met at the house of this prelate, deplored the sad fate of Peter Toussaint, who had given them so many hopes. He is at Basle, it was said, in the very house of Œcolampadius, living with one of the leaders of heresy. They wrote to him with earnestness, as if his eternal salvation had been at stake. These letters tormented the poor young man the more, that he could not help seeing in them an affection which he valued. One of his relations, probably the primicier himself, called upon him to go to Paris or Metz, or any place he pleased, provided it was away from the Lutherans. This relative, who was aware of all that Toussaint owed him, did not doubt that he would immediately obey his orders; and hence, when he saw his efforts unavailing, his affection was transformed into violent hatred. At the same time, this refusal on the part of the young refugee, exasperated against him all his family and all his friends. His mother, “who was under the power of the Court,”2 was applied to. The priests surrounded her, frightened her, and persuaded her that her son had done things which could not be spoken of without horror. The mother, in despair, wrote her son a touching letter, as he expresses it, “full of tears,” in which, in the most heart-rending manner, she depicted to him all her misfortunes. “Ah! wretched mother,” said she, “ah! unnatural son: cursed be

the breast that nursed, and the knees that bore you!”

Poor Toussaint was in consternation. What was he to do? Return to France he could not. To quit Basle for Zurich or Wittemberg, out of the reach of his family, would have encreased their sorrow. Œcolampadius suggested a middle course. “Quit my house,” said he. He, in fact, did quit Œcolampadius, with a heart full of sadness, and went to live with an ignorant and obscure priest,5 well fitted to restore confidence to his relations. What a change for Toussaint! It was only at table he met his host. There they ceased not to debate on matters of faith; but as soon as the meal was finished, Toussaint hastened again to shut himself up in his chamber, and there alone, free from noise and dispute, he carefully studied the word of God. “The Lord is my witness,” said he, “that in this valley of tears I have only one wish, and it is to see the kingdom of Christ extended, so that all may with one mouth glorify God.

One circumstance occurred which consoled Toussaint. The enemies of the gospel were always becoming stronger in Metz. At his urgent request, Chevalier d’Esch set out, in the course of January, 1525, to strengthen the evangelical Christians of that town; he crossed the forest of the Vosges, and arrived at the place where Leclerc had yielded up his life, carrying with him several books, with which he had been furnished by Farel.

Lorraine was not the only quarter to which the French refugees turned their eyes. Chevalier de Coct received a letter from one of Farel’s brothers, in which the state of Dauphiny was pourtrayed in the darkest colours. He took care not to show it, for fear of alarming the weak; and contented himself with praying earnestly to God, that he would give the assistance of his mighty hand. In December, 1524, a messenger from Dauphiny, named Peter Verrier, charged with commissions for Farel and Anemond, arrived on horseback at Montbeliard. The Chevalier, with his usual vivacity, resolved to return to France. “If Peter has brought money,” wrote he to Farel, “take it. If he has brought letters to me, open them, take a duplicate, and then send them. Nevertheless, don’t sell the horse, but return it, for perhaps I may want it. I am induced to go secretly into France by the way of Jacobus Faber, (Lefevre) and Arandius. Write me your opinion.”

Such was the confidence between these two refugees; the one opened the letters of the other, and received his money. It is true that De Coct owed thirty-six crowns to Farel, whose purse was always open to his friends. There was more zeal than prudence in the knight’s desire to return to France. He had too little prudence not to expose himself to certain death. Of this Farel doubtless convinced him. He quitted Basle and returned to a small town, where he had “great hopes of having the German language, God assisting.”

Farel continued to evangelise Montbeliard. His soul was vexed within him, when he saw the majority of the inhabitants addicted to the worship of images. It was, according to Farel, a renewal of the ancient idolatry of Paganism.

Meanwhile, the exhortations of Œcolampadius, and the fear of compromising the truth, might long have restrained him, but for an unforeseen circumstance. One day, towards the end of February, (it was the feast of St. Anthony) Farel was walking near the banks of a small stream which crosses the town, beneath the high rock on which the citadel stands, when, on arriving at the bridge, he met a procession, which was advancing, repeating prayers to St. Anthony, and having at its head two priests, with an image of the Saint. Farel thus found himself suddenly brought face to face with

these superstitions without having sought them. A violent struggle took place in his soul. Will he give way? Will he hide himself? Would not this be cowardly unbelief? These dead images, carried on the shoulders of ignorant priests, made his blood boil. Farel came boldly forward, seized the holy hermit out of the arms of the priests, and threw it from the bridge into the river. Then, turning towards the astonished people, he exclaimed, “Poor idolaters, will you never leave off your idolatry?” The priests and the people stood still in amazement. A religious dread seemed to chain the multitude. But the stupor soon ceased. “The image is drowning,” exclaimed one of the crowd, and then to stupor and silence succeeded transports and cries of fury. The crowd were going to rush on the sacrilegious man, who had thrown the object of their adoration into the water. But Farel, we know not how, escaped their rage.

There is ground, we are aware, to regret, that the Reformer allowed himself to be betrayed into this act, which rather arrested the progress of the truth. No man should think himself entitled violently to attack any proceeding by public authority. Still, in the zeal of the Reformer, there is something more noble than that cold prudence so common in the world, which recoils before the least danger, and fears to make the least sacrifice for the advancement of the kingdom of God. Farel was not ignorant that he ran the risk of losing his life, like Leclerc. But the testimony of his conscience, urging him to seek only the glory of God, took away all his fears.

After the day at the bridge, a characteristic feature in Farel’s history, the Reformer was obliged to conceal himself, and soon after to quit the town. He took refuge in Basle, beside Œcolampadius; but he always regarded Montbeliard with the affection which a servant of God invariably feels for the first-fruits of his ministry. At Basle, sad news awaited Farel. He was a fugitive, and his friend Anemond de Coct was seriously ill. Farel immediately sent him four gold crowns; but a letter from Oswald Myconius, of 25th March, informed him of the knight’s death. “Let us live,” wrote Oswald, “so as to gain the rest, into which we hope that the spirit of Anemond has already entered.”

Thus Anemond, still young, full of activity, full of strength, desirous by every means to evangelise France, qualities which made him worth a host, descended to a premature grave. God’s ways are not our ways. It was not long since, near Zurich, also, another knight, Ulric von Hutten, had breathed his last. There are some features of resemblance between the German and the French knight, but the piety and Christian virtues of the latter place him far above the witty and dauntless enemy of priests and monks.

Shortly after the death of Anemond, Farel, unable to remain at Basle, from which he had once been banished, repaired to Strasburg, to his friends, Capito and Bucer.

Thus, at Montbeliard and at Basle, as at Lyons, blows were given to the Reformation. Among the most devoted combatants some were carried off by death, others by persecution or exile. In vain did the soldiers of the gospel try all means of assault; they were everywhere repulsed. But if the forces which they had concentrated, first at Meaux, then at Lyons, and then at Basle, were successively scattered, there still remained here and there combatants who, in Lorraine, at Meaux, at Paris even, struggled more or less openly to maintain the word of God in France. If the Reformation saw its masses broken, there still remained isolated soldiers. It was against them that the Sorbonne, and the Parliament, were going to turn their rage. They wished that on the soil of France there should not remain one of the noble men who had undertaken to plant the standard of Jesus Christ, and at this time unheard of misfortunes seemed to conspire with the enemies of the

Reformation, and lend them a strong hand to finish their work.

CHAP. XIV

Francis taken at Pavia—Reaction against the Reformation—Louisa consults the Sorbonne—Commission against the Heretics—Briçonnet denounced—Appeal to the assembled Parliament—Fall—Reconciliation—Lefevre accused—Condemnation and flight—Lefevre at Strasburg—Louis de Berquin incarcerated—Erasmus attacked—Schuch at Nantz—His martyrdom—Contest with Caroli—Sadness of Pavanne—His Faggot Pile—A Christian hermit—Concourse at Nôtre-Dame.

During the latter days of Farel's residence at Montbeliard, great events had taken place on the theatre of the world. Lannoy and Pescaire, the generals of Charles V, had retreated from France on the approach of Francis I, who had passed the Alps, and proceeded to blockade Pavia. On 24th February, 1525, he was attacked by Pescaire. Bonn vet, La Tremouille, La Palisse, and Lescure, had been slain near the king. The Duke D'Alençon, the husband of Margaret, and first prince of the blood, had fled with the rear guard, and gone to die of grief and shame at Lyons. Francis, thrown from his horse, had surrendered his sword to Charles de Lannoy, viceroy of Naples, who received it with bended knee. The king of France was the emperor's prisoner. The captivity of the king seemed the greatest of misfortunes. "Of every thing am I stript save human life," wrote the king to his mother. But no one felt a deeper grief than Margaret. The glory of her country compromised, France without a monarch, and exposed to the greatest dangers, her beloved brother the captive of his proud enemy, her husband dishonoured and dead.… What woes! But she had a Comforter; and while, to console her, her brother repeated, "All is lost but honour," she could say—

"But Jesus, brother, Jesus, Son of God!"

France, the princes, parliament, and the people, were in consternation. Soon, as in the first centuries of the Church, the calamity which had befallen the country was imputed to the Christians, and from all quarters fanatical voices demanded blood as a means of warding off still greater misfortunes. The moment was favourable. It was not enough to have driven the evangelical Christians from the strong position which they had taken up. It was necessary to take advantage of the general terror to strike when the iron was hot; and to make this opposition, which was becoming so formidable to the papacy, a tabula rasa throughout the whole kingdom. At the head of the conspiracy of these clamourers was Beda, Duchesne, and Lecouturier. These irreconcilable enemies of the gospel flattered themselves that they should easily obtain from the public terror the victims who had hitherto been refused them. They immediately set every engine at work—conversation, fanatical sermons, complaints, menaces, defamatory writings, in order to stir up the wrath of the realm, and especially of its leaders. They threw fire and flames at their opponents, and overwhelmed them with the most scurrilous abuse. All means were good. They picked out some words here and there, left out what might have explained the quotation, substituted their own expressions for those of the teacher whom they impugned, and retracted or added according as they wished to blacken their adversaries.3 This is the testimony of Erasmus himself.

Nothing excited their rage so much as the fundamental doctrine of Christianity and of the Reformation—Salvation by grace. “While I see,” said Beda, “three men, otherwise possessed of such penetrating genius, Lefevre, Erasmus, and Luther, uniting in a conspiracy against works of merit, and laying the whole weight of salvation on faith only, I am no longer astonished that thousands of men, seduced by these doctrines, come and say, ‘Why should I fast and make a martyr of my body?’ Let us banish from France this odious doctrine of grace. There is in this neglect of merit a fatal delusion of the devil.”

Thus the syndic of the Sorbonne attempted to combat faith. He was to find support in a debauched court, and another portion of the nation more respectable, but not less opposed to the gospel, I mean those grave men of strict morals, who, given up to the study of the law and legal forms, see in Christianity only a system of legislation in the church, only a moral police, and who, unable to reconcile the doctrine of the spiritual incapacity of man, the new birth, and justification by faith, with their engrossing ideas of jurisprudence, regard them as fantastic imaginations, dangerous to the public morals, and the prosperity of the state. This hostile tendency to the doctrine of grace was manifested in the sixteenth century by two very different extremes: in Italy and Poland by the dogmas of Socinus, of an illustrious family of lawyers in Sienna, and in France by the persecuting decrees and faggot piles of the Parliament.

Parliament, in fact, despising the great truths of the gospel which the Reformers announced, and thinking themselves obliged to do something in the fearful calamity which had befallen the nation, addressed a strong remonstrance to Louisa of Savoy on the conduct of the government in regard to the new doctrine. “Heresy,” it said, “has raised its head in the midst of us; and the king, by not causing scaffolds to be erected for it, has brought down on the kingdom the wrath of heaven.” At the same time the pulpits resounded with complaints, menaces, and maledictions; prompt and exemplary punishment was demanded. Martial Mazurier held a distinguished place among the preachers of Paris, and seeking, by his violence, to make his old connections with the adherents of the Reformation to be forgotten, declaimed against the “hidden disciples of Luther. “Know you,” exclaimed he, “the rapidity of this poison? Know you its strength? Ah! let us tremble for France! It acts with inconceivable energy; and in a short time can put thousands of souls to death.”

It was not difficult to excite the regent against the adherents of the Reformation. Her daughter Margaret, the great personages of the court, Louisa of Savoy herself,—Louisa, always so devoted to the Roman pontiff—were denounced by certain fanatics as favouring Lefevre, Berquin, and other innovators? Had she not read their tracts and translations of the Bible? The queen mother wished to clear herself of these insulting suspicions. She had already sent her confessor to the Sorbonne to ask by what means heresy might be extirpated. “The detestable doctrine of Luther,” she had caused be said to the faculty, “is every day gaining new adherents.” The faculty had smiled on receiving this message. Previously their representations had been refused to be listened to, and now they were humbly begged to call a council on the affair. At length they had in their power that heresy which they had long been desirous to stifle. Noel Beda was appointed to reply to the regent. The fanatical syndic did so. “Since the sermons, discussions, and books, in which we have so often opposed this heresy, have not had the effect of arresting it, an ordinance should be passed prohibiting all the writings of the heretics. Force and constraint must be employed against the person even of these false teachers. Those who resist the light must be subdued to it by punishment and terror.

Louisa had not even waited for their answer. Scarcely had Francis I fallen into the hands of Charles V, than she had written to the pope to ask his pleasure in regard to heretics. It was of importance to the politics of Louisa to secure the favour of a pontiff who was able to raise Italy against the conqueror of Pavia, and she was ready to purchase it at the price of a little French blood. The pope, delighted at being able to exercise severity, in the kingdom of his most Christian majesty, against a heresy which he was unable to arrest either in Switzerland or Germany, immediately ordained that the inquisition should be introduced into France, and addressed a brief to the Parliament. At the same time Duprat, whom the pontiff had made a cardinal, and to whom he had given the archbishopric of Sens, and a rich abbey, sought to return the favour of the court of Rome by displaying indefatigable hatred against the heretics. Thus the pope, the regent, the doctors of the Sorbonne, the parliament, the chancellor, the ignorant and fanatical portion of the nation, all together and at once, conspired the ruin of the gospel and the death of its confessors. The Parliament took the lead. Nothing less than the first body in the kingdom was required to carry on the campaign against this doctrine. Besides, as the public safety was concerned, was it not their business? The Parliament, then, carried away by holy zeal and fervour against these innovators, issued a decree, ordaining “that the bishop of Paris, and other bishops, should be held bound to lend their assistance to Messieurs Philip Pot, President of Requests, and Andrew Verjus, Counsellor, and Messieurs William Duchesne and Nicolas Leclerc, Doctors in Theology, in framing and conducting the process against such as should be found infected with the doctrine of Luther.”

“And in order that it might appear that these commissaries were more under the authority of the Christian church than the Parliament, his Holiness was pleased to send his Brief, (20th May, 1525,) approving of the said named commissioners.”

“Following upon this, all who were declared Lutherans by the bishops or judges of the Church, deputed to this effect, were given over to the secular arm, that is to say, to the said Parliament, which therefor condemned them to be burnt alive.” So says a manuscript of the period.

Such was the dreadful inquest appointed during the captivity of Francis I, against the evangelical Christians of France, for the sake of public safety. It was composed of two laymen, and two ecclesiastics. One of the latter was Duchesne, next to Beda, the most fanatical doctor in the company. Shame had not allowed them to put their leader upon it, but his influence was thus only better secured.

Thus the machine was wound up: its springs were in good order, and every blow which it struck would be mortal. The question was, against whom should the first attack be directed? Beda, Duchesne, Leclerc, assisted by Philip Pot, president, and Andrew Verjus, counsellor, deliberated on this important question. Was there not the Count of Montbrun, the old friend of Louis XII, the ex-ambassador to Rome, Briçonnet, bishop of Meaux? The Committee of public safety met at Paris, in 1525, thought that by beginning with a man of his high rank, they would be sure to spread terror over the kingdom. This reason was sufficient, and this venerable bishop was served with a charge.

Far from allowing himself to be intimidated by the persecution of 1523, Briçonnet had persisted, as well as Lefevre, in opposing the popular superstitions. The more eminent his place in the Church and in the State, the more fatal his example, and therefore the more necessary to obtain from him a striking recantation, or inflict a blow more striking still. The committee of inquest hastened to

collect the charges against him. They stated the kind reception which the bishop had given to heretics—that eight days after the guardian of the Cordeliers had preached at Meaux in the church of St. Martin, conformably to the instructions of the Sorbonne, to reestablish sound doctrine, Briçonnet himself had mounted the pulpit, had replied to him, and treated the preacher and the other cordeliers, his colleagues, as false prophets and hypocrites. Not content with this public affront, he had made his official prepare a charge, summoning the guardian to appear in person. … It would even appear from a manuscript of the time, that the bishop had gone still farther, and that in the autumn of 1524, accompanied by Lefevre of Etaples, he had travelled, during three months, over his diocese, and burnt all the images except the crucifix. This bold procedure, which would show that Briçonnet combined great hardihood with much humility, cannot, if it is true, subject him to the blame attached to other destroyers of images. When he reformed these superstitions, he was at the head of the Church, and acted within the sphere of his rights and duties. Be this as it may, Briçonnet was to have guilt enough in the eyes of the enemies of the gospel. He had not only attacked the Church in general, he had attacked the Sorbonne itself, that company whose supreme law was its own glory and preservative. Accordingly it was delighted on hearing of the inquest directed against its enemy. John Bochart, one of the most celebrated advocates of the time supporting the charge against Briçonnet before the Parliament, exclaimed, raising his voice “Against the Faculty, neither bishop of Meaux, nor any other individual, can raise the head or open the mouth. Neither is the Faculty under any obligation to go and dispute, to carry and state its reasons before the said bishop, who must not resist the wisdom of this holy company, which he must consider to be aided by God.” In consequence of this requisition, the Parliament, on the 3rd Oct., 1525, issued a decree in which, after ordering the personal apprehension of all those who were specified, it ordained that the bishop should be interrogated by James Menager and Andrew Verjus, counsellors of the court, on the facts with which he was charged. This decree of the Parliament terrified the bishop. Briçonnet, ambassador at Rome to two kings—Briçonnet a bishop and prince, the friend of Louis XII and Francis I, about to be subjected to the interrogatives of two counsellors of the court.… He who had hoped that God would kindle in the heart of the king, his mother, and his sister, a flame which would communicate itself to all the kingdom, saw the kingdom turning against himself, in order to extinguish the flame which he had received from heaven. The king is a prisoner, his mother is moving at the head of the enemies of the gospel, and Margaret, dismayed at the disasters which have fallen on France, dares not turn aside the blows which are going to strike her dearest friends, and first of all that spiritual father who has so often consoled her; or if she dares, she has not the power. Recently she had written Briçonnet a letter full of pious ejaculations—“Oh may the poor dead heart feel some spark of the love in which it longs to burn to ashes!” Now there was literally a question of being burnt to ashes. This mystic language was now out of place. He who would confess his faith, must brave the scaffold. The poor bishop, who had hoped so much to see an evangelical Reformation spread gradually, and peacefully, was in fear and trembling when he saw that it must now be purchased at the expence of life. The dreadful thought, perhaps, had never before occurred to him, and he started back in anguish and dismay.

Briçonnet, however, had still a hope that he would be permitted to appear before the assembled Chambers of Parliament, this being due to a personage of his rank, and in that august and numerous court he would find (he was sure of it) generous hearts, who would understand his language, and undertake his defence. He accordingly petitioned the court to grant him this

indulgence. But his enemies had likewise foreseen what the issue of such an audience might be. Had not Luther been seen at Worms before the Germanic Diet, shaking the most resolute hearts? Eager to keep away every chance of escape, they did their work so well, that the Parliament, by a decree of the 25th Oct., 1525, confirming the former one, refused Briçonnet's application.

Here, then, was the bishop of Meaux sent away, like the most obscure priest, before Masters James Menager and Andrew Verjus. These two lawyers, docile instruments of the Sorbonne, could not be moved by the elevated views to which the whole chamber might have been sensible. They were matter of fact men. Has the bishop been, or has he not been, at variance with the Company? This was all they asked. Briçonnet's condemnation was therefore certain.

While the sword was thus suspended by the Parliament over the head of the bishop, the monks, priests, and doctors, were not losing their time. They perceived that a recantation by Briçonnet would serve their purpose better even than his execution. His death would inflame all those who shared his faith: but his apostacy would be a very great discouragement. To work, then! He was visited and urged. Martial Mazurier in particular laboured to make him fall, as he had fallen himself, and he was not without arguments which might seem specious to Briçonnet. Was he willing to leave his place? Might he not, by remaining in the Church, use his influence over the king and the Court, to do good of which it was impossible to foresee the extent? What would become of his old friends, when he was no longer in power? How much might his resistance compromise a reform which, in order to be salutary and durable, must operate by the legitimate influence of the clergy! How many would be shocked by his resistance to the Church, how many, on the contrary, should he attract by yielding!… There was a wish like his own for reform. Everything was insensibly leading to it. At court, in the city, in the provinces, everywhere, there was an advance. Could he feel glad at heart while annihilating this fair prospect!… In reality he was not asked for any sacrifice of doctrine, but only to submit to the order established in the Church. Was it well, when France was overwhelmed with so many disasters, to stir up new troubles? "In the name of religion, in the name of your country, in the name of your friends, in the name of the Reformation itself—yield." By such sophisms, the noblest causes are lost.

Meanwhile every one of these words made some impression on the bishop. The tempter, who would have made our Saviour fall in the desert, presented himself under specious forms, and Briçonnet, instead of exclaiming with his Master, "Get thee behind me, Satan," listened, received, weighed these discourses. After this it was all over with his fidelity.

Briçonnet had never, like a Farel or a Luther, entered fully into the movement which was then regenerating the Church. There was in him a certain mystical tendency, which enfeebles the mind, and deprives it of the firmness and courage which a faith founded on the word of God alone can give. The cross, which he behoved to take up in order to follow Jesus Christ, was too heavy. Shaken, frightened, stupified, distracted,2 he tottered and stumbled over the stone which was craftily thrown in the way … He fell. Instead of throwing himself into the arms of Jesus Christ, he threw himself into those of Mazurier, and by a shameful recantation sullied the glory of a noble fidelity.2

Thus fell Briçonnet, the friend of Lefevre and of Margaret: thus the first supporter of the gospel in France, denied the glad tidings of grace in the guilty thought, that if he remained faithful to them, he would lose his influence on the Church, the Court, and France. But what was presented to him

as the salvation of his country, became, perhaps, its ruin. What would have happened if Briçonnet had had the courage of a Luther? If one of the first bishops of France, dear to the king, dear to the people, had mounted the scaffold, and had there, like the little ones in the estimation of the world, sealed the truth of the gospel by a courageous confession, and a Christian death, might not France have been moved, and the blood of the bishop of Meaux, becoming like that of the Polycarps and Cyprians, the seed of the Church, might not those countries, so illustrious in so many respects, have been seen emerging from the long spiritual darkness in which they are still plunged?

Briçonnet, as a matter of form, underwent the interrogatory before Masters James Menager and Andrew Verjus, who declared that he had sufficiently exculpated himself from the crime with which he was charged. He was then brought to repentance, and assembled a synod in which he condemned the books of Luther, retracted all that he had taught contrary to the doctrine of the Church, reestablished the worship of saints, laboured to bring back those who had abandoned the worship of Rome, and wishing to leave no doubt as to his reconciliation with the pope and the Sorbonne, he, on the eve of Corpus Christi, held a solemn fast, and ordered a pompous procession, in which he appeared in person, giving pledges of his faith, by his magnificence and all sorts of devotion.

Briçonnet is, perhaps, the most celebrated instance of backsliding which the Reformation presents. Nowhere do we see a man so far engaged in the Reformation, and so sincerely pious, turn so suddenly against it. Still it is necessary to form a distinct idea both of his character and his fall. Briçonnet was on the side of Rome, and Lefevre was on the side of the Reformation. They are both of the juste-milieu, and properly do not belong to any of the two parties, but the one is of the centre-droit, the other of the centre-gauche. The doctor of Etaples inclines towards the Word, the bishop of Meaux towards the Hierarchy; and when these two men who approximate each other are obliged to decide, the one arrays himself with Rome, and the other with Jesus Christ. At the same time we cannot believe that Briçonnet was altogether faithless to the convictions of his faith. Even after his recantation the Roman doctors never had full confidence in him. He acted as did, at a later period, the bishop of Cambray, to whom he has more than one feature of resemblance. He thought he could submit externally to the pope, while he continued inwardly subject to the Divine Word. This is a weakness incompatible with the principles of the Reformation. Briçonnet was one of the heads of the mystic, or quietest school in France, and we know that one of its first principles always was to accommodate itself to the church in which it happened to be, be that church what it might. The guilty fall of Briçonnet went to the heart of his old friends, and was the sad forerunner of those deplorable apostacies which, in another age, the spirit of the world so often obtained in France. This personage who, in regard to the Reformation, seemed to hold the reins in his hand, was suddenly thrown out of the chariot, and the Reformation was thenceforth to pursue its course in France without head, without human guide, in humility and obscurity. But the disciples of the gospel raised their head, and thenceforth looked with still firmer faith to the heavenly head whose fidelity they knew could not be shaken. The Sorbonne triumphed: a great stride had been made towards the annihilation of the Reformation in France. It was necessary to hasten without longer delay to another victory. Lefevre was the first after Briçonnet. Accordingly Beda had immediately directed his attacks against this distinguished teacher, by publishing against him a book containing such gross calumnies, that, as Erasmus expresses it, “Smiths and cobblers might have pointed to

them with their finger." What especially excited his wrath was the doctrine of justification by faith, which Lefevre had first proclaimed in Christendom. This was the point to which Beda incessantly returned, the article which, according to him, subverted the Church. "What!" said he, "Lefevre affirms that whosoever ascribes to himself the power of obtaining salvation, will perish, while he who, divesting himself of all strength, throws himself entirely into the arms of Jesus Christ, will be saved.… Oh! what heresy thus to preach the impotence of merit.… What infernal error! what pernicious doctrine of the devil! Let us oppose it with all our might!" The doctor of Etaples was immediately subjected to the persecuting machinery which produced retraction or death. They hoped to see Lefevre sharing the fate either of the poor wool-carder Leclerc, or of the distinguished bishop Briçonnet. His accusation was soon drawn up, and a decree of the Parliament, (28th Aug., 1525,) condemned nine propositions drawn from his Commentaries on the Gospel, and classed his translation of the Holy Scriptures among the prohibited books. This was only the prelude. Of this the learned doctor was aware. From the first symptom of persecution he had felt that, in the absence of Francis I, he would fall under the attacks of his enemies, and that the moment was come to observe the command of the Lord, "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another." Lefevre quitted Meaux, where, since the fall of the bishop, he had drunk bitterness, and seen all his activity paralysed, and withdrawing from his persecutors, he shook off the dust of his feet against them, "not to wish them any ill, but as a sign of the ills which await them, for he says somewhere, in the same way, as this dust is shaken from our feet, are they shaken from the face of the Lord."3 The persecutors had missed their victim, but they consoled themselves with thinking that France, at least, was delivered from the parent of heretics.

Lefevre, a fugitive, arrived under a borrowed name at Strasburg. He at once frankly joined the friends of the Reformation. How great his joy at hearing that gospel publicly taught, which he had been the first to bring forward in the Church. "Here is my faith!" This, indeed, was what he had wished to be able to say. Gerard Roussel, one of those evangelical men, who, like the doctor of Etaples, did not attain to a complete emancipation, had, also like him, been obliged to quit France. They, together, attended the lectures of Capito and Bucer; with these faithful teachers they had special interviews;5 and the rumour even spread that they had been sent for this purpose by Margaret, the king's sister. But reverence for the ways of the Lord, occupied Lefevre more than polemics. Turning his eye upon Christendom, filled with astonishment at the great things which were then taking place, his heart stirred with gratitude and full of expectation, he fell on his knees, and prayed the Lord "to perfect what he then saw commencing."7 A joyful meeting awaited him at Strasburg. His son Farel, whom persecution had separated from him for nearly three years, had arrived there before him. The old doctor of the Sorbonne found in this young pupil a man in the full vigour of life, a Christian in the full energy of faith. Farel respectfully clasped the wrinkled hand which had guided his first steps, and felt an undescribable joy in again finding his father in an evangelical town, and in seeing him surrounded with believing men. They together attended the pure lessons of illustrious teachers; they communicated at the Lord's Supper, administered agreeably to the institution of Jesus Christ, and received touching evidence of the charity of their brethren. "Do you remember," said Farel to him, "what you once said to me when we were both plunged in darkness?" "William, God will renovate the world, and you shall see it … Here is the commencement of what you then spoke to me." "Yes," replied the old man. "Yes, God is renewing the world. O, my son! continue boldly to preach the holy gospel of Jesus Christ."

Lefevre, doubtless from an excess of prudence, wished to remain at Strasburg incognito, and had taken the name of Anthony Peregrine, while Roussel took that of Solnin. But the illustrious old man could not be concealed. The whole town, even the very children, soon bowed respectfully to the old French doctor. He did not live by himself, but at the house of Capito, with Farel, Roussel, Vedaste, whom every body praised for his modesty, and one Simon, a recent Jewish convert. The houses of Capito, Œcolampadius, Zninglius, and Luther, were thus a kind of inns. Such was the strength of brotherly love in those times. There were many other Frenchmen in this town on the banks of the Rhine, and they here formed a church, in which Farel often preached the doctrine of salvation. This Christian society alleviated their exile.

While these brethren thus enjoyed the asylum which brotherly charity had opened to them, those who were at Paris or in other parts of France, were exposed to great dangers. Briçonnet had recanted—Lefevre had left. This, doubtless, was something to the Sorbonne; but they were still waiting for the punishments which they had advised.… There was an individual who irritated them still more than Briçonnet and Lefevre. This was Louis de Berquin. The gentleman of Artois, of a more decided character than his two masters, let no opportunity pass of assailing the theologians and monks, and unmasking their fanaticism. Residing by turns at Paris and in the country, he collected the works of Erasmus and Luther, and translated them. He also himself composed controversial writings. In short, he defended and propagated the new doctrines with all the zeal of a new convert. He was denounced by the bishop of Amiens. Beda supported the complaint; and the parliament caused him to be thrown into prison. “This one,” it is said, “will not escape like Briçonnet or Lefevre.” In fact, he was kept under bars and bolts. In vain did the prior of the Carthusians, and others besides, implore him to offer an apology. He declared distinctly that he would not yield in a single point. “Then,” says a chronicler, “it seemed that nothing remained but to take him to the fire.”2

Margaret, in consternation at what had happened, trembled at the thought of seeing Berquin dragged to the scaffold, which the bishop had so disgracefully escaped. She dared not to penetrate into his prison; but she tried to send him some words of consolation; and it may have been for him the princess made the touching complaint of the prisoner, when addressing the Lord, he exclaims—

Oh! surety, safety, access, refuge sure Of the afflicted, Judge of the orphan-poor, Treasure of consolations that endure!

These bars of iron, draw-bridge, portal gate, By which I here am held in sad estate, Exclude all friends who sorrow at my fate; But here or there, where’er my prison be, No bar, no lock, can keep me far from thee, For by my side thou art perpetually. But Margaret did not confine herself to this. She immediately wrote to her brother, soliciting him to interfere in Berquin’s behalf; happy if she could in time deliver him from the hatred of his enemies.

While waiting for their victim, Beda resolved to make the enemies of the Sorbonne and the monks tremble, by humbling the most celebrated of them. Erasmus had attacked Luther; but no matter. If they succeed in destroying Erasmus, à fortiori, the ruin of Farel, Luther, and their associates, will be inevitable. The surest way of striking an object is to take aim beyond it. When once a foot was on the neck of the philosopher of Rotterdam, who should escape the vengeance of Rome? Already, Lecouturier, commonly called, from the translation of his name into Latin, Sutor, had

taken the first step by launching at Erasmus from his solitary Carthusian cell a most violent philippic in which he called his opponents theologasters and little asses, and imputed to them scandals, heresies, and blasphemies. Handling subjects, which he did not at all understand, he reminded one, says Erasmus cuttingly, of the old adage, “Ne sutor ultra crepidam. Let the cobbler only mend his shoes.”

Beda hastened to the support of his colleague. He told Erasmus not to write any more, and himself taking the pen, which he ordered the first writer of the age to lay down, he made a selection of all the calumnies which the monks had invented against the distinguished philosopher, translated them into French, and made a book of them, which he circulated at Court, and in the city, trying to arouse all France against him.2 This book was the signal of attack. From all quarters an assault was made on Erasmus. Nicholas d’Ecmond, an old Carmelite of Lorraine, every time he mounted the pulpit, exclaimed, “There is no difference between Erasmus and Luther, unless it be that Erasmus is the greater heretic;” and wherever the Carmelite was, at table, travelling by land or water, he called Erasmus a heresiarch and falsifier.4 The faculty of Paris, moved by these brawlers, prepared a censure of this illustrious author.

Erasmus was in consternation. Such, then, is the result of all his management, and even of his hostility against Luther. More than any other had he placed himself in the breach; and it was now wished to treat him like a stepping-stone, and trample him under foot, the more readily to reach the common enemy. He revolts at the thought. He suddenly wheels round, and has no sooner attacked Luther in front, than he turns on the fanatical doctors, who had struck him from behind. Never was his correspondence more active. Looking all around him, his quick eye immediately discovers in what hands his lot is placed. He hesitates not. He will carry his complaints and cries to the foot of the Sorbonne, the parliament, the king, the emperor himself. Addressing those of the theologians of the Sorbonne, from whom he still hoped for some impartiality, he says, “Who has caused this immense fire of Luther? who has stirred it up but Beda with his violence? In war, a soldier who has behaved well, receives reward from his generals; but all the reward I am to receive from you, the generals of the war, is a book of calumnies by the Bedas, and the Lecouturiers!”

“What!” he wrote to the parliament of Paris, “I was combating these Lutherans, and while fighting a fierce battle by orders of the emperor, the pope, and other princes, to the peril even of my life, Lecouturier and Beda attack me from behind with furious libels. Ah! had not fortune carried off from us king Francis, I would have besought that avenger of the muses against this new invasion of the barbarians. But now it is for you to lay an arrest on this injustice!….” No sooner did he descry the possibility of getting a letter to reach the king, than he wrote him also. His penetrating eye could see in those fanatical doctors of the Sorbonne the germs of the league—the predecessors of those three priests who were one day to establish the sixteen against the last of the Valois. His genius gave a prediction to the king of the crimes and misfortunes which his descendants were to know but too well. “They put faith in front,” said he; “but they aim at tyranny, even over princes. They march with a sure step, though under ground. Should the prince refuse to be at their beck in every thing, they will forthwith declare, that he may be deposed by the Church, that is, by some false monks and some false theologians, conspiring against the public peace.” Erasmus, in writing to Francis I, could not have touched a better string.

Lastly, to make still more sure of escaping from his enemies, Erasmus invoked the protection of Charles V himself. “Invincible emperor,” said he, “men who, under pretext of religion, wish to procure a triumph for their belly and their despotism, are raising horrible clamour against me. I fight under your banners, and those of Jesus Christ. Let your wisdom, and your power give peace to the Christian world.…”

Thus the prince of literature made application to all the great ones of the world. The danger was averted from his head; the princes of the world interposed, and the vultures were obliged to abandon a prey which they already thought within their talons. They then turned their eyes in another direction, seeking other victims, and did not miss them.

It was in Lorraine that blood was first again to flow. From the first days of the Reformation there was a copartnery of zeal between Paris and the country of the Guises. If Paris reposed, Lorraine set to work, and then Paris began anew, waiting till new supplies reached Nancy or Metz. The first blows seemed to fall upon an excellent man, one of the refugees of Basle, a friend of Farel and Toussaint. At Metz, the Chevalier d’Esch had been unable to escape the suspicions of the priests. It being known that he was connected with the evangelical Christians, he was made prisoner at Pont-à-Mousson, five miles from Metz, on the banks of the Mosselle. This news caused great grief to the French refugees, and also to the Swiss themselves. “O, heart, full of innocence!” exclaimed Œcolampadius. “I have confidence in the Lord, that he will preserve this man for us, whether in life to announce his name as a preacher of righteousness, or in death to confess him as a martyr.”2 But, at the same time, Œcolampadius disapproved of the vivacity, the impetuosity, the zeal, in his opinion zeal without prudence, which distinguished the French refugees. “I wish,” said he, that my dear French lords would not hasten to return into their country until they have carefully examined all things, for the devil is everywhere laying his snares. Nevertheless, may they obey the Spirit of Christ, and may this Spirit never abandon them.” In fact, there was ground to tremble for the chevalier’s fate. There was double hatred in Lorraine. Friar Bonaventure Renel, provincial of the cordeliers, confessor of Duke Anthony the Good, a forward man of indifferent morals, allowed this feeble prince, who reigned from 1508 to 1544, great liberty in his pleasures, and persuaded him, almost as a kind of penance, to destroy all innovators without mercy. This prince, so well counselled by Renel, used often to say, “It is enough for each to know the Pater and Ave-Maria; the greatest doctors are the cause of the greatest troubles.”

Towards the end of 1524 it was learned at the court of the Duke, that a pastor named Schuch was preaching a new doctrine in the town of Saint-Hippolyte, situated at the foot of the Vosges. “Let them return to order,” said Anthony the Good; “if not, I march against the town and fill every place with fire and blood.” The faithful pastor resolved to sacrifice himself for his sheep; he repaired to Nancy, where the prince resided. Immediately on his arrival, he was cast into a pestilential prison, under the guard of coarse and cruel men. Friar Bonaventure then, at length, saw the heretic in his prison. He presided at the inquest, and addressed him as “Heretic! Judas! Devil!” Schuch, calm and collected, made no answer to those insults; but holding in his hand his Bible, all covered with notes which he had written in it, he meekly and forcibly confessed Jesus Christ crucified. Suddenly becoming animated, he stood up boldly, raised his voice, as if under an impulse from the Spirit above, and looking the judges in the face, denounced to them dreadful judgments from God.

Friar Bonaventure and his companions, amazed and transported with rage, rushed upon him with loud cries, tore the Bible, in which he read his denunciations, out of his hands; and, like mad dogs, says the chronicler, “unable to gnaw at his doctrine, they burnt it in their convent.” The whole court of Lorraine rung with the obstinacy and audacity of the minister of St. Hippolyte, and the Prince, curious to hear the heretic, resolved to be present at his last appearance; but, in secret, concealed from every eye. The interrogatories having been put in Latin, he could not comprehend them; but he was struck at seeing the minister with a firm countenance, apparently neither vanquished nor astonished. Anthony the Good, astonished at this obstinacy, rose up, and, on going away, said, “Why debate any more? He denies the sacrament of the mass; let sentence be pronounced upon him.” Schuch was immediately condemned to be burnt alive. On learning his sentence, he raised his eyes to heaven, and said calmly, “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.”3 On the 19th of August, the whole town of Nancy was in movement. The bells were ringing the death of a heretic. The sad procession began to move. The road lay in front of the convent of the Cordeliers, who, joyous, and on the alert, had met at the gate. At the moment when Schuch appeared, father Bonaventure, pointing to the images sculptured on the front of the convent, exclaimed, “Heretic, give honour to God, his mother, and the saints!”—“O, hypocrites!” replied Schuch, looking up at those pieces of wood and stone, “God will destroy you, and bring your impostures to light.…” The martyr having arrived at the place of execution, the first thing done was to burn his books in his presence; then he was summoned to recant, but he refused, saying, “Thou, O God, hast called me, and will confirm me unto the end.” He then began to repeat, aloud, the fifty-first Psalm, “Have mercy upon me, O God! according to thy loving kindness.” After mounting the scaffold, he continued to repeat the psalm, until the smoke and flames choked his voice.

Thus, the persecutors of France and Lorraine saw their triumphs again begun. At length attention was paid to their advice. The heretical ashes thrown to the winds at Nancy, were a challenge to the capital of France. What! Were Beda and Lecouturier to be the last to show their zeal for the pope? Let flames answer flames, and soon let heresy, swept from the soil of the kingdom, be driven entirely beyond the Rhine!

Before succeeding, Beda had to fight a battle half in earnest, half in mockery, with one of those men with whom the struggle with the papacy is only a game of intellect, not a matter of the heart.

Among the learned men whom Briçonnet had drawn into his diocese, was a doctor of Sorbonne, named Peter Caroli, a vain, giddy man, as full of bluster and chicanery as Beda himself. Caroli saw in the new doctrine the means of producing an effect, and of thwarting Beda, whose ascendancy he could not endure. Accordingly, on his return from Meaux to Paris, he made a great sensation by carrying into all the pulpits what was called “The new mode of preaching.” An incessant struggle now commenced between the two doctors. It was blow for blow, and wile for wile. Beda summons Caroli before the Sorbonne, and Caroli, to repay the honour hands him over to the Officiality. The faculty proceeds with its inquest, and Caroli intimates an appeal to the Parliament. He is interdicted from taking his turn in the chair, and he preaches in all the churches of Paris. He is expressly excluded from all the pulpits, and he publicly expounds the Psalms in the college of Cambray. The faculty prohibits him to continue this exercise, and he asks permission to finish the exposition of Psalms 22:1-31, which he had commenced. At length his request is refused, and he placards the college gates with the following notice: “Peter Caroli, desirous to

obey the orders of the sacred faculty, ceases to teach. He will resume his lectures, (when it shall please God,) at the verse where he stopped: They pierced my hands and my feet." Thus Beda had at last found his match. Had Caroli defended the truth in earnest, the fire would soon have done him justice; but he had too profane a spirit to be put to death. How was it possible to execute a man who put his judges out of countenance? Neither the Officiality, nor the Parliament, nor the Council, could ever judge his cause definitively. Two men like Caroli, would have worn out the activity of a Beda; but the Reformation did not see two. This annoying contest ended, Beda set himself to more serious affairs. Happily for the syndic of Sorbonne there were men who furnished better subjects for persecution than Caroli. It is true, Briçonnet, Erasmus, Lefevre, and Berquin, had escaped him; but since he cannot reach great personages, he will content himself with humble ones. The poor youth, James Pavanne, since his abjuration at Christmas, 1524, had always been sighing and weeping. He was seen with a melancholy air, his eye fixed on the ground, inwardly groaning, and keenly reproaching himself for having denied his Saviour and his God.

Pavanne was no doubt one of the most modest and inoffensive of men. But no matter. He had been at Meaux at this time; no more was required. The cry was raised, "Pavanne has relapsed: The dog has returned to his vomit, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire." He was forthwith seized, cast into prison, and taken before the judges. This was the very thing that young Master James longed for. He felt comforted so soon as he was in irons, and recovered strength to make a full confession of Jesus Christ. The cruel smiled to see that this time nothing could deprive them of their victim: no recantation, no flight, no powerful protector. Neither the mildness of the young man, nor his candour and courage, nothing could soften his adversaries. He looked at them with love: for, in throwing him into chains, they had restored him his tranquillity and joy. But this tender look only hardened their heart the more. His accusation was quickly drawn up, and the Place de Grève soon saw a scaffold erected, on which Pavanne died joyfully, by his example strengthening all who in this great city openly or secretly believed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. This was not enough for the Sorbonne. If those in humble life are sacrificed, quality must be redeemed by number. The flames of the Place de Grève have spread terror over Paris and France; but a new pile, kindled in some other place, will double the terror. It will be spoken of at court, in colleges, and the workshops of the people. Such examples will show better than all edicts, that Louisa of Savoy, the Sorbonne, and the Parliament, are determined to sacrifice every remaining heretic to the anathemas of Rome. In the forest of Livry, three leagues from Paris, not far from the place where stood the ancient abbey of the Augustins, lived a hermit, who, having met in his wanderings with some individuals from Meaux, had received the gospel into his heart. The poor hermit had found himself very rich in his retirement, when one day, along with his coarse loaf, which public charity gave him, he had brought back with him Jesus Christ and his grace. Thereupon he understood how it was better to give than receive. He went from house to house in the surrounding villages, and had no sooner opened the doors of the poor peasants, whom he visited in their humble huts, than he spoke to them of the gospel, of the complete pardon which it gave to agonised souls, and which was better than absolutions. The good hermit of Livry was soon known in the environs of Paris. He was sought after in his poor hermitage, and became a gentle and fervent missionary to the poor of the district. A report of the doings of the new evangelist were not long of reaching the ears of the Sorbonne and the tribunals of Paris. The hermit was apprehended, dragged from his hermitage, from his forest, and from the places which he daily traversed, thrown into a dungeon in the great city which he had always shunned, there tried,

convicted, and condemned to be “exemplarily punished with the punishment of slow fire.”

It was resolved, in order to make the example more striking that he should be burnt alive in the square of Notre Dame, in front of this celebrated basilisk and majestic symbol of Roman Catholicism. The whole clergy assembled, and great pomp was displayed as on the most solemn festivals. The wish would have been to assemble all Paris around this pile, “the great bell of the temple of Notre Dame, ringing,” says a historian, “with full peal, to warn the whole people of the town.”4 In fact, the people thronged into the square through all the streets that opened into it. The deep tones of the bell arrested the workman in his shop, the scholar in his studies, the merchant in his traffic, and the soldier in his idleness. The whole square was already filled by an immense crowd, while the people still kept flocking. The hermit arrayed in the clothing assigned to obstinate heretics, his head and feet bare, had been brought before the gates of the cathedral. Calm, firm, and collected, his only answer to the exhortations of the confessors, who presented the crucifix to him, was to declare, that his hope was solely in the pardon of God. The doctors of the Sorbonne, who were in the front seat of the spectators, seeing his constancy, and the effect which it produced upon the people, cried aloud, “He is damned: they are taking him to hell fire.” Meanwhile the large bell continued to peal, and its sounds, stunning the ears of the people, increased the solemnity of this sad festival. At last the bell was silent, and the martyr having replied to the last questions of his enemies, that he wished to die in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, was, as his sentence bore, “burnt with a slow fire.” Thus died peacefully on the pavement of Notre Dame, amid the shouts and agitation of a whole people, under the towers reared by the piety of Louis the Young, one whose name even history has not preserved—“the hermit of Livry.”

CHAP. XV A Scholar of Noyon—Character of young Calvin—Early Education—He is devoted to Theology—The bishop gives him the tonsure—He quits Noyon because of the Plague—The Reformation creates new languages—Persecution and terror—Toussaint put into prison—Persecution gives new strength—Death of Du Blet, Merlin, and Papillon—God saves the Church—Project of Margaret—Departure for Spain.

While in France men were thus putting the confessors of Jesus Christ to death, God was preparing more powerful confessors. Beda, in dragging to execution a modest scholar, a humble hermit, almost thought he was dragging with him the whole Reformation. But Providence has resources which the world knows not. The gospel, like the fabulous bird, carries in it a principle of life which the flames cannot consume. It rises from its ashes. It is often at the very moment when the storm is at its height, when the thunder seems to have struck down the truth, and when the darkness of night covers it, that a sudden gleam shines forth, and announces a great deliverance. At this time, when all human powers in France were arming for the total destruction of the Reformation, God was preparing an instrument, feeble in appearance, which should one day maintain his rights, and defend his cause with an intrepidity more than human. Amid the persecution and faggot piles, which succeed and press close on each other, ever since Francis was the prisoner of Charles, let us cast an eye on a child who should afterwards be called to place himself at the head of a great army, in the holy wars of Israel.

Among the inhabitants of the town and the colleges of Paris, who heard the sounds of the great bell, was a young student of sixteen, of middle stature, of a pale complexion, with piercing eyes, and an animated expression betokening an intellect of uncommon sagacity. His dress remarkable

at once for its cleanness and perfect simplicity, indicated order and modesty. This young man, named John Cauvin or Calvin, was then studying at the college of La Marche, under Mathurin Cordier, a regent celebrated for his probity, his erudition, and the talents he had received for instructing youth. Brought up in all the superstitions of the papacy, the scholar of Noyon was blindly submissive to the Church, devoted with docility to its observances,2 and persuaded that the heretics richly deserved the flames which had consumed them. The blood which then flowed in Paris only served in his eyes to magnify the crime of heresy. But though naturally of a timid temper, which he himself has called soft and pusillanimous, he had that integrity and generosity of heart which dispose the possessor to sacrifice every thing for the convictions once acquired. Accordingly, in vain was his youth struck with these frightful spectacles, in vain on the Place de Grave and the square of Notre Dame did murderous flames consume the faithful disciples of the gospel; the remembrance of their horrors could not hinder him from one day entering this new path, where apparently he could only expect imprisonment and the scaffold. In the character of young Calvin already appeared traits which announced what he was to become. The strictness of his morals was a prelude to the strictness of his doctrine, and in the student of sixteen might have been recognised a man who would take in earnest whatever he should receive, and who would require from others what he himself felt it quite simple to do. Quiet and grave during the lectures, in the hours for recreation, taking no part in the amusements and follies of his fellow-students, but keeping himself apart;4 impressed with horror at sin, he occasionally censured their irregularities sharply and even with some degree of bitterness. Accordingly a canon of Noyon assures us that his fellows had surnamed him the accusative. He was among them the representative of conscience and duty, so far was he from being what some slanderers have wished to make him. The pale hue, the piercing eye of the student of sixteen already inspired his comrades with more respect, than the black gown of their teachers, and this child of Picardy, of little stature and timid air, who came daily to take his seat on the benches of the college of La Marche, was even now, without thinking it, by the gravity of his speech and deportment, a master and a Reformer.

It was not in these respects only that the boy of Noyon was above his fellow-students. His great timidity sometimes prevented him from manifesting the hatred which he felt for vanity and vice, but he was already devoting to study the whole strength of his intellect and his will. On seeing him, one might have had presentiment of a man who would wear out his life in exertion. He comprehended every thing with inconceivable facility; he ran in his studies, when his fellows only crept on slowly; and engraved deeply on his young genius what others took much time to learn superficially. Hence his masters were obliged to take him out of the class, and make him pass by himself to new studies.

Among his fellow-students were the young De Mommors, belonging to the first nobility of Picardy. John Calvin was intimately connected with them, especially with Claude, who was at a later period abbot of St. Eloi, and to whom he dedicated his Commentary on Seneca. Calvin had gone to Paris in the company of these young nobles. His father, Gerard Cauvin, a notary apostolic, procurator-fiscal of the county of Noyon, secretary to the bishopric, and procurator of the Chapter, was a judicious and able man. By his talents he had obtained those offices which were sought by the first families, and gained the esteem of all the gentlemen of the district, in particular of the illustrious family of Mommor.3 Gerard lived at Noyon. He had married a young lady of Cambray, of remarkable beauty, and retiring piety, named Jean Lefranq. She had already given him a son

named Charles, when on the 10th July, 1509, she had a second son who was named John, and baptised in the church of St. Godebert. A third son named Anthony, who died in early life, and two daughters, completed the family of the procurator-fiscal of Noyon.

Gerard Cauvin, living in intimate relation with the heads of the clergy and nobles of the province, wished his son to receive the same education as those of the best families. John, who had shown precocious talents, was brought up with the sons of the house of Mommor. He was like one of themselves, and received the same lessons as young Claude. In this family he learnt the first elements of literature and life, and had thus a higher culture than that which he seemed destined to receive. At a later period he was sent to the college of Capettes, founded in the town of Noyon.2 The boy had few recreations. Sternness, which was one of the features in the character of the son, was in the father also. Gerard brought him up strictly. John, from his most tender years, behoved to bend under the inflexible rule of duty. He was early trained to this, and in this way the influence of the father counteracted that of the family of Mommor. Calvin, of a timid disposition and somewhat rustic nature, as he himself describes it, rendered still more timid by the severity of his father, shunned the splendid apartments of his patrons, and loved to dwell alone in the shade.4 His young soul was thus formed in retirement for great thoughts. It appears that he sometimes went to Pont l'Evêque, near Noyon, where his grandfather dwelt in a cottage, and where other relations besides, who afterwards changed their name from hatred to the heresiarch, then gave a kind welcome to the son of the procurator-fiscal. But young Calvin's time was especially devoted to study. While Luther, who was to act upon the people, was brought up as a child of the people, Calvin, who was to act chiefly as a theologian, as a thinker, and to become the legislator of the renovated church, received from infancy a more liberal education.6 At an early period a spirit of piety was disclosed in the heart of the child. An author relates that they had accustomed him, when a child, to pray in the open air, under the vault of heaven, and this contributed to keep a feeling of the Divine presence alive in his heart. But though Calvin may from infancy have heard the voice of God in his heart, there was not a person in Noyon more strict than he in the observance of ecclesiastical rules. Hence Gerard, struck with this disposition, conceived the design of devoting his son to theology.8 This prospect, doubtless, contributed to give his soul that grave form, that theological character which distinguished him at a later period. His mind was of a description to receive strong impressions, and to familiarise itself from youth with the most elevated thoughts. The report that he was at this time one of the boys of the choir has no foundation, according to the testimony of his enemies themselves. But they confidently assert, that when he was a boy he was seen in processions bearing a sword with a cross guard, to represent a cross, a presage, they add, of what he was one day to be. The servant of the Lord says in Isaiah, "The Lord has made my mouth like a sharp sword." The same may be said of Calvin.

Gerard was poor. The education of his son cost him much, and he desired to attach him to the church irrevocably. The Cardinal of Lorraine had, at the age of fourteen, been appointed coadjutor to the bishop of Metz. It was then common to give offices and ecclesiastical revenues to children. Alphonso of Portugal was made a cardinal at eight, by Leo X; and Odet of Chattilon, by Clement VII, at eleven. At a later period the celebrated mother Angelica, of Port Royal, was appointed coadjutress of the monastery at seven. Gerard, who died a good catholic, was in the good graces of the bishop of Noyon, Messire Charles de Hangest, and his vicars-general. Accordingly the chaplain of Gesine having resigned his office, the bishop, on the 21st May, 1521, gave the living to

John Calvin, who was then about twelve. This was communicated to the Chapter twelve days after. On the eve of Corpus Christi, the bishop, in due form, cut the hair of the boy, and by this ceremony of the tonsure, John entered the clerical order, and became capable of being admitted to holy orders, and of possessing benefice, without residence.

Thus Calvin was called, as a child, to make upon himself an experiment of the abuses of the Church of Rome. There was not a tonsured individual in the kingdom more in earnest in his piety than the chaplain of Gesine, and the grave child was perhaps himself astonished at the work performed by the bishop and his vicars-general. But in his simplicity he had too much veneration for these high personages, to allow himself to entertain the least suspicion as to the legitimacy of his tonsure. He had held the office for two years when Noyon was visited by a dreadful plague. Several canons applied to the Chapter for permission to quit the town. Many of the inhabitants had been struck by the “great death,” and Gerard began to be afraid that the plague might in a moment bereave him of his son John, the hope of his life. The young Mommors were going to prosecute their studies at Paris. This was the very thing which the procurator-fiscal had ever desired for his son. Why should he separate John from his fellow-students? Accordingly on the 5th August, 1523, he presented a petition to the Chapter, requesting leave for the young chaplain “to go wherever should seem to him good during the plague, without forfeiture of his living.” This was granted till the feast of St. Remy. John Calvin thus quitted the paternal roof at the age of fourteen. It requires great effrontery in slander to attribute his departure to other causes, and thus boldly encounter the disgrace which justly recoils on the promoters of charges whose falsehood has been so completely demonstrated. Calvin, it would seem, alighted in Paris at the house of one of his uncles, Richard Cauvin, who lived near the church of St. Germain-l’Auxerrois. “Thus fleeing the plague,” says the canon of Noyon, “he was to catch it elsewhere.” In the metropolis of literature, a new world opened on the young student. He availed himself of it, set himself to study, and made great progress in Latin. He familiarised himself with Cicero, and learned of this great master to use the language of the Romans with a facility, purity, and grace which excited the admiration even of his enemies. But at the same time he found in this language riches which he was at a later period to transfer to his own.

Till now Latin had been the only literary language. It was, and to our day has remained, the language of the Church. It was the Reformation which created, or at least everywhere emancipated modern languages. The exclusive character of the priests had ceased: the people were called to learn and know. In this fact alone there was an end to the language of the priest, and the introduction of the language of the people. It was no longer to the Sorbonne merely, it was no longer to some monks, some ecclesiastics, that new ideas were to be addressed. It was to the noble, the citizen, the mechanic. All were to be preached to, and what is more, all were going to preach—carders of wool and knights, as well as curates and doctors. A new tongue, then, was required, or, at least, the vulgar tongue must undergo an immense transformation—a great emancipation. Drawn from the common uses of life, it must receive from renovated Christianity its patent of nobility. The gospel which had so long slept, was awake: it spoke, it addressed the whole nation, and everywhere enkindled the most generous affections. It opened the treasures of heaven, to a generation which was thinking only of the petty interests here below. It moved the masses. It spoke to them of God, of man, of good and evil, of the pope, of the Bible, of a crown in heaven, and, it might be, a scaffold upon earth. The popular idiom, which till now had been only

the language of chroniclers and troubadours, was called by the Reformation to act a new part, and consequently to undergo new developments. Society saw a new world begin, and this new world must have new languages. The Reformation freed the French language from the swaddling bands in which it had till then been wrapt up, and enabled it to reach the age of majority. Thenceforth this language was in full possession of those exalted rights which relate to the things of mind and the blessings of heaven, and of which it had been deprived under the tutelage of Rome. No doubt the people form their own language. It is they who form those happy words—those figurative and energetic expressions, which give language so much vivacity and life. But there are resources which lie beyond their reach, and can only come from men of intellect. Calvin being called to discuss and prove, gave the language connections, relations, shades, transitions, and dialectic forms which it did not previously possess.

All these elements were already at work in the head of the young student of the college La Marche. This youth, who was to be so mighty in wielding the human heart, was also to conquer the language which he was called to employ. Protestant France was formed, at a later period, on the French of Calvin, and Protestant France was the best informed part of the nation. From it came forth those families of literati and high magistracy which had so powerful an influence on the culture of the people: from it came forth Port Royal, one of the greatest instruments which contributed to form French prose and even French poetry, and which having attempted to carry into the Gallican catholicism the doctrine and language of the Reformation, failed in the one project, but succeeded in the other. For Roman Catholic France had to come and learn of its Jansenist and Reformed opponents, how to wield those weapons of language without which she could not combat them.2

Meantime, while thus in the college of La Marche was being formed the future reformer of religion and even of language, all was in agitation around the youthful and the grave student, who, as yet, took no part in the great movement which was stirring society. The flames which had consumed the hermit and Pavanne, had spread terror over Paris. But the persecutors were not satisfied; a system of terror was put in operation throughout France. The friends of the Reformation durst no longer correspond with each other, lest their letters being intercepted, should mark out for the vengeance of the tribunals both themselves and those to whom they were addressed. One man, however, ventured to carry news from Paris and France to the refugees of Basle by sewing unsigned letters into his doublet. He escaped the platoons of arquebusiers, all the marshalmen of the different communes, the scrutiny of the provosts and lieutenants, and arrived at Basle without the mysterious doublet having been torn up. His statements struck Toussaint and his friends with terror. “It is dreadful to hear of the great cruelties which are there done,”2 exclaimed Toussaint. A short time before had arrived at Basle, with the officers of justice at their heels, two monks of St. Francis, one of whom, named John Prevost, had preached at Meaux, and been afterwards cast into prison at Paris. What they told of Paris and Lyons, called forth the deepest sympathy in the refugees. “May our Lord send thither his grace!” wrote Toussaint to Farel. “I assure you I sometimes feel myself in great anguish and tribulation.”

Still these excellent men did not lose courage. In vain were all the parliaments on the watch, in vain did the spies of the Sorbonne and of the monks come into churches, colleges, and even private families, to pry into every evangelical word that might be pronounced, in vain did the king’s gens d’armes arrest on the roads every thing that seemed to bear the stamp of the Reformation.

These Frenchmen, whom Rome and her partizans tracked and crushed, had faith in a better future, and already hailed the end of this Babylonish captivity, as they termed it. “At length,” said they, “the seventieth year will come, the year of deliverance, and liberty of mind and conscience will be given us.” But the seventy years were to last for three centuries, and it was only after unheard of disasters that their hopes were to be realised. It was not, however, from men that the refugees hoped anything. “Those who have begun the dance,” said Toussaint, “will not stop by the way.” But they believed that the Lord “knew those that were his, and would himself work out a mighty deliverance.”5

Chevalier d’ Esch had in fact been delivered. Having escaped from the prisons of Pont-a-Mousson, he had hastened to Strasburg. There, however, he did not remain long. Toussaint had immediately written to Farel, “For the glory of God try and get the Knight, our good master, to return as quickly as may be: for the other brethren have great need of such a captain.” In fact the French refugees had new fears. They trembled lest this dispute on the Lord’s Supper, which had distressed them so much in Germany, should cross the Rhine, and bring new sorrows into France. Francis Lambert, the monk of Avignon, after being at Zurich and Wittemberg, had come to Metz, but there was not complete confidence in him. It was feared that he might bring Luther’s sentiments, and by useless controversies, “monstrous,” Toussaint calls them, arrest the progress of the Reformation. Esch then returned to Lorraine, but it was to be exposed anew to great dangers, “with all those who then sought the glory of Jesus Christ.”2

Toussaint was not of a character to send others to the battle, without going himself. Deprived of daily intercourse with Œcolampadius, confined to the society of a coarse priest, he had sought the presence of Christ, and his courage had increased. If he could not retire to Metz, might he not at least go to Paris? The piles of the hermit and Pavanne were still smoking, it is true, and served to warn off from the capital all who had a similar faith. But if the colleges and streets of Paris were terror-struck, so that no person now dared to pronounce the word Gospel or Reformation, was not this a reason for repairing thither? Toussaint quitted Basle, and came within that enclosure where fanaticism had taken the place of festivities and dissipation. He sought, while advancing in Christian studies, to connect himself with the brethren in the colleges, and especially in that of Cardinal Lemoine, where Lefevre and Farel had taught. But he was not long at liberty to do so. The tyranny of the commissioners of the parliament, and the theologians, reigned supreme in the capital, and every one who displeased them was by them accused of heresy.4 A duke and an abbot, whose names are not given, denounced Toussaint as a heretic, and one of the king’s serjeants arrested the youth from Lorraine, and threw him into prison. Separated from all his friends, and treated as a criminal, Toussaint felt his wretchedness the more keenly. “O Lord,” exclaimed he, “take not thy Spirit from me; for, without him, I am only flesh and blood, and a sink of iniquity.” While his body was in fetters, he thought of all those who were still combating freely for the gospel. There was Œcolampadius, his father, he “whose work we are in the Lord;” there was Lefevre, whom he thought, doubtless on account of his age, “incapable of bearing the burden of the gospel;”6 Roussel, “by whom he hoped that the Lord would perform great things;” Vaugris, who displayed all the charity “of the most affectionate brother” in order to deliver him from his enemies;2 in fine, there was Farel, to whom he wrote, “I commend myself to your prayers, that I may not fall in this combat.” Oh! how all the names of these beloved men alleviated the bitterness of his imprisonment! Indeed he was not ready to fall. Death, it is true, threatened to overtake him in

this city, in which the blood of a multitude of his brethren was to be poured out like water,4 while the friends of his mother, and his uncle, the primicier of Metz, and the Cardinal Lorraine, made him the most splendid offers. … “I despise them,” he replied. “I know that it is a temptation from God: I would rather be hungry, I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord, than dwell with great riches in the palaces of the ungodly.”6 At the same time he made an open profession of his faith: “I glory,” said he, “in being called a heretic by those whose life and doctrine are opposed to Jesus Christ.” This interesting and intrepid young man signed his letters, “Peter Toussaint, unworthy of being called a Christian.”

Thus, in the absence of the king, new blows were struck at the Reformation. Berquin, Toussaint, and many others, were in prison: Schuch, Pavanne, and the hermit of Livry, had been put to death: Farel, Lefevre, Roussel, and a great many more, defenders of sound doctrine, were in exile. The lips of the eloquent were mute. The light of the gospel day was becoming more and more overcast, and the storm incessantly growling, bent, shook, and threatened as it were to root up the still tender tree which the hand of God had planted in the soil of France. Nor was this all. To the humbler victims who had been sacrificed, more illustrious were to succeed. The enemies of the Reformation in France, not having been able to succeed when they began at the top, had become resigned to begin at the bottom, but with the hope of rising step by step in condemnation and death, until they should reach the highest pinnacles. This inverted course succeeded. Scarcely were the ashes with which persecution had covered the Place-de-Grave and the pavement of Notre Dame, been dispersed, when new blows were struck. Messire Anthony Du Blet, that excellent man, that merchant of Lyons, fell under the attacks of the enemies of the truth, with another disciple, François Moulin, though we do not know the details of his death. They went farther still, and took a higher aim. There was an illustrious personage, one they could not reach in person, but they could strike her in those who were dear to her. This was the Duchess D’Alençon. Michael d’ Arande, chaplain to the king’s sister, for whom Margaret had dismissed all her other preachers, and who preached the pure gospel before her, became the object of attack by the persecutors, and was threatened with imprisonment and death. Almost at the same time Anthony Papillon, for whom the princess had procured the office of first Master of Requests to the Dauphin, died suddenly, and the universal rumour, even among the enemy, was, that he had been poisoned.2

Thus persecution extended in the kingdom, and always drew nearer to Margaret. After the forces of the Reformation, concentrated at Meaux, Lyons, and Basle, had been dispersed, the isolated combatants, who had here and there maintained her cause, were cut off in detail. A few efforts more, and the French soil will be purged of heresy! Silent manœuvres, secret wiles, succeed to clamour and the scaffold. The war will be carried on in open day, but at the same time also in darkness. If fanaticism employs the tribunal and the scaffold for the ignoble, it will reserve poison and the poniard for the great. The teachers of a celebrated society have only too much patronised the use of it, and even kings have fallen under the daggers of the assassin. But if Rome has always had Seides, it has also seen Vincent Pauls and Fenelons. These blows, struck in darkness and silence, were well fitted to spread universal terror. To this perfidious course, to these fanatical persecutions within, were joined fatal defeats without. The whole kingdom was veiled in mourning. There was not a family, especially among the nobility, in which tears did not flow for a father, a husband, or a son left on the plains of Italy, or one where the heart did not tremble for the liberty or

life of one of its members. The great reverses which had overtaken the kingdom, diffused a leaven of hatred against the heretics. The people, the parliament, the Church, the throne, even lent a hand. Was it not enough that the defeat of Pavia had deprived the Duchess D'Alençon of her husband, and cast her brother into prison? Must she see the gospel torch, in whose soft light she had always rejoiced, extinguished, perhaps, for ever? The news from Spain increased the general grief. Chagrin and sickness were endangering the life of the haughty Francis I. If the king continues prisoner, if he dies, if the regency of his mother continues for many long years, is it not all over with the Reformation? "But, though all seems lost," said the young scholar of Noyon at a later period, "God saves and guards his church in a miraculous manner." The Church of France, which was travailing as in birth, was to have a time of refreshing before new sorrows, and, in order to give it to her, God employed a feeble woman who never declared decidedly in favour of the Reformation. She was then thinking more of saving the king, and the kingdom, than of delivering obscure Christians, who, however, put great hope in her.2 But under the glare of worldly affairs, God often conceals the mysterious means by which he governs his people. A noble project was formed in the breast of the Duchess D'Alençon:—to cross the sea or the Pyrenees to rescue Francis I from the hands of Charles V. Such is henceforth the aim of her life.

Margaret de Valois intimated her design, and France hailed her with a shout of gratitude. Her great talents, the reputation which she had acquired, the love which she had for her brother, and that which Francis had for her, were, in the eyes of Louisa and Duprat, a counterbalance for her attachment to the new doctrine. All turned their eyes towards her as the only person capable of delivering the kingdom from the peril in which it was placed. Let Margaret herself, then, go to Spain; let her speak to the mighty Emperor and his ministers; and let her employ the admirable talents, which Providence has bestowed upon her, in the deliverance of her brother and her king.

Meanwhile very various feelings filled the hearts of the nobles and the people when they saw the Duchess D'Alençon, placing herself amid the hostile councils and fierce soldiery of the Catholic king.

Every one admired the courage and devotedness of this young female, but without participating in them. The friends of the princess had fears for her, which were well nigh realised. But the evangelical Christians were full of hope. The captivity of Francis I had brought unparalleled severities on the friends of the Reformation, and it was thought that his liberation might put an end to them. To open the gates of Spain to the king, was to shut those of the officialities and castles into which the servants of the word of God were thrown. Margaret strengthened herself in a design on which her whole soul was bent, by all these different motives: No height of heaven can bar my way, Nor depth beneath my soul dismay;

E'en Hell must own my Saviour's sway! Her weak female heart was strengthened by the faith which gives the victory over the world, and her resolution was unmoved. Every thing was prepared in haste for this important and dangerous voyage. The archbishop of Embrun, since Cardinal of Tournon, and the president De Selves, were already at Madrid to negotiate the deliverance of the king. They were made subordinate to Margaret, as was also the Bishop of Tarbes, since Cardinal De Grammont. Full powers were given to the princess alone. At the same time Montmorency, who at a later period was so hostile to the Reformation, was sent in all haste into Spain in order to obtain a safe-conduct for the king's sister. The emperor made difficulties. He said it was for his

ministers alone to arrange the affair. “One hour of conference,” exclaimed Selves, “between your majesty, the king, my master, and the Duchess D’Alençon, will advance the treaty more than a month of discussion between lawyers.”3

Margaret, impatient to arrive because of the sickness of the king, set out without a safe-conduct, with an imposing retinue. She quitted the court, and passed through Lyons, proceeding towards the Mediterranean. As she was on the way, Montmorency returned with letters from Charles, who guaranteed her liberty for three months only. She arrived at Aigues-Mortes,5 and here the sister of Francis I embarked in the vessel prepared for her. Led by God into Spain rather to deliver humble Christians from oppression than to bring the mighty monarch of France out of captivity, Margaret committed herself to the billows of the same sea which had borne her captive brother after the disastrous battle of Pavia.

01.04. Volume 4

VOLUME 4 PREFACE TO VOLUME FOURTH When a foreigner visits certain countries, as England, Scotland, or America, he is sometimes presented with the rights of citizenship. Such has been the privilege of the “History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century.” From 150,000 to 200,000 copies are in circulation, in the English language, in the countries I have just mentioned: while in France the number hardly exceeds 4000. This is a real adoption,—naturalizing my Work in the countries that have received it with so much favour.

I accept this honour. Accordingly, while the former Volumes of my History were originally published in France; now that, after a lapse of five years, I think of issuing a continuation of it, I do so in Great Britain. This is not the only change in the mode of publication. I did not think it right to leave to translators, as in the cases of the former Volumes, the task of expressing my ideas in English. The best translations are always faulty; and the Author alone can have the certainty of conveying his idea, his whole idea, and nothing but his idea. Without overlooking the merit that the several existing translations may possess, even the best of them is not free from inaccuracies, more or less important, of which I have given a specimen in my Preface to the First Volume of the Edition revised by me, and published by Messrs. Oliver & Boyd. These inaccuracies, no doubt most involuntary, gave rise to a very severe contest in America, on the subject of this Work, between the Episcopalians and the Baptists on the one hand, and the Presbyterians on the other,—a contest that I hope is now terminated, but in which (as a New York correspondent informed me) one of the most beneficial and powerful Christian Societies of the United States had been on the brink of dissolution. With such facts before me, I could no longer hesitate. It became necessary for me to publish, myself, in English; and this I accordingly do. But although that language is familiar to me, I was desirous of securing, to a certain extent, the cooperation of an English literary gentleman. Dr. Henry White, of Croydon, has had the great kindness to visit Switzerland for this purpose, although such a step exposed him to much inconvenience, and to pass with me at Geneva the time necessary for this labour. I could not have had a more enlightened coadjutor; and I here express my obligations to him for his very able assistance.

I therefore publish in English this Continuation of the History of the Reformation. I do not think that, as I publish, myself, in this language, any one will have the power, or will entertain the idea, of attempting another publication. It would be a very bad speculation on the part of any bookseller; for where is the reader that would not prefer the original text, as published by the Author himself, to a translation made by a stranger? But there is a higher question—a question of morality. Of all property that a man can possess, there is none so essentially his own as the labours of his mind. He acquires the fruits of his fields by the sweat of his servants and of his beasts of burden; and the produce of his manufactures by the labour of his workmen and the movement of his machines; but it is by his own toils, by the exercise of his most exalted faculties, that he creates the productions of his mind. Accordingly, in putting this History under the protection of the laws, I place it at the same time under a no less secure safeguard,—that of justice. I know that it is written in the consciences on the other side of the Channel and of the Atlantic: Ye shall have one manner of law,

as well for the stranger as for one of your own country: for I am the Lord your God. To English honour I confide this work. The first two Books of this Volume contain the most important epochs of the Reformation—the Protest of Spires, and the Confession of Augsburg. The last two describe the establishment of the Reform in most of the Swiss cantons, and the instructive and deplorable events that are connected with the catastrophe of Cappel.

It was my desire to narrate also the beginnings of the English Reformation; but my Volume is filled, and I am compelled to defer this subject to the next. It is true I might have omitted some matters here treated of, but I had strong reasons for doing the contrary. The Reformation in Great Britain is not very important before the period described in this volume; the order of time compelled me, therefore, to remain on the Continent; for whatever may be the historian's desire, he cannot change dates and the sequence that God has assigned to the events of the world. Besides, before turning more especially towards England, Scotland, France, and other countries, I determined on bringing the Reformation of Germany and German Switzerland to the decisive epochs of 1530 and 1531. The History of the Reformation, properly so called, is then, in my opinion, almost complete in those countries. The work of Faith has there attained its apogee: that of conferences, of interims, of diplomacy begins. I do not, however, entirely abandon Germany and German Switzerland, but henceforward they will occupy me less: the movement of the sixteenth century has there made its effort. I said from the very first: It is the History of the Reformation and not of Protestantism that I am relating.

I cannot, however, approach the History of the Reformation in England without some portion of fear; it is perhaps more difficult there than elsewhere. I have received communications from some of the most respectable men of the different ecclesiastical parties, who, each feeling convinced that their own point of view is the true one, desire me to present the history in this light. I hope to execute my task with impartiality and truth; and thought it would be advantageous to study for some time longer the principles and the facts. In this task I am at present occupied, and shall consecrate to it, with God's assistance, the first part of my next volume. Should it be thought that I might have described the Reformation in Switzerland with greater brevity, I beg my readers will call to mind that, independently of the intrinsic importance of this history, Switzerland is the Author's birth-place.

I had at first thought of making arrangements for the present publication with the English and Scoteh booksellers who had translated the former portions. Relations that I had maintained with some of these publishers, and which had gained my esteem for them, induced me to adopt this course. They were consequently informed by letter of my purpose, and several months later I had an interview with some of them at Glasgow. From circumstances which it is unnecessary to explain, so arrangement was entered into with these gentlemen. But at the same time, one of the first houses in Great Britain, Messrs. Oliver & Boyd of Edinburgh, who were introduced to me by my highly respected friend Dr. Chalmers, made me a suitable and precise offer. I could wait no longer; and on the very eve of my departure from London for the Continent, after a sojourn of three months in Scotland and in England, I made arrangements with them, which have since been definitely settled, and the Work is now their property. The French laws are positive to protect literary property in France, even if it belongs to a foreigner. I am less familiar with the English laws; but I will not do England the injustice of believing that its legislation is surpassed by that of France in justice and in morality.

Eux-Vives Geneva, January, 1846.

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1526–1529

CHAPTER I

Twofold Movement of Reform—Reform the Work of God—First Diet of Spires—Palladium of Reform—Firmness of the Reformers—Proceedings of the Diet—Report of the Commissioners—The Papacy painted and described by Luther—The Destruction of Jerusalem—Instructions of Seville—Change of Policy—Holy League—Religions Liberty proposed—Crisis of the Reformation.

We have witnessed the commencement, the struggles, the reverses, and the progress of the Reformation; but the conflicts hitherto described have been only partial; we are entering upon a new period,—that of general battles. Spires (1529) and Augsburg (1530) are names that shine forth with more immortal glory than Marathon, Pavia, or Marengo. Forces that up to the present time were separate, are now uniting into one energetic band; and the power or God is at work in those brilliant actions, which open a new era in the history of nations, and communicate an irresistible impulse to mankind. The passage from the middle ages to modern times has arrived. A great protest is about to be accomplished; and although there have been protestants in the Church from the very beginning of Christianity, since liberty and truth could not be maintained here below, save by protesting continually against despotism and error, Protestantism is about to take a new step. It is about to become a body, and thus attack with greater energy that “mystery of iniquity” which for ages has taken a bodily shape at Rome, in the very temple of God. But although we have to treat of protests, it must not however be imagined that the Reformation is a negative work. In every sphere in which anything great is evolved, whether in nature or society, there is a principle of life at work,—a seed that God fertilizes. The Reformation, when it appeared in the sixteenth century, did not, indeed, perform a new work, for a reformation is not a formation; but it turned its face toward the beginnings of Christianity; it seized upon them with affection, and embraced them with adoration. Yet it was not satisfied with this return to primitive times. Laden with its precious burden, it again crossed the interval of ages, and brought back to fallen and lifeless Christendom the sacred fire that was destined to restore it to light and life. In this twofold movement consisted its action and its strength. Afterwards, no doubt, it rejected superannuated forms, and combated error; but this was, so to speak, only the least of its works, and its third movement. Even the protest of which we have to speak, had for its end and aim the re-establishment of truth and of life,

and was essentially a positive act. This powerful and rapid twofold action of reform, by which the apostolic times were re-established at the opening of modern history, proceeded not from man. A reformation is not arbitrarily made, as charters and revolutions are in some countries. A real reformation, prepared during many ages, is the work of the Spirit of God. Before the appointed hour, the greatest geniuses, and even the most faithful of God's servants, cannot produce it; but when the reforming time is come, when it is God's pleasure to renovate the affairs of the world, the divine life must clear a passage, and it is able to create of itself the humble instruments by which this life is communicated to the human race. Then, if men are silent, the very stones will cry out.

It is to the protest of Spires (1529) that we are now about to turn our eyes; but the way to this protest was prepared by years of peace, and followed by attempts at concord that we shall have also to describe. Nevertheless the formal establishment of Protestantism remains the great fact that prevails in the history of the Reformation from 1526 to 1529. The Duke of Brunswick had brought into Germany the threatening message of Charles the Fifth. That emperor was about to repair from Spain to Rome to come to an understanding with the pope, and from thence to pass into Germany to constrain the heretics. The last summons was to be addressed to them by the Diet of Spires, 1526. The decisive hour for the Reformation was on the point of striking. On the 25th June, 1526, the diet opened. In the instructions dated at Seville, 23rd March, the emperor ordered that the Church customs should be maintained entire, and called upon the diet to punish those who refused to carry out the edict of Worms. Ferdinand himself was at Spires, and his presence rendered these orders more formidable. Never had the hostility which the Romish partisans entertained against the evangelical princes, appeared in so striking a manner. "The Pharisees," said Spalatin, "are inveterate in their hatred against Jesus Christ."3

Never also had the evangelical princes showed so much hope. Instead of coming forward frightened and trembling, like guilty men, they were seen advancing, surrounded by the ministers of the Word, with uplifted heads and cheerful looks. Their first step was to ask for a place of worship. The Bishop of Spires, count-palatine of the Rhine, having indignantly refused this strange request, the princes complained of it as an act of injustice, and ordered their ministers to preach daily in the halls of their palaces, which were immediately filled by an immense crowd from the city and the country, amounting to many thousands.5 In vain on the feast days did Ferdinand, the ultramontane princes, and the bishops assist in the pomps of the Roman worship in the beautiful cathedral of Spires; the unadorned Word of God, preached in the protestant vestibules, engrossed all hearers, and the mass was celebrated in an empty church.

It was not only the ministers, but the knights and the grooms, "mere idiots," who, unable to control their zeal, everywhere eagerly extolled the Word of the Lord. All the followers of the evangelical princes wore these letters embroidered on their right sleeves: V. D. M. I. Æ., that is to say, "The Word of the Lord endureth for ever."8 The same inscription might be read on the escutcheons of the princes, suspended over their hotels. The Word of God—such from this moment was the palladium of the Reformation. This was not all. The Protestants knew that the mere worship would not suffice: the landgrave had therefore called upon the Elector to abolish certain "court customs" which dishonoured the Gospel. These princes had consequently drawn up an order of living which forbade drunkenness, debauchery, and other vicious customs prevalent during a diet.

Perhaps the protestant princes sometimes put forward their dissent beyond what prudence would have required. Not only, they did not go to mass, and did not observe the prescribed fasts, but still further, on the fast days, their attendants were seen publicly bearing dishes of meat and game, destined for their masters' tables, and crossing, says Cochlœus, in the presence of the whole auditory, the halls in which the worship was celebrating. "It was," says this writer, "with the intent of attracting the catholics by the savour of the meats and of the wines." The Elector in effect had a numerous court: seven hundred persons formed his retinue. One day he gave a banquet at which twenty-six princes with their gentlemen and councillors were present. They continued playing until a very late hour—ten at night. Everything in Duke John announced the most powerful prince of the empire. The youthful landgrave of Hesse, full of zeal and knowledge, and in the strength of a first christian love, made a still deeper impression on those who approached him. He would frequently dispute with the bishops, and owing to his acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, easily stopped their mouths. This firmness in the friends of the Reformation produced results that surpassed their expectation. It was no longer possible to be deceived: the spirit that was manifested in these men was the spirit of the Bible. Everywhere the sceptre was falling from the hands of Rome. "The leaven of Luther," said a zealous papist, "sets all the people of Germany in a ferment, and foreign nations themselves are agitated by formidable movements."

It was immediately seen how great is the strength of deep convictions. The states that were well-disposed towards the reform, but which had not ventured to give their adhesion publicly became emboldened. The neutral states, demanding the repose of the empire, formed the resolution of opposing the edict of Worms, the execution of which would have spread trouble through all Germany; and the papist states lost their boldness. The bow of the mighty was broken.

Ferdinand did not think proper, at so critical a moment, to communicate to the diet the severe instructions he had received from Seville. He substituted a proposition calculated to satisfy both parties. The laymen immediately recovered the influence of which the clergy had dispossessed them. The ecclesiastics resisted a proposal in the college of princes that the diet should occupy itself with church abuses, but their exertions were unavailing. Undoubtedly a non-political assembly would have been preferable to the diet, but it was already a point gained, that religious matters were no longer to be regulated solely by the priests. As soon as this resolution was communicated to the deputies from the cities, they called for the abolition of every usage contrary to the faith in Jesus Christ. In vain did the bishops exclaim that, instead of doing away with pretended abuses, they would do much better to burn all the books with which Germany had been inundated during the last eight years. "You desire," was the reply, "to bury all wisdom and knowledge. The request of the cities was agreed to,4 and the diet was divided into committees for the abolition of abuses.

Then was manifested the profound disgust inspired by the priests of Rome. "The clergy," said the deputy for Frankfort, "make a jest of the public good, and look after their own interests only." "The laymen," said the deputy from Duke George, "have the salvation of Christendom much more at heart than the clergy." The commissioners made their report; people were astonished at it. Never had men spoken out so freely against the pope and the bishops. The commission of the princes, in which the ecclesiastics and laymen were in equal numbers, proposed a fusion of popery and reform. "The priests would do better to marry," said they, "than to keep women of ill fame in their houses; every man should he at liberty to communicate under one or both forms; German and

Latin may be equally employed in the Lord's Supper and in baptism; as for the other sacraments, let them be preserved, but let them be administered gratuitously. Finally, let the Word of God be preached according to the interpretation of the Church (this was the demand of Rome), but always explaining Scripture by Scripture" (this was the great principle of the Reformation). Thus the first step was taken towards a national union. Still a few more efforts, and the whole German race would be walking in the direction of the Gospel. The evangelical Christians, at the sight of this glorious prospect, redoubled their exertions. "Stand fast in the doctrine," said the Elector of Saxony to his councillors. At the same time hawkers in every part of the city were selling Christian pamphlets, short and easy to read, written in Latin and in German, and ornamented with engravings, in which the errors of Rome were vigorously attacked.2 One of these books was entitled, The Papacy, with its Members painted and described, by Doctor Luther. In it figured the pope, the cardinals, and all the religious orders, exceeding sixty, each with their costumes and description in verse. Under the picture of one of these orders were the following lines:

Greedy priests, see, roll in gold, Forgetful of the humble Jesu: under another:

We forbid you to behold The Bible, lest it should mislead you! and under a third:

We can fast and pray the harder With an overflowing larder.

"Not one of these orders," said Luther to the reader, "thinks either of faith or charity. This one wears the tonsure, the other a hood; this a cloak, that a robe. One is white, another black, a third gray, and a fourth blue. Here is one holding a loooking-glass, there one with a pair of scissars. Each has his playthings … Ah! these are the palmer-worms, the locusts, the canker-worms, and the caterpillars, which, as Joel saith, have eaten up all the earth." But if Luther employed the scourges of sarcasm, he also blew the trumpet of the prophets; and this he did in a work entitled The Destruction of Jerusalem. Shedding tears like Jeremiah, he denounced to the German people a ruin similar to that of the holy city, if like it they rejected the Gospel. "God has imparted to us all his treasures," exclaimed he; "he became man, he has served us,2 he died for us, he has risen again, and he has so opened the gates of heaven, that all may enter … The hour of grace is come … The glad tidings are proclaimed … But where is the city, where is the prince that has received them? They insult the Gospel: they draw the sword, and daring seize God by the beard. … But wait … He will turn round; with one blow will he break their jaws, and all Germany will be one vast ruin."

These works had a very great sale. They were read not only by the peasants and townspeople, but also by the nobles and princes. Leaving the priests alone at the foot of the altar, they threw themselves into the arms of the new Gospel.5 The necessity of a reform of abuses was proclaimed on the 1st of August by a general committee.

Then Rome, which had appeared to slumber, awoke. Fanatical priests, monks, ecclesiastical princes, all gathered round Ferdinand. Cunning, bribery, nothing was spared. Did not Ferdinand possess the instructions of Seville? To refuse their publication was to effect the ruin of the Church and of the empire. Let the voice of Charles, said they, oppose its powerful veto to the dizziness that is hurrying Germany along, and the empire will be saved! Ferdinand made up his mind, and at length, on the 3d August, published the decree drawn up more than four months previously in favour of the edict of Worms. The persecution was about to begin; the reformers would be thrown

into dungeons, and the sword drawn on the banks of the Guadalquivir would at last pierce the bosom of the Reformation. The effect of the imperial ordinance was immense. The breaking of an axletree does not more violently check the velocity of a railway train. The Elector and the landgrave announced that they were about to quit the diet, and ordered their attendants to prepare for their departure. At the same time the deputies from the cities drew towards these two princes, and the Reformation appeared as if it would enter immediately upon a contest with the pope and Charles the Fifth. But it was not yet prepared for a general struggle. The tree was destined to strike its root deeper, before the Almighty unchained the stormy winds against it. A spirit of blindness, similar to that which in former times was sent out upon Saul and Herod, then seized upon the great enemy of the Gospel: and thus was it that Divine Providence saved the Reformation in its cradle. The first movement of trouble being over, the friends of the Gospel began to consider the date of the imperial instructions, and to weigh the new political combinations which seemed to announce to the world the most unlooked-for events. “When the emperor wrote these letters,” said the cities of Upper Germany, “he was on good terms with the pope, but now everything is changed. It is even asserted that he told Margaret, his representative in the Low Countries, to proceed gently with respect to the Gospel. Let us send him a deputation.” That was not necessary. Charles had not waited until now to form a different resolution. The course of public affairs, taking a sudden turn, had rushed into an entirely new path. Years of peace were about to be granted to the Reformation.

Clement VII., whom Charles was about to visit, according to the instructions of Seville, in order to receive the imperial crown in Rome itself and from his sacred hands, and in return to give up to the pontiff the Gospel and the Reformation,—Clement VII., seized with a strange infatuation, had suddenly turned against this powerful monarch. The emperor, unwilling to favour his ambition in every point, had opposed his claims on the states of the Duke of Ferrara. Clement immediately became exasperated, and cried out that Charles wished to enslave the peninsula, but that the time was come for re-establishing the independence of Italy. This great idea of Italian independence, entertained at that period by a few literary men, had not, as in our days, penetrated the mass of the nation. Clement therefore hastened to have recourse to political combinations. The Pope, the Venetians, and the King of France, who had scarcely recovered his liberty, formed a holy league, of which the King of England was by a bull nominated the preserver and protector. In June 1526, the emperor caused the most favourable propositions to be presented to the pope; but his advances were ineffectual, and the Duke of Sessa, Charles’s ambassador at Rome, returning on horseback, from his last audience, placed a court-fool behind him, who, by a thousand monkey tricks, gave the Roman people to understand how little they cared for the pope and his projects. Clement responded to these bravadoes by a brief, in which he threatened the emperor with excommunication, and without loss of time pushed his troops into Lombardy, whilst Milan, Florence, and Piedmont declared for the holy league. Thus was Europe preparing to be avenged for the triumph of Pavia.

Charles did not hesitate. He wheeled to the right as quickly as the pope had done to the left, and turned abruptly towards the evangelical princes. “Let us suspend the edict of Worms,” wrote he to his brother; “let us bring back Luther’s partisans by mildness, and by a good council cause the triumph of evangelical truth.” At the same time he demanded that the elector, the landgrave, and their allies should march with him against the Turks—or against Italy, for the common good of

Christendom.

Ferdinand hesitated. To gain the friendship of the Lutherans was to forfeit that of the other princes, who were already beginning to utter violent threats. The Protestants themselves were not very eager to take the emperor's hand. "It is God, God himself," they said, "who will save his churches."3 What was to be done? The edict of Worms could neither be repealed nor carried into execution. So strange a situation led of necessity to the desired solution: religious liberty. The first idea of this occurred to the deputies of the cities. "In one place," said they, "the ancient ceremonies have been preserved; in another they have been abolished; and both think they are right. Let us allow every man to do as he thinks fit, until a council shall re-establish the desired unity by the Word of God." This idea gained favour, and the recess of the diet, dated the 17th August, decreed that a universal or at least a national free council should be convoked within a year, that they should request the emperor to return speedily to Germany, and that, until then, each state should behave in its own territory in such a manner as to be able to render an account to God and to the emperor.

Thus they escaped from their difficulty by a middle course; and this time it was really the true path. Each one maintained his rights, while recognising another's. The diet of 1526 forms an important epoch in history: an ancient power, that of the middle ages, is shaken; a new power, that of modern times, is advancing; religious liberty boldly takes its stand in front of Romish despotism; a lay spirit prevails over the sacerdotal spirit. In this single step there is a complete victory: the cause of the reform is won.

Yet it was little suspected. Luther, on the morrow of the day on which the recess was published, wrote to a friend: "The diet is sitting at Spires in the German fashion. They drink and gamble, and there is nothing done except that." "Le congrès danse et ne marche pas,"3 has been said in our days. Great things are often transacted under an appearance of frivolity, and God accomplishes his designs unknown even to those whom he employs as his instruments. In this diet a gravity and love of liberty of conscience were manifested, which are the fruits of Christianity, and which in the sixteenth century had its earliest if not its most energetic development among the German nations.

Yet Ferdinand still hesitated. Mahomet himself came to the aid of the Gospel. Louis, king of Hungary and Bohemia, drowned at Mohacz on the 29th August, 1526, as he was fleeing from before Soliman II., had bequeathed the crown of these two kingdoms to Ferdinand. But the Duke of Bavaria, the Waywode of Transylvania, and, above all, the terrible Soliman, contested it against him. This was sufficient to occupy Charles's brother: he left Luther, and hastened to dispute two thrones.

CHAPTER II

Italian War—the Emperor's Manifesto—March on Rome—Revolt of the Troops—The Sack of Rome—German Humours—Violence of the Spaniards—Clement VII. capitulates. The emperor immediately reaped the fruits of his new policy. No longer having his hands tied by Germany, he turned them against Rome. The Reformation was to be exalted and the Papacy abased. The blows aimed at its pitiless enemy were about to open a new career to the evangelical work.

Ferdinand, who was detained by his Hungarian affairs, gave the charge of the Italian expedition to Freundsberg, that old general who had in so friendly a manner patted Luther on the shoulder, as

the Reformer was about to appear before the Diet of Worms. This veteran who, as a contemporary observes,2 “bore in his chivalrous heart God’s holy Gospel, well fortified and flanked by a strong wall,” pledged his wife’s jewels, sent recruiting parties into all the towns of Upper Germany, and, owing to the magic idea of a war against the pope, soon witnessed crowds of soldiers flocking to his standard. “Announce,” Charles had said to his brother,—“announce that the army is to march against the Turks; every one will know what Turks are meant.”

Thus the puissant Charles, instead of marching with the pope against the Reformation, as he had threatened at Seville, marches with the Reformation against the pope. A few days had sufficed to produce this change of direction: there are few periods of history in which the hand of God is more plainly manifested. Charles immediately assumed all the airs of a reformer. On the 17th September, he addressed a manifesto to the pope, in which he reproaches him for behaving not like the father of the faithful, but like an insolent and haughty man;4 and declares his astonishment that he, Christ’s vicar, should dare shed blood to acquire earthly possessions, “which,” added he, “is quite contrary to the evangelical doctrine.” Luther could not have spoken better. “Let your holiness,” continued Charles the Fifth, “return the sword of St. Peter into the scabbard, and convoke a holy and universal council.” But I the sword was much more to the pontiff’s taste than the council. Is not the papacy, according to the Romish doctors, the source of the two powers? Can it not depose kings, and consequently fight against them?6 Charles prepared to requite “eye for eye and tooth for tooth.”

Now began that terrible campaign during which the storm burst on Rome and on the Papacy that had been destined to fall on Germany and the Gospel. By the violence of the blows inflicted on the pontifical city, we may judge of the severity of those that would have dashed in pieces the reformed churches. While retracing such scenes of horror, we have constant need of calling to mind that the chastisement of the seven-hilled city had been predicted by the Holy Scriptures. In the month of November, Freundsberg at the head of fifteen thousand men was at the foot of the Alps. The old general, avoiding the military roads, that were well guarded by the enemy, flung himself into a narrow path, over frightful precipices, that a few blows of the mattock would have rendered impassable. The soldiers were forbidden to look behind them; nevertheless their heads turned, their feet slipped, and horse and foot rolled from time to time into the abyss. In the most difficult passes, the surest-footed of the infantry lowered their long pikes to the right and left of their aged chief, by way of barrier, and Freundsberg advanced clinging to the lansquenet in front, and pushed on by the one behind. In three days the Alps were crossed, and on the 19th November the army reached the territory of Brescia. The Constable of Bourbon, who succeeded to the chief command of the imperial army after the death of Pescara, had just taken possession of the duchy of Milan. The emperor having promised him this conquest for a recompense, Bourbon was compelled to remain there some time to consolidate his power. At length, on the 12th February, he and his Spanish troops joined the army of Freundsberg, which was becoming impatient at his delays. The constable had many men, but no money; he resolved therefore to follow the advice of the Duke of Ferrara, that inveterate enemy of the princes of the Church, and proceed straight to Rome. The whole army received this news with a shout of joy. The Spaniards were filled with the desire of avenging Charles V, and the Germans were overflowing with hatred against the pope; all exulted in the hope of receiving their pay and of having their labours richly repaid at last by those treasures of Christendom that Rome had been accumulating for ages. Their shouts re-echoed

beyond the Alps. Every man in Germany thought that the last hour of the papacy had arrived, and prepared to contemplate its fall. “The emperor’s forces are triumphing in Italy,” wrote Luther; “the pope is visited from every quarter. His destruction draweth nigh: his hour and his end are come.”3 A few slight advantages gained by the papal soldiers in the kingdom of Naples led to the conclusion of a truce that was to be ratified by the pope and by the emperor. As soon as this was known, a frightful tumult broke out in the constable’s army. The Spanish troops revolted, compelled him to flee, and pillaged his tent. Then approaching the lansquenets, they began to shout as loudly as they could, the only German words they knew: Lance! lance! money! money! Such cries found an echo in the bosoms of the Imperialists; they were moved in their turn, and also began to shout with all their might: Lance! lance! money! money! Freundsberg beat to muster, and having drawn up the soldiers around him and his principal officers, calmly demanded if he had ever deserted them. All was useless. The old affection which the lansquenets bore to their leader seemed extinct. One chord alone vibrated in their hearts: they must have pay and war. Accordingly, lowering their lances, they presented them as if they would slay their officers, and again began to shout, “Lance! lance! money! money!” When Freundsberg, whom no army however large had ever frightened,—Freundsberg, who was accustomed to say, “the more enemies, the greater the honour,” saw these lansquenets, at whose head he had grown grey, aiming their murderous steel against him, he lost all power of utterance, and fell senseless upon a drum, as if struck with a thunderbolt. The strength of the veteran general was broken for ever. But the sight of their dying captain produced on the lansquenets an effect that no speech could have made. All the lances were upraised, and the agitated soldiers retired with downcast eyes. Four days later, Freundsberg recovered his speech. “Forward,” said he to the Constable; “God himself will bring us to the mark.” Forward! forward! repeated the lansquenets. Bourbon had no alternative: besides, neither Charles nor Clement would listen to any proposals of peace. Freundsberg was carried to Ferrara, and afterwards to his castle of Mindelheim, where he died after an illness of eighteen months; and on the 18th April Bourbon took that high road to Rome which so many formidable armies coming from the north had already trodden.

Whilst the storm descending from the Alps was approaching the eternal city, the pope lost his presence of mind, sent away his troops, and kept only his body-guard. More than 30,000 Romans, capable of bearing arms, paraded their bravery in the streets, dragging their long swords after them, quarrelling and fighting; but these citizens, eager in the pursuit of gain, had little thought of defending the pope, and hoping to derive great profit from his stay, they desired on the contrary that the magnificent Charles would come and settle in Rome. On the evening of the 5th May Bourbon arrived under the walls of the capital; and he would have begun the assault at that very moment had he been provided with ladders. On the morning of the 6th, the army, concealed by a thick fog which hid their movements, was put in motion, the Spaniards marching to their station above the gate of the Holy Ghost, and the Germans below.2 The constable, wishing to encourage his soldiers, seized a scaling-ladder, mounted the wall, and called on them to follow him. At this moment a ball struck him: he fell, and expired an hour after. Such was the end of this unhappy man, a traitor to his king and to his country, and suspected even by his new friends. His death, far from checking, served only to excite the army. Claudius Seidenstucker, grasping his long sword, first cleared the wall; he was followed by Michael Hartmann, and these two reformed Germans exclaimed that God himself was marching before them in the clouds. The gates were opened, the army poured in, the suburbs were taken, and the pope, surrounded by thirteen cardinals, fled to

the castle of St. Angelo. The Imperialists, at whose head was now the prince of Orange, offered him peace on condition of his paying 300,000 crowns. But Clement, who thought that the holy league was on the point of delivering him, and fancied he already saw their leading horsemen, rejected every proposition. After four hours' repose, the attack was renewed, and by sunset the army was master of all the city. It remained under arms and in good order until midnight, the Spaniards in the Piazza Navona, and the Germans in the Campofiore. At last, seeing no demonstrations either of war or peace, the soldiers disbanded and ran to pillage.

Then began the famous "Sack of Rome." The papacy had for centuries put Christendom in the press. Prebends, annates, jubilees, pilgrimages, ecclesiastical graces,—she had made money of them all. These greedy troops, that for months had lived in wretchedness, determined to make her disgorge. No one was spared, the imperial not more than the ultramontane party, the Ghibellines not more than the Guelfs. Churches, palaces, convents, private houses, basilics, banks, tombs—every thing was pillaged, even to the golden ring that the corpse of Julius II. still wore on its finger. The Spaniards displayed the greatest skill, scenting out and discovering treasures in the most mysterious hiding-places; but the Neapolitans were the most outrageous. "On every side were heard," says Guicciardini, "the piteous shrieks of the Roman women and of the nuns, whom the soldiers dragged away by companies to satiate their lust.2 At first the Germans found a certain pleasure in making the papists feel the weight of their swords. But erelong, happy at procuring victuals and drink, they were more pacific than their allies. It was upon those things which the Romans called "holy" that the anger of the Lutherans was especially discharged. They took away the chalices, the pyxes, the silver remontrances, and clothed their servants and camp-boys with the sacerdotal garments. The Campofiore was changed into an immense gambling-house. The soldiers brought thither golden vessels and bags full of crowns, staked them upon one throw of the dice, and after losing them went in search of others. A certain Simon Baptista, who had foretold the sack of the city, had been thrown into prison by the pope; the Germans liberated him, and made him drink with them. But, like Jeremiah, he prophesied against all. "Rob, plunder," cried he to his liberators; "you shall however give back all; the money of the soldiers and the gold of the priests will follow the same road."

Nothing pleased the Germans more than to mock the papal court. "Many prelates," says Guicciardini. "were paraded on asses through all the city of Rome." After this procession, the bishops paid their ransom; but they fell into the hands of the Spaniards, who made them pay it a second time.5

One day a lansquenet, named Guillaume de Sainte Celle, put on the pope's robes, and placed the triple crown upon his head; others gathered round him, adorning themselves with the red hats and long robes of the cardinals; and going in procession upon asses through the streets of the city, they all arrived at last before the castle of St. Angelo, to which Clement VII. had retired. Here the soldier-cardinals alighted, and lifting up the front of their robes, kissed the feet of the pretended pontiff. The latter drank to the health of Clement VII., the cardinals kneeling did the same, and exclaimed that henceforward they would be pious popes and good cardinals, careful not to excite wars as their predecessors had done. They then formed a conclave, and the pope having announced to his consistory that it was his intention to resign the papacy, all hands were immediately raised for the election, and they cried out, "Luther is pope! Luther is pope!" Never had pontiff been proclaimed with such perfect unanimity. Such were the humours of the Germans. The

Spaniards did not let the Romans off so easily. Clement VII. had called them “Moors,” and had published a plenary indulgence for whoever should kill any of them. Nothing, therefore, could restrain their fury. These faithful Catholics put the prelates to death in the midst of horrible cruelties, destined to extort their treasures from them: they spared neither rank, sex, nor age. It was not until the sack had lasted ten days, and a booty of ten millions of golden crowns had been collected, and from five to eight thousand victims had perished, that quiet began to be in some degree restored.

Thus did the pontifical city decline in the midst of a long and cruel pillage, and that splendour with which Rome from the beginning of the sixteenth century had filled the world, faded in a few hours. Nothing could preserve this haughty capital from chastisement, not even the prayers of its enemies. “I would not have Rome burnt,” Luther had exclaimed; “it would be a monstrous deed.” The fears of Melancthon were still keener: “I tremble for the libraries,” said he: “we know how hateful books are to Mars.”3 But in despite of these wishes of the reformers, the city of Leo X. fell under the judgment of God.

Clement VII., besieged in the castle of Saint Angelo, and fearful that the enemy would blow his asylum into the air with their mines, at last capitulated. He renounced every alliance against Charles the Fifth, and bound himself to remain a prisoner until he had paid the army four hundred thousand ducats. The evangelical Christians gazed with astonishment on this judgment of the Lord. “Such,” said they, “is the empire of Jesus Christ, that the emperor, pursuing Luther on behalf of the pope, is constrained to ruin the pope instead of Luther. All things minister unto the Lord, and turn against his adversaries.”

CHAPTER III

Profitable Calm—Constitution of the Church—Philip of Hesse—The Monk of Marburg—Lambert’s Paradoxes—Friar Boniface—Disputation at Hamburg—Triumph of the Gospel in Hesse—Constitution of the Church—Bishops—Synods—Two Elements of the Church—Luther on the Ministry—Organization of the Church—Luther’s Contradictions on State Interference—Luther to the Elector—German Mass—Melancthon’s Instructions—Disaffection—Visitation of the Reformed Churches—Results—The Reformation advances—Elizabeth of Brandenburg The Reformation needed some years of repose that it might increase and gain strength; and it could not enjoy peace, unless its great enemies were at war with each other. The madness of Clement VII. was as it were the lightning-conductor of the Reformation, and the ruins of Rome built up the Gospel. It was not only a few months’ gain; from 1526 to 1529 there was a calm in Germany, by which the Reformation profited to organize and extend itself. A constitution was now to be given to the renovated Church. As the papal yoke had been broken, the ecclesiastical order required to be re-established. It was impossible to restore their ancient jurisdiction to the bishops; for these continental prelates maintained that they were, in an especial manner, the pope’s servants. A new state of things was therefore called for, under pain of seeing the Church fall into anarchy. This was immediately provided against. It was then that the evangelical nations separated definitely from that despotic dominion which had for ages kept all the West in bondage. The diet had already on two occasions wished to make the reform of the Church a national work; the emperor, the pope, and a few princes were opposed to it; the diet of Spires had therefore resigned to each state the task that it could not accomplish itself. But what constitution were they about to substitute for the

papal hierarchy?

They could, while suppressing the pope, preserve the Episcopal order: it was the form nearest approximating that which was on the point of being destroyed. This was done in England, where we have an Episcopalian Church; but, as we have just observed, it could not be realized on the continent. There were no Latimers, no Cranmers among the continental bishops.

They might, on the contrary, reconstruct the ecclesiastical order, by having recourse to the sovereignty of God's Word, and by re-establishing the rights of the christian people. This form was the most remote from the Roman hierarchy. Between these two extremes there were several middle courses. The latter plan was Zwingle's: but the reformer of Zurich had not fully carried it out. He had not called upon the christian people to exercise the sovereignty, and had stopped at the Council of Two Hundred as representing the Church. The step before which Zwingle had hesitated might be taken, and it was so. A prince did not shrink from what had alarmed even republicans. Evangelical Germany, at the moment when, she began to try her hand on ecclesiastical constitutions, began with that which trenched deepest on the papal monarchy.

It was not, however, from Germany that such a system could proceed. If aristocratic England was destined to cling to the episcopal form, docile Germany was destined the rather to stop in a governmental medium. The democratic extreme issued from Switzerland and France. One of Calvin's predecessors now hoisted that flag which the powerful arm of the Genevese Reformer was to lift again in after-years and plant in France, Switzerland, Holland, Scotland, and even in England, whence it was a century later to cross the Atlantic and summon North America to take its rank among the nations.

Philip of Hesse, who has been compared to Philip of Macedon in subtlety, and to his son Alexander in courage, was the most enterprising of all the evangelical princes. Philip comprehended that religion was at length acquiring its due importance; and far from opposing the great development that was agitating the people, he put himself in harmony with the new ideas. The morning-star had risen for Hesse almost at the same time as for Saxony. In 1517, when Luther in Wittemberg was preaching the gratuitous remission of sins, men and women in Marburg were seen repairing secretly to one of the ditches of the city, and there, collected round a solitary loophole, listening eagerly to the words of consolation that issued from within. It was the voice of the Franciscan, James Limburg, who, having declared that for fifteen centuries the priests had falsified the Gospel of Christ, had been thrown into this gloomy dungeon. These mysterious assemblies lasted a fortnight. On a sudden the voice was silent; these lonely meetings had been discovered, and the Franciscan, torn from his cell, had been hurried away across the Lahnberg towards some unknown spot. Not far. from the Ziegenberg, some weeping citizens of Marburg came up with him, and hastily pulling aside the awning that covered his car, they asked him, "Whither are you going?" "Where God wills," calmly replied the friar. He was never heard of again, and it is not known what became of him. These disappearances are usual in the papacy. No sooner had Philip prevailed in the Diet of Spires, than he resolved on devoting himself to the reformation of his hereditary states. His resolute character made him incline towards the Swiss reform: it was not therefore one of the moderates that he wanted. He had formed a connexion at Spires with James Sturm, the deputy from Strasburg, who spoke to him of Francis Lambert of Avignon, who was then at Strasburg. Of a pleasing exterior and decided character, Lambert

combined with the fire of the south all the perseverance of the north. He was the first in France to throw off the cowl, and from that time he had never ceased to call for a thorough reform in the Church. “Formerly,” said he, “when I was a hypocrite, I lived in abundance; now I consume frugally my daily bread with my small family; but I had rather be poor in Christ’s kingdom, than possess abundance of gold in the dissolute dwellings of the pope.” The landgrave saw that Lambert was just the man he required, and invited him to his court.

Lambert, desiring to clear the way for the reformation of Hesse, drew up one hundred and fifty-eight theses, which he entitled “paradoxes,” and posted them, according to the custom of the times, on the church doors.

Friends and enemies immediately crowded round them. Some Roman-catholics would have torn them down, but the reformed townspeople kept watch, and holding a synod in the public square, discussed, developed, and proved these propositions, ridiculing at the same time the anger of the papists.

Boniface Dornemann, a young priest, full of self-conceit, whom the bishop, on the day of his consecration, had extolled above Paul for his learning, and above the Virgin for his chastity, finding himself too short to reach Lambert’s placard, borrowed a stool, and, surrounded by a numerous audience, began to read the propositions aloud,

“All that is deformed ought to be reformed. The Word of God alone teaches us what ought to be so, and all reform that is effected otherwise is vain.” This was the first thesis. “Hem!” said the young priest, “I shall not attack that.” He continued.

“It belongs to the Church to judge on matters of faith. Now the Church is the congregation of those who are united by the same spirit, the same faith, the same God, the same Mediator, the same Word, by which alone they are governed, and in which alone they have life.”

I cannot attack that proposition,” said the priest. He continued reading from his stool.

“The Word is the true key. The kingdom of heaven is open to him who believes the Word, and shut against him who believes it not. Whoever, therefore, truly possesses the Word of God, has the power of the keys. All other keys, all the decrees of the councils and popes, and all the rules of the monks, are valueless.”

Friar Boniface shook his head and continued.

“Since the priesthood of the law has been abolished, Christ is the only immortal and eternal priest, and he does not, like men, need a successor. Neither the Bishop of Rome nor any other person in the world is his representative here below. But all Christians, since the commencement of the Church, have been and are participators in his priesthood.” This proposition smelt of heresy. Dornemann, however, was not discouraged; and whether it was from weakness of mind, or from the dawning of light, at each proposition that did not too much shock his prejudices, he repeated: “Certainly, I shall not attack that one!” The people listened in astonishment, when one of them—whether he was a fanatical Romanist, a fanatical reformer, or a mischievous wag, I cannot tell—tired with these continual repetitions, exclaimed; “Get down, you knave, who cannot find a word to impugn.” Then rudely pulling away the stool, he threw the unfortunate clerk flat in the mud. On the 21st October, at seven in the morning, the gates of the principal church at Homburg were

thrown open, and prelates, abbots, priests, counts, knights, and deputies of the towns, entered in succession, and among them was Philip, in his quality of first member of the church.

After Lambert had explained and proved his theses, he added: “Let him stand forth who has anything to say against them.” At first there was a profound silence; but at length Nicholas Ferber, superior of the Franciscans of Marburg, who in 1524, applying to Rome’s favourite argument, had entreated the Landgrave to employ the sword against the heretics, began to speak with drooping head and downcast eyes. As he invoked Augustin, Peter Lombard, and other doctors to his assistance, the landgrave observed to him: “Do not put forward the wavering opinions of men, but the Word of God, which alone fortifies and strengthens our hearts.” The Franciscan sat down in confusion, saying, “This is not the place for replying.” The disputation, however, recommenced, and Lambert, showing all the power of truth, so astonished his adversary, that the superior, alarmed at what he called “thunders of blasphemy and lightnings of impiety,” sat down again, observing a second time, “This is not the place for replying.” In vain did the Chancellor Feige declare to him that each man had the right of maintaining his opinion with full liberty; in vain did the landgrave himself exclaim that the Church was sighing after truth; silence had become Rome’s refuge. “I will defend the doctrine of purgatory,” a priest had said prior to the discussion; “I will attack the paradoxes under the sixth head (on the true priesthood),” had said another; and a third had exclaimed, “I will overthrow those under the tenth head (on images): but now they were all dumb.

Upon this Lambert, clasping his hands, exclaimed with Zacharias: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people.

After three days of discussion, which had been a continual triumph for the evangelical doctrine, men were selected and commissioned to constitute the churches of Hesse in accordance with the Word of God. They were more than three days occupied in the task, and their new constitution was then published in the name of the synod. The first ecclesiastical constitution produced by the Reformation should have a place in history, and the more so as it was then put forward as a model for the new churches of Christendom. The autonomy of self-government of the Church is its fundamental principle: it is from the Church, from its representatives assembled in the name of the Lord, that this legislation emanates; there is no mention in the prologue either of state or of landgrave. Philip, content with having broken for himself and for his people the yoke of a foreign priest, had no desire to put himself in his place, and was satisfied with that external superintendence which is necessary for the maintenance of order. A second distinctive feature in this constitution is its simplicity both of government and worship. The assembly conjures all future synods not to load the churches with a multitude of ordinances, “seeing that where orders abound disorder superabounds.” They would not even continue the organs in the churches, “because,” said they, “men should understand what they hear.” The more the human mind has been bent in one direction, the more violent is the reaction when it is unbent. The Church passed at that time from the extreme of symbols to the extreme of simplicity. These are the principal features of this constitution:—

“The Church can only be taught and governed by the Word of its Sovereign Pastor. Whoever has recourse to any other word shall be deposed and excommunicated.

“Every pious man, learned in the Word of God, whatever be his condition, may be elected bishop if he desire it, for he is called inwardly of God.

“Let no one believe that by a bishop we understand any thing else than a simple minister of the Word of God.

“The ministers are servants, and consequently they ought not to be lords, princes, or governors.

“Let the faithful assemble and choose their bishops and deacons. Each church should elect its own pastor.

“Let those who are elected bishops be consecrated to their office by the imposition of the hands of three bishops; and as for the deacons, if there are no ministers present, let them receive the laying on of hands from the elders of the Church.

“If a bishop causes any scandal to the church by his effeminacy, by the splendour of his garments, or by levity of conduct, and if, on being warned, he persists, let him be deposed by the Church.

“Let each church place its bishop in a condition to live with his family, and to be hospitable, as St. Paul enjoins; but let the bishops exact nothing for their casual duties.

“On every Sunday let there be, in some suitable place, an assembly of all the men who are in the number of the saints, to regulate with the bishop, according to God’s Word, all the affairs of the Church, and to excommunicate whoever gives occasion of scandal to the Church; for the Church of Christ has never existed without exercising the power of excommunication.

“As a weekly assembly is necessary for the direction of the particular churches, so a general synod should be held annually for the direction of all the churches in the country.

“All the pastors are its natural members; but each church shall further elect from its body a man full of the Spirit and of faith, to whom it shall entrust its powers for all that is in the jurisdiction of the synod.

“Three visitors shall be elected yearly, with commission to go through all the churches, to examine those who have been elected bishops, to confirm those who have been approved of, and to provide for the execution of the decrees of the synod.”

It will no doubt be found that this first evangelical constitution went in some points to the extreme of ecclesiastical democracy; but certain institutions had crept in that were capable of increase and of changing its nature. Six superintendents for life were afterwards substituted for the three annual visiters (who, according to the primitive institution, might be simple members of the church); and, as has been remarked, the encroachments, whether of these superintendents or of the state, gradually paralyzed the activity and independence of the churches of Hesse. This constitution fared like that of the Abbé Sièyes, in the year 8, (a.d. 1799,) which, intended to be republican, served, through the influence of Napoleon Bonaparte to establish the despotism of the Empire.

It was not the less a remarkable work. Romish doctors have reproached the Reformation for making the Church a too interior institution. In effect, the Reformation and Popery recognise two elements in the Church,—the one exterior, the other interior; but while Popery gives precedence to the former, the Reformation assigns it to the latter. If however it be a reproach against the

Reformation for having an inward Church only, and for not creating an external one, the remarkable constitution of which we have just exhibited a few features, will save us the trouble of reply. The exterior ecclesiastical order, which then sprung from the very heart of the Reformation, is far more perfect than that of Popery.

One great question presented itself: Will these principles be adopted by all the Churches of the Reformation?

Every thing seemed to indicate that they would. At that time the most pious men were of opinion that the ecclesiastical power proceeded from the members of the Church. On withdrawing from the hierarchical extreme, they flung themselves into a democratical one. Luther himself had professed this doctrine as early as 1523. When the Calixtins of Bohemia found that the bishops of their country refused them ministers, they had gone so far as to take the first vagabond priest. “If you have no other means of procuring pastors,” wrote Luther to them, “rather do without them, and let each head of a family read the Gospel in his own house, and baptize his children, sighing after the sacrament of the altar as the Jews at Babylon did for Jerusalem. The consecration of the Pope creates priests—not of God, but of the Devil, ordained solely to trample Jesus Christ under foot, to bring his sacrifice to naught, and to sell imaginary holocausts to the world in his name.2 Men become ministers only by election and calling, and that ought to be effected in the following manner:

“First, seek God by prayer; then being assembled together with all those whose hearts God has touched, choose in the Lord’s name him or them whom you shall have acknowledged to be fitted for this ministry. After that, let the chief men among you lay their hands on them, and recommend them to the people and to the Church.”4

Luther, in thus calling upon the people alone to nominate their pastors, submitted to the necessities of the times in Bohemia. It was requisite to constitute the ministry; and as the ministry had no existence, it could not then have the legitimate part that belongs to it in the choice of God’s ministers. But another necessity, proceeding in like manner from the state of affairs, was to incline Luther to deviate in Saxony from the principles he had formerly laid down.

It can hardly be said that the German Reformation began with the lower classes, as in Switzerland and France; and Luther could scarcely find anywhere that christian people, which should have played so great a part in his new constitution. Ignorant men, conceited townspeople, who would not even maintain their ministers—these were the members of the Church. Now what could be done with such elements? But if the people were indifferent, the princes were not so. They stood in the foremost rank of the great battle of the Reformation, and sat on the first bench in the council. The democratic organization was therefore compelled to give way to an organization conformable to the civil government. The Church is composed of Christians, and they are taken wherever they are found—high or low. It was particularly in high stations that Luther found them. He admitted the princes (as Zwingle did the Council of Two Hundred) as representatives of the people, and henceforward the influence of the State became one of the principal elements in the constitution of the evangelical Church in Germany.

Thus Luther, setting out in principle from the democratic, arrived in fact at the Erastian extreme. Never perhaps was there so immense a space between the premises laid down by any man and

the conduct he adopted. If Luther crossed that wide interval without hesitation, it was not from mere inconsistency on his part; he yielded to the necessities of the times. The rules of Church government are not, like the doctrines of the Gospel, of an absolute nature; their application depends in a measure on the state of the Church. Nevertheless there was some inconsistency in Luther: he often expressed himself in a contradictory manner on what princes ought and ought not to do in the Church. This is a point upon which the reformer and his age had no very settled opinions: there were other questions to be cleared up. In the mind of the reformer the tutelage of the princes was only to be provisional. The faithful being still in their minority, they had need of a guardian: but the era of the Church's majority might arrive, and then would come its emancipation. As we said in another place, we will not decide on this great controversy of Church and State. But there are certain ideas which can never be forgotten. God is the principle from which every being emanates, and who ought to govern the whole world—societies as well as individuals—the State not less than the Church. God has to do with governments, and governments with God. The great truths of which the Church is the depository are given from above to exert their influence on the whole nation,—on him who is seated on the throne, as well as on the peasant in his cottage: and it is not only as an individual that the prince must be partaker of this heavenly light; it is also that he may receive a Divine wisdom as governor of his people. God must be in the State. To place nations, governments, social and political life on one side,—and God, his Word, and his Church on the other, as if there were a great gulf between them, and that these two orders of things should never meet,—would be at once high treason against man and against God. But if there ought to be a close union between these two spheres (the Church and State), we ought to seek the means best calculated to obtain it. Now, if the direction of the Church is intrusted to the civil government, as was the case in Saxony, there is great reason to fear lest the reality of this union should be compromised, and the infiltration of heavenly strength into the body of the nation be obstructed. The Church administered by a civil department will often be sacrificed to political ends, and, gradually becoming secularized, will lose its pristine vigour. This at least has taken place in Germany, where in some places religion has sunk to the rank of a temporal administration. In order that any created being may exercise all the influence of which it is capable, it ought to have a free development. Let a tree grow unconfined in the open fields, you will better enjoy its cool shade, and gather more abundant fruits, than if you planted it in a vase and shut it up in your chamber. Such a tree is the Church of Christ. The recourse to the civil power, which was perhaps at that time necessary in Germany, had still another consequence; when Protestantism became an affair of governments it ceased to be universal. The new spirit was capable of creating a new earth. But instead of opening new roads and of purposing the regeneration of all Christendom and the conversion of the whole world. Protestantism shrank back, and Protestants sought to settle themselves as comfortably as possible in a few German duchies. This timidity, which has been called prudence, did immense injury to the Reformation. The organizing power being once discovered in the councils of the princes, the reformers thought of organization, and Luther applied to the task; for although he was in an especial manner an assailant and Calvin an organizer, these two qualities, as necessary to the reformers of the Church as to the founders of empires, were not wanting in either of these great servants of God.

It was necessary to compose a new ministry, for most of the priests who had quitted the papacy were content to receive the watchword of Reform without having personally experienced the sanctifying virtue of the truth. There was even one parish in which the priest preached the Gospel

in his principal church, and sang mass in its succursal. But something more was wanting: a Christian people had to be created. “Alas,” said Luther of some of the adherents of the Reform, “they have abandoned their Romish doctrines and rites, and they scoff at ours.”

Luther did not shrink from before this double necessity; and he made provision for it. Convinced that a general visitation of the churches was necessary, he addressed the elector on this subject, on the 22nd October, 1526. “Your highness, in your quality of guardian of youth, and of all those who know not how to take care of themselves,” said he, “should compel the inhabitants, who desire neither pastors nor schools, to receive these means of grace, as they are compelled to work on the roads, on bridges, and such like services. The papal order being abolished, it is your duty to regulate these things: no other person cares about them, no other can, and no other ought to do so. Commission, therefore, four persons to visit all the country; let two of them inquire into the tithes and church property; and let two take charge of the doctrine, schools, churches, and pastors.” It may be asked, on reading these words, whether the church which was formed in the first cen-century without the support of princes, could not in the sixteenth be reformed without them?

Luther was not content with soliciting in writing the intervention of the prince. He was indignant at seeing the courtiers, who in the time of the elector Frederick had shown themselves the inveterate enemies of the Reformation, now rushing, “sporting, laughing, skipping,” as he said, on the spoils of the Church. Accordingly, at the end of this year, the elector having come to Wittemberg, the reformer repaired immediately to the palace, made his complaint to the prince-electoral, whom he met at the gate, and then, without caring about those who would have stopped him, forced his way into the elector’s bed-chamber, and addressing this prince, who was surprised at so unexpected a visit, begged him to remedy the evils of the Church. The visitation of the churches was resolved upon, and Melancthon was commissioned to draw up the necessary instructions. In 1526, Luther published his “German Mass,” by which he signified the order of church service in general. “The real evangelical assemblies,” he said, “do not take place publicly, pell-mell, admitting people of every sort; but they are formed of serious Christians, who confess the Gospel by their words and by their lives,3 and in the midst of whom we may reprove and excommunicate those who do not live according to the rule of Christ Jesus. I cannot institute such assemblies, for I have no one to place in them;2 but if the thing becomes possible, I shall not be wanting in this duty.”

It was with a conviction that he must give the Church, not the best form of worship imaginable, but the best possible, that Melancthon, like Luther, laboured at his instructions. The German Reformation at that time tacked about, as it were. If Lambert in Hesse had gone to the extreme of a democratical system, Melancthon in Saxony was approximating the contrary extreme of traditional principles. A conservative principle was substituted for a reforming one. Melancthon wrote to one of the inspectors: “All the old ceremonies that you can preserve, pray do so.4 Do not innovate much, for every innovation is injurious to the people.”

They retained, therefore, the Latin liturgy, a few German hymns being mingled with it: the communion in one kind for those only who scrupled from habit to take it in both; a confession made to the priest without being in any way obligatory; many saints’ days, the sacred vestments,7 and other rites, “in which,” said Melancthon, “there is no harm, whatever Zwingle may say.” And at the same time they set forth with reserve the doctrines of the Reformation.

It is but right to confess the dominion of facts and circumstances upon these ecclesiastical organizations; but there is a dominion which rises higher still—that of the Word of God.

Perhaps Melancthon did all that could be effected at that time; but it was necessary for the work to be one day resumed and re-established on its primitive plan, and this was Calvin's glory. A cry of astonishment was heard both from the camp of Rome and from that of the Reformation. "Our cause is betrayed," exclaimed some of the evangelical Christians: "the liberty is taken away that Jesus Christ had given us." On their part the Ultramontanists triumphed in Melancthon's moderation: they called it a retractation, and took advantage of it to insult the Reform. Cochlœus published a "horrible" engraving, as he styles it himself, in which, from beneath the same hood was seen issuing a seven-headed monster representing Luther. Each of these heads had different features, and all, uttering together the most frightful and contradictory words, kept disputing, tearing, and devouring each other. The astonished Elector resolved to communicate Melancthon's paper to Luther. But never did the reformer's respect for his friend show itself in a more striking manner. He made only one or two unimportant additions to this plan, and sent it back accompanied with the highest eulogiums. The Romanists said that the tiger caught in a net was licking the hands that clipped his talons. But it was not so. Luther knew that the aim of Melancthon's labours was to strengthen the very soul of the Reformation in all the churches of Saxony. That was sufficient for him. He thought besides, that in every thing there must be a transition; and being justly convinced that his friend was more than himself a man of transition, he frankly accepted his views. The general visitation began. Luther in Saxony, Spalatin in the districts of Altenburg and Zwickau, Melancthon in Thuringia, and Thuring in Franconia, with ecclesiastical deputies and several lay colleagues, commenced the work in October and November, 1528.

They purified the clergy by dismissing every priest of scandalous life; assigned a portion of the church property to the maintenance of public worship, and placed the remainder beyond the reach of plunder. They continued the suppression of the convents, and every where established unity of instruction. "Luther's greater and smaller catechisms," which appeared in 1529, contributed more perhaps than any other writings to propagate throughout the new churches the ancient faith of the apostles. The visiters commissioned the pastors of the great towns, under the title of superintendents, to watch over the churches and the schools; they maintained the abolition of celibacy; and the ministers of the Word, become husbands and fathers, formed the germ of a third estate, whence in after years were diffused in all ranks of society learning, activity, and light. This is one of the truest causes of that intellectual and moral superiority which indisputably distinguishes the evangelical nations. The organization of the churches in Saxony, notwithstanding its imperfections, produced for a time at least the most important results. It was because the word of God prevailed; and because, wherever this Word exercises its power, secondary errors and abuses are paralyzed. The very discretion that was employed really originated in a good principle. The reformers, unlike the enthusiasts, did not utterly reject an institution because it was corrupted. They did not say, for example, "The sacraments are disfigured, let us do without them! the ministry is corrupt, let us reject it!"—but they rejected the abuse, and restored the use. This prudence is the mark of a work of God; and if Luther sometimes permitted the chaff to remain along with the wheat, Calvin appeared later, and more thoroughly purged the christian threshing-floor. The organization which was at that time going on in Saxony exerted a strong reaction on all the German empire, and the doctrine of the Gospel advanced with gigantic strides. God's design in

turning aside from the reformed states of Germany the thunder-bolt that he caused to fall upon the seven-hilled city, was clearly manifest. Never were years more usefully employed; and it was not only to framing a constitution that the Reformation devoted itself, it was also to extend its doctrine. The duchies of Luneburg and Brunswick, many of the most important imperial cities, as Nuremberg, Augsburg, Ulm, Strasburg, Gottingen, Gosslar, Nordhausen, Lubeck, Bremen, and Hamburg, removed the tapers from the chapels, and substituted in their place the brighter torch of the Word of God. In vain did the frightened canons allege the authority of the Church. “The authority of the Church,” replied Kempe and Zechenhagen, the reformer of Hamburg, “cannot be acknowledged unless the Church herself obeys her pastor Jesus Christ.” Pomeranus visited many places to put a finishing hand to the Reform. In Franconia, the Margrave George of Brandenburg, having reformed Anspach and Bayreuth, wrote to his ancient protector, Ferdinand of Austria, who had knit his brows on being informed of these proceedings: “I have acted thus by God’s order; for he commands princes to take care not only of the bodies of their subjects, but also of their souls.” In East Friesland, on new-year’s day 1527, a Dominican named Resius, having put on his hood, ascended the pulpit at Noorden, and declared himself ready to maintain certain theses according to the tenor of the Gospel. After silencing the Abbot of Noorden by the soundness of his arguments, Resius took off his cowl, left it on the pulpit, and was received in the nave by the acclamations of the faithful. Ere long the whole of Friesland laid aside the uniform of popery, as Resius had done. At Berlin, Elizabeth, electress of Bradenburg, having read Luther’s works, felt a desire to receive the Lord’s Supper in conformity with Christ’s institution. A minister secretly administered it at the festival of Easter, 1528; but one of her children informed the elector. Joachim was greatly exasperated, and ordered his wife to keep her room for several days; it was even rumoured that he intended shutting her up.3 This princess, being deprived of all religious support, and mistrusting the perfidious manœuvres of the Romish priests, resolved to escape by flight; and claimed the assistance of her brother, Christian II. of Denmark, then residing at Torgau. Taking advantage of a dark night, she quitted the castle in a peasant’s dress, and got into a rude country-waggon that was waiting for her at the gate of the city. Elizabeth urged on the driver, when, in a bad road, the wain broke down. The electress, hastily unfastening a handkerchief she wore round her head, flung it to the man, who employed it in repairing the damage, and erelong Elizabeth arrived at Torgau. “If I should expose you to any risk,” said she to her uncle, the Elector of Saxony, “I am ready to go wherever Providence may lead me.” But John assigned her a residence in the castle of Lichtenberg, on the Elbe, near Wittemberg. Without taking upon us to approve of Elizabeth’s flight, let us acknowledge the good that God’s Providence derived from it. This amiablo lady, who lived at Lichtenberg in the study of His Word, seldom appearing at court, frequently going to hear Luther’s sermons, and exercising a salutary influence over her children, who sometimes had permission to see her, was the first of those pious princesses whom the house of Brandenburg has counted, and even still counts, among its members. At the same time, Holstein, Sleswick, and Silesia decided in favour of the Reformation: and Hungary, as well as Bohemia, saw the number of its adherents increase. In every place, instead of a hierarchy seeking its righteousness in the works of man, its glory in external pomp, its strength in a material power, the Church of the Apostles reappeared, humble as in primitive times, and like the ancient Christians, looking for its righteousness, its glory, and its power solely in the blood of the Lamb and in the Word of God.

CHAPTER IV

Edict of Ofen—Persecutions—Winchler, Carpenter, and Keyser—Alarm in Germany—Pack's Forgery—League of the Reformed Princes—Advice of the Reformers—Luther's Pacific Counsel—Surprise of the Papist Princes—Pack's Scheme not improbable—Vigour of the Reformation.

These triumphs of the Gospel could not pass unperceived; there was a powerful reaction, and until political circumstances should permit a grand attack upon the Reformation on the very soil where it was established, and of fighting against it by means of diets, and if necessary by armies, the adversaries began to persecute it in detail in the Romish countries with tortures and the scaffold. On the 20th August, 1527, King Ferdinand, by the Edict of Ofen in Hungary, published a tariff of crimes and penalties, in which he threatened death by the sword, by fire, or by water, against whoever should say that Mary was like other women; or partake of the sacrament in an heretical manner; or consecrate the bread and wine, not being a Romish priest; and further, in the second case, the house in which the sacrament should have been administered was to be confiscated or rased to the ground.

Such was not the legislation of Luther. Link having asked him if it were lawful for the magistrate to put the false prophets to death, meaning the Sacramentarians, whose doctrines Luther had so violently attacked, the reformer replied: "I am slow whenever life is concerned, even if the offender is exceedingly guilty.4 I can by no means admit that the false teachers should be put to death: it is sufficient to remove them." For ages the Romish Church has bathed in blood. Luther was the first to profess the great principles of humanity and religious liberty.

Recourse was sometimes had to more expeditious means than the scaffold itself. George Winkler, pastor of Halle, having been summoned before Archbishop Albert in the spring of 1527, for having administered the sacrament in both kinds, had been acquitted. As this minister was returning home along an unfrequented road in the midst of the woods, he was suddenly attacked by a number of horsemen, who murdered him, and immediately fled through the thickets without taking anything from his person. "The world," exclaimed Luther, "is a cavern of assassins under the command of the devil; an inn, whose landlord is a brigand, and which bears this sign, Lies and Murder: and none are more readily put to death therein than those who proclaim Jesus Christ." At Munich, George Carpenter was led to the scaffold for having denied that the baptism of water is able by its own virtue to save a man. "When you are thrown into the fire," said some of his brethren, "give us a sign by which we may know that you persevere in the faith."—"As long as I can open my mouth, I will confess the name of the Lord Jesus." The executioner stretched him on a ladder, tied a small bag of gunpowder round his neck, and then flung him into the flames. Carpenter immediately cried out, "Jesus! Jesus!" and while the executioner was turning him again and again with his hooks, the martyr several times repeated the word Jesus, and expired. At Landsberg nine persons were consigned to the flames, and at Munich twenty-nine were thrown into the water. At Scherding, Leonard Keyser, a friend and disciple of Luther, having been condemned by the bishop, had his head shaved, and being dressed in a smock-frock, was placed on horseback. As the executioners were cursing and swearing, because they could not disentangle the ropes with which his limbs were to be tied, he said to them mildly: "Dear friends, your bonds are not necessary; my Lord Christ has already bound me." When he drew near the stake, Keyser looked at the crowd and exclaimed, "Behold the harvest! O Master, send forth thy labourers!" He then ascended the scaffold and said: "O Jesu, save me! I am thine." These were his

last words. “Who am I, a wordy preacher,” cried Luther, when he received the news of his death, “in comparison with this great doer!”

Thus the Reformation manifested by such striking works the truth that it had come to re-establish; namely, that faith is not, as Rome maintains, an historical, vain, dead knowledge, but a lively faith, the work of the Holy Ghost, the channel by which Christ fills the heart with new desires and with new affections, the true worship of the living God.

These martyrdoms filled Germany with horror, and gloomy forebodings descended from the thrones among the ranks of the people. Around the domestic hearth, in the long winter evenings, the conversations wholly turned on prisons, tortures, scaffolds, and martyrs; the slightest noise alarmed the old men, women, and children. Such narratives gathered strength as they passed from mouth to mouth; the rumour of a universal conspiracy against the Gospel spread through all the empire. Its adversaries, taking advantage of this terror, announced with a mysterious air that they must look during this year (1528) for some decisive measure against the reform. One scoundrel (Pack) resolved to profit by this state of mind to satisfy his avarice. No blows are more terrible to a cause than those which it infliets upon itself. The Reformation, seized with a dizziness, was on the verge of self-destruction. There is a spirit of error that conspires against the cause of truth, beguiling by subtlety; the Reformation was about to experience its attacks, and to stagger under the most formidable assaults—perturbation of thought, and estrangement from the ways of wisdom and truth.

Otho Pack, vice-chancellor to Duke George of Saxony, was a crafty and dissipated man, who took advantage of his office, and had recourse to all sorts of practices to procure money. The Duke having on one occasion sent him to the Diet of Nurumberg as his representative, the Bishop of Merseburg confided to him his contribution towards the imperial government. The bishop having been afterwards called upon for this money, Pack declared that he had paid it to a citizen of Nuremberg, whose seal and signature he produced. This paper was a forgery; Pack himself was the author of it. The wretch, however, put an impudent face on the matter, and having escaped conviction, preserved the confidence of his master. Ere long an opportunity presented itself of exercising his criminal talents on a larger scale. No one entertained greater suspicions with regard to the papists than the Landgrave of Hesse. Young, susceptible, and restless, he was always on the alert. In the month of February, 1528, Pack happening to be at Cassel to assist Philip in some difficult business, the landgrave imparted to him his fears. If any one could have had any knowledge of the designs of the papists, it must have been the vice-chancellor of one of the greatest enemies to the Reformation. The crafty Pack heaved a sigh, bent down his eyes, and was silent. Philip immediately became uneasy, entreated him, and promised to do nothing that would injure the duke. Then Pack, as if he had allowed an important secret to be torn from him with regret, confessed that a league against the Lutherans had been concluded at Breslau on the Wednesday following Jubilate Sunday, 12th May, 1527; and engaged to procure the original of this act for the landgrave, who offered him for this service a remuneration of ten thousand florins. This was the greatest transaction that the wretched man had ever undertaken; but it tended to nothing less than the utter overthrow of the empire. The landgrave was amazed: he restrained himself, however, wishing to see the act with his own eyes before informing his allies. He therefore repaired to Dresden. “I cannot,” said Pack, “furnish you with the original: the duke always carries it about his person to read it to other princes whom he hopes to gain over. Recently at Leipsic, he

showed it to Duke Henry of Brunswick. But here is a copy made by his highness's order." The landgrave took the document, which bore all the marks of the most perfect authenticity. It was crossed by a cord of black silk, and fastened at both ends by the seal of the ducal chancery. Above was an impression from the ring Duke George always wore on his finger, with the three quarterings that Philip had so often seen; at the top, the coronet, and at the bottom, the two lions. He had no more doubts as to its authenticity. But how can we describe his indignation as he read this guilty document? King Ferdinand, the Elector of Mentz and of Brandenburg, Duke George of Saxony, the Dukes of Bavaria, the Bishops of Salzburg, Wurtzburg, and Bamberg, had entered into a coalition to call upon the Elector of Saxony to deliver up the arch-heretic Luther, with all the apostate priests, monks, and nuns, and to re-establish the ancient worship. If he made default, his estates were to be invaded, and this prince and his descendants for ever dispossessed. The same measure was next to be applied to the landgrave, only ("it was your father-in-law, Duke George," said Pack to Philip, "who got this clause inserted") his states were to be restored to him in consideration of his youth, if he became fully reconciled to the holy Church. The document stated moreover the contingents of men and money to be provided by the confederates, and the share they were to have in the spoils of the two heretical princes.

Many circumstances tended to confirm the authenticity of this paper. Ferdinand, Joachim of Brandenburg, and George of Saxony, had in fact met at Breslau on the day indicated, and an evangelical prince, the Margrave George, had seen Joachim leave Ferdinand's apartments, holding in his hand a large parchment to which several seals were attached. The agitated landgrave caused a copy to be taken of this document, promised secrecy for a time, paid Pack four thousand florins, and engaged to make up the sum agreed upon, if he would procure him the original. And then, wishing to prevent the storm, he hastened to Weimar to inform the elector of this unprecedented conspiracy.

"I have seen," said he to John and his son, "nay more—I have had in my hands, a duplicate of this horrible treaty. Signatures, seals—nothing was wanting? Here is a copy, and I bind myself to place the original before your eyes. The most frightful danger threatens us—ourselves, our faithful subjects, and the Word of God." The elector had no reason to doubt the account the landgrave had just given him: he was stunned, confounded, and overpowered. The promptest measures alone could avert such unprecedented disasters: everything must be risked to extricate them from certain destruction. The impetuous Philip breathed fire and flames; his plan of defence was already prepared. He presented it, and in the first moment of consternation carried the consent of his ally, as it were, by assault. On the 9th March, 1528, the two princes agreed to employ all their forces to defend themselves, and even to take the offensive, and sacrifice life, honour, rank, subjects, and states, that they might preserve the Word of God. The Dukes of Prussia, Mecklenburg, Luneburg, and Pomerania, the Kings of Denmark and Poland, and the Margrave of Brandenburg, were to be invited to enter into this alliance. Six hundred thousand florins were destined for the expenses of the war; and to procure them, they would raise loans, pledge their cities, and sell the offerings in the churches. They had already begun to raise a powerful army.2 The landgrave set out in person for Nuremberg and Anspach. The alarm was general in those countries; the commotion was felt throughout all Germany, and even beyond it. John Zapolya, king of Hungary, at that time a refugee at Cracow, promised a hundred thousand florins to raise an army, and twenty thousand florins a-month for its maintenance. Thus a spirit of error was

misleading the princes; if it should carry away the Reformers also, the destruction of the Reformation would not be far distant. But God was watching over them. Supported on the rock of the Word, Melancthon and Luther replied: “It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” As soon as these two men whom the danger threatened (for it was they who were to be delivered up to the papal power) saw the youthful landgrave drawing the sword, and the aged elector himself putting his hand on the hilt, they uttered a cry, and this cry, which was heard in heaven, saved the Reformation.

Luther, Pomeranus, and Melancthon immediately forwarded the following advice to the elector: “Above all things, let not the attack proceed from our side, and let no blood be shed through our fault. Let us wait for the enemy, and seek after peace. Send an ambassador to the emperor to make him acquainted with this hateful plot.”

Thus it was that the faith of the children of God, which is so despised by politicians, conducted them aright, at the very moment when the diplomatists were going astray. The elector and his son declared to the landgrave that they would not assume the offensive. Philip was in amazement. “Are not the preparations of the papists worthy an attack?” asked he. “What! we will threaten war, and yet not make it! We will inflame the hatred of our antagonists, and leave them time to prepare their forces! No, no; forward! It is thus we shall secure the means of an honourable peace.”—“If the landgrave desires to begin the war,” replied the reformer, “the elector is not obliged to observe the treaty; for we must obey God rather than men. God and the right are above every alliance. Let us beware of painting the devil on our doors, and inviting him as godfather. But if the landgrave is attacked, the elector ought to go to his assistance; for it is God’s will that we preserve our faith.” This advice, which the reformers gave, cost them dear. Never did man, condemned to the torture, endure a punishment like theirs. The fears excited by the landgrave were succeeded by the terrors inspired by the papist princes. This cruel trial left them in great distress. “I am worn away with sorrow,” cried Melancthon; “and this anguish puts me to the most horrible torture.2 The issue,” added he, “will be found on our knees before God.” The elector, drawn in different directions by the theologians and the politicians, at last took a middle course: he resolved to assemble an army, “but only,” said he, “to obtain peace.” Philip of Hesse at length gave way, and forthwith sent copies of the famous treaty to Duke George, to the dukes of Bavaria, and to the emperor’s representatives, calling upon them to renounce such cruel designs. “I would rather have a limb cut off,” said he to his father-in-law, “than know you to be a member of such an alliance.” The surprise of the German courts, when they read this document, is beyond description. Duke George immediately replied to the landgrave, that he had allowed himself to be deceived by unmeaning absurdities; that he who pretended to have seen the original of this act was an infamous liar, and an incorrigible scoundrel; and called upon the landgrave to give up his authority, or else it might well be thought that he was himself the inventor of this impudent fabrication. King Ferdinand, the Elector of Brandenburg, and all the pretended conspirators, made similar replies.

Philip of Hesse saw that he had been deceived; his confusion was only exceeded by his anger. He had in this affair justified the accusations of his adversaries, who called him a hot-headed young man, and had compromised to the highest degree the cause of the Reformation and that of his people. He said afterwards, “If that business had not happened, it would no more happen now. Nothing that I have done in all my life has caused me greater vexation.”

Pack fled in alarm to the landgrave, who caused him to be arrested; and envoys from the several princes whom this scoundrel had compromised met at Cassel, and proceeded to examine him. He maintained that the original act of the alliance had really existed in the Dresden archives. In the following year the landgrave banished him from Hesse, proving by this action that he did not fear him. Pack was afterwards discovered in Belgium; and to the demand of Duke George, who had never shown any pity towards him, he was seized, tortured, and finally beheaded. The landgrave was unwilling to have taken up arms to no purpose. The Archbishop-elector of Mentz was compelled, on the 11th June, 1528, to renounce in the camp of Herzkirchen all spiritual jurisdiction in Saxony and Hesse. This was no small advantage.

Scarcely had the arms been laid aside before Luther took up his pen and began a war of another kind. “Impious princes may deny this alliance as long as they please,” wrote he to Link; “I am very certain that it is not a chimera. These insatiable leeches will take no repose until they see the whole of Germany flowing with blood.” This idea of Luther’s was the one generally entertained. “The document presented to the landgrave may be,” it was said, “Pack’s invention; but all this fabric of lies is founded on some truth. If the alliance has not been concluded it has been conceived.”3

Melancholy were the results of this affair. It inspired division in the bosom of the Reformation, and fanned the hatred between the two parties. The sparks from the piles of Keyser, Winkler, Carpenter, and so many other martyrs, added strength to the fire that was already threatening to set the empire in flames. It was under such critical circumstances, and with such menacing dispositions, that the famous Diet of Spires was opened in March 1529. The empire and the Papacy were in reality preparing to annihilate the Reformation, although in a manner different from what Pack had pretended. It was still to be learnt whether more vital strength would be found in the revived Church than in so many sects that Rome had easily crushed. Happily the faith had increased, and the constitution given to the Church had imparted greater power to its adherents. All were resolved on defending a doctrine so pure, and a church government so superior to that of popery. During three years of tranquillity the Gospel tree had struck its roots deep; and if the storm should burst it would now be able to brave it.

CHAPTER V

Alliance between Charles and Clement VII.—Omens—Hostility of the Papists—Arbitrary Proposition of Charles—Resolutions of the Diet—The Reformation in Danger—Decision of the Princes—Violence of Ferdinand—The Schism completed. The sack of Rome by exasperating the adherents of the Papacy, had given arms to all the enemies of Charles V. The French army under Lautrec had forced the imperial army, enervated by the delights of a new Capua, to hide itself within the walls of Naples. Doria, at the head of his Genoese galleys, had destroyed the Spanish fleet, and all the imperial power seemed drawing to an end in Italy. But Doria suddenly declared for the emperor; pestilence carried off Lautrec and half of his troops; and Charles, suffering only from alarm, had again grasped the power with a firm resolution to unite henceforward closely with the pontiff, whose humiliation had nearly cost him so dear. On his side Clement VII., hearing the Italians reproach him for his illegitimate birth, and even refuse him the title of pope, said aloud, that he would rather be the emperor’s groom than the sport of his people. On the 29th June 1528, a peace between the heads of the Empire and of the Church was concluded at Barcelona, based on

the destruction of heresy; and in November a diet was convoked to meet at Spires on the 21st February 1529. Charles was resolved to endeavour at first to destroy the Reform by a federal vote; but if this means did not suffice, to employ his whole power against it. The road being thus traced out, they were about to commence operations.

Germany felt the seriousness of the position. Mournful omens filled every mind. About the middle of January, a great brightness in the sky had suddenly dispersed the darkness of the night. “What that forebodes,” exclaimed Luther, “God only knows!” At the beginning of April there was a rumour of an earthquake that had engulfed castles, cities, and whole districts in Carinthia and Istria, and split the tower of St. Mark at Venice into four parts. “If that is true,” said the reformer, “these prodigies are the forerunners of the day of Jesus Christ.” The astrologers declared that the aspect of the quartiles of Saturn and Jupiter, and the general position of the stars, was ominous.2 The waters of the Elbe rolled thick and stormy, and stones fell from the roofs of churches. “All these things,” exclaimed the terrified Melancthon, “excite me in no trifling degree.” The letters of convocation issued by the imperial government agreed but too well with these prodigies. The emperor writing from Toledo to the elector, accused him of sedition and revolt. Alarming whispers passed from mouth to mouth that were sufficient to cause the fall of the weak. Duke Henry of Mecklenburg and the elector-palatine hastily returned to the side of popery.

Never had the sacerdotal party appeared in the diet in such numbers, or so powerful and decided. On the 5th March, Ferdinand, the president of the diet, after him the Dukes of Bavaria, and lastly the ecclesiastical Electors of Mentz and Treves, had entered the gates of Spires surrounded by a numerous armed escort. On the 13th March, the Elector of Saxony arrived, attended only by Melancthon and Agricola. But Philip of Hesse, faithful to his character, entered the city on the 18th March to the sound of trumpets, and with two hundred horsemen. The divergence of men’s minds soon became manifest. A papist did not meet an evangelical in the street without casting angry glances upon him, and secretly threatening him with perfidious machinations. The elector-palatine passed the Saxons without appearing to know them,7 and although John of Saxony was the most important of the electors, none of the chiefs of the opposite party visited him. Grouped around their tables, the Roman-catholic princes seemed absorbed in games of hazard. But erelong they gave positive marks of their hostile disposition. The elector and the landgrave were prohibited from having the Gospel preached in their mansions. It was asserted even at this early period that John was about to be turned out of Spires, and deprived of his eloctorate. “We are the execration and the sweepings of the world,” said Melancthon; “but Christ will look down on his poor people, and will preserve them.”2 In truth, God was with the witnesses to his Word. The people of Spires thirsted for the Gospel, and the elector wrote to his son on Palm Sunday: “About eight thousand persons were present to-day in my chapel at morning and evening worship.” The Roman party now quickened their proceedings: their plan was simple but energetic. It was necessary to put down the religious liberty that had existed for more than three years, and for this purpose they must abrogate the decree of 1526, and revive that of 1521. On the 15th March the imperial commissaries announced to the diet that the last resolution of Spires, which left all the states free to act in conformity with the inspirations of their consciences, having given rise to great disorders, the emperor had annulled it by virtue of his supreme power. This arbitrary act, which had no precedent in the empire, as well as the despotic tone in which it was notified, filled the evangelical Christians with indignation and alarm. “Christ,” exclaimed Sturm, “has again fallen into the hands

of Caiaphas and Pilate." A commission was charged to examine the imperial proposition. The Archbishop of Salzburg, Faber, and Eck, that is to say, the most violent enemies of the Reformation, were among its members. "The Turks are better than the Lutherans," said Faber, "for the Turks observe fast-days, and the Lutherans violate them. If we must choose between the Holy Scriptures of God and the old errors of the Church, we should reject the former."5 Every day in full assembly Faber casts some new stone at us Gospellers," says Melancthon. "Oh, what an Iliad I should have to compose," added he, "if I were to report all these blasphemies!" The priests called for the execution of the edict of Worms, 1521, and the evangelical members of the commission, among whom were the Electors of Saxony and Sturm, demanded on the contrary the maintenance of the edict of Spires, 1526. The latter thus remained within the bounds of legality, whilst their adversaries were driven to coups d'état. In fact, a new order of things having been legally established in the empire, no one could infringe it; and if the diet presumed to destroy by force what had been constitutionally established three years before, the evangelical states had the right of opposing it. The majority of the commission felt that the re-establishment of the ancient order of things would be a revolution no less complete than the Reformation itself. How could they subject anew to Rome and to her clergy those nations in whose bosom the Word of God had been so richly spread abroad? For this reason equally rejecting the demands of the priests and of the evangelicals, the majority came to a resolution on the 24th March that every religious innovation should continue to be interdicted in the places where the edict of Worms had been carried out; and that in those where the people had deviated from it, and where they could not conform to it without danger of revolt, they should at least effect no new reform, they should touch upon no controverted point, they should not oppose the celebration of the mass, they should permit no Roman Catholic to embrace Lutheranism, they should not decline the Episcopal jurisdiction, and should tolerate no anabaptist or sacramentarians. The status-quo and no proselytism—such were the essentials of this resolution. The majority no longer voted as in 1526: the wind had turned against the Gospel. Accordingly this proposition, after having been delayed a few days by the festival of Easter, was laid before the diet on the 6th April, and passed on the 7th.

If it became a law, the Reformation could neither be extended into those places where it was as yet unknown, nor be established on solid foundations in those where it already existed. The re-establishment of the Romish hierarchy, stipulated in the proposition, would infallibly bring back the ancient abuses; and the least deviation from so vexatious an ordinance would easily furnish the Romanists with a pretext for completing the destruction of a work already so violently shaken. The Elector, the Landgrave, the Margrave of Brandenburg, the Prince of Anhalt, and the Chancellor of Luneburg, on one side, and the deputies for the cities on the other, consulted together. An entirely new order of things was to proceed from this council. If they had been animated by selfishness, they would perhaps have accepted this decree. In fact they were left free, in appearance at least, to profess their faith: ought they to demand more? could they do so? Were they bound to constitute themselves the champions of liberty of conscience in ail the world? Never, perhaps, had there been a more critical situation; but these noble-minded men came victorious out of the trial. What! should they legalize by anticipation the scaffold and the torture! Should they oppose the Holy Ghost in its work of converting souls to Christ! Should they forget their Master's command: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature"? If one of the states of the empire desired some day to follow their example and be reformed, should they take away its power of doing so? Having themselves entered the kingdom of heaven, should they shut the door

after them? No! rather endure everything, sacrifice everything, even their states, their crowns, and their lives.

“Let us reject this decree,” said the princes. “In matters of conscience the majority has no power.”—“It is to the decree of 1526,” added the cities, “that we are indebted for the peace that the empire enjoys: its abolition would fill Germany with troubles and divisions. The diet is incompetent to do more than preserve religious liberty until a council meets.” Such in fact is the grand attribute of the state, and if in our days the protestant powers should desire to influence the Romish governments, they should strive solely at obtaining for the subjects of the latter that religious liberty which the pope confiscates to his own advantage wherever he reigns alone, and by which he profits greatly in every evangelical state. Some of the deputies proposed refusing all assistance against the Turks, hoping thus to force the emperor to interfere in this religious question. But Sturm called upon them not to mix up political matters with the salvation of souls. They resolved therefore to reject the proposition, but without holding out any threats. It was this noble resolution that gained for modern times liberty of thought and independence of faith.

Ferdinand and the priests, who were no less resolute, determined, however, on vanquishing what they called a daring obstinacy; and they commenced with the weaker states. They began to frighten and divide the cities, which had hitherto pursued a common course. On the 12th April they were summoned before the diet: in vain did they allege the absence of some of their number, and ask for delay. It was refused, and the call was hurried on. Twenty-one free cities accepted the proposition of the diet, and fourteen rejected it. It was a bold act on the part of the latter, and was accomplished in the midst of the most painful sufferings. “This is the first trial,” said Pfarrer, second deputy of Strasburg; “now will come the second; we must either deny the Word of God or—be burnt.” A violent proceeding of Ferdinand’s immediately commenced the series of humiliations that were reserved for the evangelical cities. A deputy of Strasburg should, in conformity with the decree of Worms, have been a member of the imperial government from the commencement of April. He was declared excluded from his rights until the re-establishment of the mass in Strasburg. All the cities united in protesting against this arbitrary act. At the same time, the elector-palatine and King Ferdinand himself begged the princes to accept the decree, assuring them that the emperor would be exceedingly pleased with them. “We will obey the emperor,” replied they calmly, “in everything that may contribute to maintain peace and the honour of God.”

It was time to put an end to this struggle. On the 18th April it was decreed that the evangelical states should not be heard again; and Ferdinand prepared to inflict the decisive blow on the morrow. When the day came, the king appeared in the diet, surrounded by the other commissaries of the empire, and by several bishops. He thanked the Roman-catholics for their fidelity, and declared that the resolution having been definitively agreed to, it was about to be drawn up in the form of an imperial decree. He then announced to the elector and his friends, that their only remaining course was to submit to the majority. The evangelical princes, who had not expected so positive a declaration, were excited at this summons, and passed, according to custom, into an adjoining chamber to deliberate. But Ferdinand was not in a humour to wait for their answer. He rose, and the imperial commissaries with him. Vain were all endeavours to stop him. “I have received an order from his imperial majesty, “replied he; “I have executed it. All is over.”

Thus did Charles's brother notify an order to the christian princes, and then retire without caring even if there was any reply to be made! To no purpose they sent a deputation entreating the king to return. "It is a settled affair," repeated Ferdinand; "submission is all that remains." This refusal completed the schism: it separated Rome from the Gospel. Perhaps more justice on the part of the empire and of the papacy might have prevented the rupture that since then has divided the Western Church.

CHAPTER VI The Protest—Principles of the Protest—Supremacy of the Gospel—Christian Union Ferdinand rejects the Protest—Attempt at Conciliation—Exultation of the Papists—Evangelical Appeal—Christian Unity a Reality—Dangers of the Protestants—The Protestants leave Spires—The Princes the true Reformers—Germany and Reform.

If the imperial party displayed such contempt, it was not without a cause. They felt that weakness was on the side of the Reformation, and strength with Charles and the pope. But the weak have also their strength; and of this the evangelical princes were aware. As Ferdinand paid no attention to their complaints, they ought to pay none to his absence, to appeal from the report of the diet to the Word of God, and from the Emperor Charles to Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

They resolved upon this step. A declaration was drawn up to that effect, and this was the famous Protest that henceforward gave the name of Protestant to the renovated Church. The elector and his allies having returned to the common hall of the dict, thus addressed the assembled states:

"Dear Lords, Cousins, Uncles, and Friends! Having repaired to this diet at the summons of his majesty, and for the common good of the empire and of Christendom, we have heard and learnt that the decisions of the last diet concerning our holy Christian faith are to be repealed, and that it is proposed to substitute for them certain restrictive and onerous resolutions.

"King Ferdinand and the other imperial commissaries, by affixing their seals to the last Recess of Spires, had promised, however, in the name of the emperor, to carry out sincerely and inviolably all that it contained, and to permit nothing that was contrary to it. In like manner, also, you and we, electors, princes, prelates, lords, and deputies of the empire, bound ourselves to maintain always and with our whole might every article of that decree.

"We cannot therefore consent to its repeal:—

"Firstly, because we believe that his imperial majesty (as well as you and we), is called to maintain firmly what has been unanimously and solemnly resolved.

"Secondly, because it concerns the glory of God and the salvation of our souls, and that in such matters we ought to have regard, above all, to the commandment of God, who is King of kings and Lord of lords; each of us rendering him account for himself, without caring the least in the world about majority or minority.

"We form no judgment on that which concerns you, most dear lords; and we are content to pray God daily that he will bring us all to unity of faith, in truth, charity, and holiness through Jesus Christ, our throne of grace and our only Mediator.

“But in what concerns ourselves, adhesion to your resolution (and let every honest man be judge!) would be acting against our conscience, condemning a doctrine that we maintain to be christian, and pronouncing that it ought to be abolished in our states, if we could do so without trouble.

“This would be to deny our Lord Jesus Christ, to reject his holy Word, and thus give him just reason to deny us in turn before his Father, as he has threatened.

“What! we ratify this edict! We assert that when Almighty God calls a man to His knowledge, this man cannot however receive the knowledge of God! Oh! of what deadly backslidings should we not thus become the accomplices, not only among our own subjects, but also among yours!

“For this reason we reject the yoke that is imposed on us. And although it is universally known that in our states the holy sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord is becomingly administered, we cannot adhere to what the edict proposes against the sacramentarians, seeing that the imperial edict did not speak of them, that they have not been heard, and that we cannot resolve upon such important points before the next council.

“Moreover”—and this is the essential part of the protest—“the new edict declaring the ministers shall preach the Gospel, explaining it according to the writings accepted by the holy Christian Church; we think that, for this regulation to have any value, we should first agree on what is meant by the true and holy Church. Now, seeing that there is great diversity of opinion in this respect; that there is no sure doctrine but such as is conformable to the Word of God; that the Lord forbids the teaching of any other doctrine; that each text of the Holy Scriptures ought to be explained by other and clearer texts; that this holy book is in all things necessary for the Christian, easy of understanding, and calculated to scatter the darkness: we are resolved, with the grace of God, to maintain the pure and exclusive preaching of his holy Word, such as it is contained in the biblical books of the Old and New Testament, without adding anything thereto that may be contrary to it. This Word is the only truth; it is the sure rule of all doctrine and of all life, and can never fail or deceive us. He who builds on this foundation shall stand against all the powers of hell, whilst all the human vanities that are set up against it shall fall before the face of God.

“For these reasons, most dear lords, uncles, cousins, and friends, we earnestly entreat you to weigh carefully our grievances and our motives. If you do not yield to our request, we Protest by these presents, before God, our only Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Saviour, and who will one day be our judge, as well as before all men and all creatures, that we, for us and for our people, neither consent nor adhere in any manner whatsoever to the proposed decree, in any thing that is contrary to God, to his holy Word, to our right conscience, to the salvation of our souls, and to the last decree of Spires.

“At the same time we are in expectation that his imperial majesty will behave towards us like a christian prince who loves God above all things; and we declare ourselves ready to pay unto him, as well as unto you, gracious lords, all the affection and obedience that are our just and legitimate duty.”

Thus, in presence of the diet, spoke out those courageous men whom Christendom will henceforward denominate The Protestants.

They had barely finished when they announced their intention of quitting Spires on the morrow. This protest and declaration produced a deep impression. The diet was rudely interrupted and broken into two hostile parties,—thus preluding war. The majority became the prey of the liveliest fears. As for the Protestants, relying, jure humano, upon the edict of Spires, and, jure divino, upon the Bible, they were full of courage and firmness. The principles contained in this celebrated protest of the 19th April 1529, constitute the very essence of Protestantism. Now this protest opposes two abuses of man in matters of faith: the first is the intrusion of the civil magistrate, and the second the arbitrary authority of the Church. Instead of these abuses, Protestantism sets the power of conscience above the magistrate; and the authority of the Word of God above the visible church. In the first place, it rejects the civil power in divine things, and says with the prophets and apostles: We must obey God rather than man. In presence of the crown of Charles the Fifth, it uplifts the crown of Jesus Christ. But it goes farther: it lays down the principle, that all human teaching should be subordinate to the oracles of God. Even the primitive Church, by recognizing the writings of the apostles, had performed an act of submission to this supreme authority, and not an act of authority, as Rome maintains; and the establishment of a tribunal charged with the interpretation of the Bible, had terminated only in slavishly subjecting man to man in what should be the most unfettered—conscience and faith. In this celebrated act of Spires no doctor appears, and the Word of God reigns alone. Never has man exalted himself like the pope; never have men kept in the background like the reformers. A Romish historian maintains that the word Protestant signifies enemy of the emperor and of the pope. If he means that Protestantism, in matters of faith, rejects the intervention both of the empire and of the papacy, it is well. But even this explanation does not exhaust the signification of the word, for Protestantism threw off man's authority solely to place Jesus Christ on the throne of the Church, and his Word in the pulpit. There has never been anything more positive, and at the same time more aggressive, than the position of the Protestants at Spires. By maintaining that their faith alone is capable of saving the world, they defended with intrepid courage the rights of Christian proselytism. We cannot abandon this proselytism without deserting the prostestant principle. The Protestants of Spires were not content to exalt the truth; they defended charity. Faber and the other papal partisans had endeavoured to separate the princes, who in general walked with Luther, from the cities that ranged themselves rather on the side of Zwingle. Œeolampadius had immediately written to Melancthon, and enlightened him on the doctrines of the Zurich Reformer. He had indignantly rejected the idea that Christ was banished into a corner of heaven, and had energetically declared that, according to the Swiss Christians, Christ was in every place upholding all things by the Word of his power. "With the visible symbols," he added, "we give and we receive the invisible grace, like all the faithful."2

These declarations were not useless. There were at Spires two men who from different motives opposed the efforts of Faber, and seconded those of Œeolampadius. The landgrave, ever revolving projects of alliance in his mind, felt clearly that if the Christians of Saxony and of Hesse allowed the condemnation of the Churches of Switzerland and of Upper Germany, they would by that very means deprive themselves of powerful auxiliaries. Melancthon, who unlike the landgrave was far from desiring a diplomatic alliance, lest it should hasten on a war, defended the great principles of justice, and exclaimed: "To what just reproaches should we not be exposed, were we to recognise in our adversaries the right of condemning a doctrine without having heard those who defend it!" The union of all evangelical Christians is therefore a principle of primitive Protestantism. As Ferdinand had not heard the protest of the 19th April, a deputation of the evangelical states

went the next day to present it to him. The brother of Charles the Fifth received it at first, but immediately after desired to return it. Then was witnessed a strange scene—the king refusing to keep the protest, and the deputies to take it back. At last the latter, out of respect, received it from Ferdinand's hands; but they laid it boldly upon a table, and directly quitted the hall. The king and the imperial commissaries remained in presence of this formidable writing. It was there—before their eyes—a significant monument of the courage and faith of the Protestants. Irritated against this silent but mighty witness, which accused his tyranny, and left him the responsibility of all the evils that were about to burst upon the empire, the brother of Charles the Fifth called some of his councillors, and ordered them instantly to carry the important document back to the Protestants.

All this was unavailing; the protest had been registered in the annals of the world, and nothing could erase it. Liberty of thought and of conscience had been conquered for ages to come. Thus all evangelical Germany, foreseeing these things, was moved at this courageous act, and adopted it as the expression of its will and of its faith. Men in every quarter beheld in it not a mere political event, but a christian action, and the youthful electoral prince, John Frederick, in this repeet the organ of his age, cried to the Protestants of Spires: "May the Almighty, who has given you grace to confess energetically, freely, and fearlessly, preserve you in that christian firmness until the day of eternity!"

While the Christians were filled with joy, their enemies were frightened at their own work. The very day on which Ferdinand had declined to receive the protest (Tuesday 20th April), at one in the afternoon, Henry of Brunswick and Philip of Baden presented themselves as mediators, announcing, however, that they were acting solely of their own authority. They proposed that there should be no more mention of the decree of Worms, and that the first decree of Spires should be maintained, but with a few modifications; that the two parties, while remaining free until the next council, should oppose every new sect, and tolerate no doctrine contrary to the sacrament of the Lord's body. On Wednesday, 21st April, the evangelical states did not appear adverse to these propositions; and even those who had embraced the doctrines of Zwingle declared boldly that such a proposal would not compromise their existence. "Only let us call to mind," said they, "that in such difficult matters we must act, not with the sword, but with the sure Word of God. For, as St. Paul says: What is not of faith is sin. If therefore we constrain Christians to do what they believe unjust, instead of leading them by God's Word to acknowledge what is good, we force them to sin and incur a terrible responsibility." The fanatics of the Roman party trembled as they saw the victory nearly escaping from them; they rejected all compromise, and desired purely and simply the re-establishment of the papacy. Their zeal overcame everything, and the negotiations were broken off. On Thursday, 22d April, the diet re-assembled at seven in the morning, and the Recess was read precisely as it had been previously drawn up, without even mentioning the attempt at conciliation which had just failed.

Faber triumphed. Proud of having the ear of kings, he tossed himself furiously about, and to look at him, one would have said (according to an eye-witness) that he was a Cyclops forging in his cavern the monstrous chains with which he was about to bind the Reformation and the reformers. The papist princes, carried away by the tumult, gave the spur, says Melancthon, and flung themselves headlong into a path filled with dangers.2 Nothing was left for the evangelical Christians but to fall on their knees and cry to the Lord. "All that remains for us now to do," repeated Melancthon, "is to call upon the Son of God." The last sitting of the diet took place on the

24th April. The princes renewed their protest, in which fourteen free and imperial cities joined; and they next thought of giving their appeal a legal form. On Sunday, 25th April, two notaries. Leonard Stetner of Freysingen and Pangrace Saltzmann of Bamberg, were seated before a small table in a narrow chamber on the ground-floor of a house situated in St. John's Lane, near the church of the same name in Spires, and around them were the chancellors of the princes and of the evangelical cities, with several witnesses. This little house belonged to an humble pastor, Peter Muterstatt, deacon of St. John's, who taking the place of the elector or of the landgrave, had offered a domicile for the important act that was preparing. His name shall in consequence be transmitted to posterity. The document having been definitively drawn up, one of the notaries began reading it. "Since there is a natural communion between all men," said the Protestants, "and since even persons condemned to death are permitted to unite and appeal against their condemnation; how much more are we, who are members of the same spiritual body, the Church of the Son of God. children of the same Heavenly Father, and consequently brothers in the Spirit, authorized to unite when our salvation and eternal condemnation are concerned."

After reviewing all that had passed in the diet, and after intercalating in their appeal the principal documents that had reference to it, the Protestants ended by saying: "We therefore appeal for ourselves, for our subjects, and for all who receive or who shall hereafter receive the Word of God, from all past, present, or future vexatious measures, to his Imperial Majesty, and to a free and universal assembly of holy Christendom." This document filled twelve sheets of parchment; the signatures and seals were affixed to the thirteenth.

Thus in the obscure dwelling of the chaplain of St. John's was made the first confession of the true christian union. In presence of the wholly mechanical unity of the pope, these confessors of Jesus raised the banner of the living unity of Christ; and, as in the days of our Saviour, if there were many synagogues in Israel, there was at least but one temple. The Christians of Electoral Saxony, of Luneburg, of Anhalt, of Hesse and the Margravate, of Strasburg, Nuremberg, Ulm, Constance, Lindau, Memmingen, Kempten, Nordlingen, Heilbronn, Reutlingen, Isny, Saint Gall, Weissemburg, and Windsheim, took each other's hands on the 25th April, near the church of St. John, in the face of threatening persecutions. Among them might be found those who, like Zwingle, acknowledged in the Lord's Supper the entirely spiritual presence of Jesus Christ, as well as those who, with Luther, admitted his corporeal presence. There existed not at that time in the evangelical body any sects, hatred, or schism; christian unity was a reality. That upper chamber in which, during the early days of Christianity, the apostles with the women and the brethren "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication," and that lower chamber where, in the first days of the Reformation, the renewed disciples of Jesus Christ presented themselves to the pope and the emperor, to the world and to the scaffold, as forming but one body, are the two cradles of the Church; and it is in this its hour of weakness and humiliation that it shines forth with the brightest glory.

After this appeal each one returned in silence to his dwelling. Several tokens excited alarm for the safety of the Protestants. A short time previously Melancthon hastily conducted through the streets of Spires toward the Rhine his friend Simon Grynæns, pressing him to cross the river. The latter was astonished at such precipitation. "An old man of grave and Solemn air, but who is unknown to me," said Melancthon, "appeared before me and said: In a minute officers of justice will be sent by Ferdinand to arrest Grynæus." As he was intimate with Faber, and had been scandalized at one of

his sermons, Grynæus went to him, and begged him no longer to make war against the truth. Faber dissembled his anger, but immediately after repaired to the king, from whom he had obtained an order against the importunate professor of Heidelberg. Melancthon doubted not that God had saved his friend by sending one of his holy angels to forewarn him. Motionless on the banks of the Rhine, he waited until the waters of that stream had rescued Grynæus from his persecutors. “At last, cried Melancthon, as he saw him on the opposite side, “at last he is torn from the cruel jaws of those who thirst for innocent blood.”2 When he returned to his house, Melancthon was informed that officers in search of Grynæus had ransacked it from top to bottom.

There was nothing to detain the Protestants longer in Spires, and accordingly, on the morning after their appeal (Monday, 26th April), the elector, the landgrave, and the Dukes of Luneburg, quitted the city, reached Worms, and then returned by Hesse into their own states. The appeal of Spires was published by the landgrave on the 5th, and by the elector on the 13th of May.

Melancthon had returned to Wittemberg on the 6th of May, persuaded that the two parties were about to draw the sword. His friends were alarmed at seeing him agitated, exhausted, and like one dead. “It is a great event that has just taken place at Spires,” said he; “an event pregnant with dangers, not only to the empire, but to religion itself.5 All the pains of hell oppress me.”

It was Melancthon’s greatest affliction, that these evils were attributed to him, as indeed he ascribed them himself. “One single thing has injured us,” said he; “our not having approved, as was required of us, the edict against the Zwinglians.” Luther did not take this gloomy view of affairs: but he was far from comprehending the force of the protest. “The diet,” said he, “has come to an end almost without results, except that those who scourge Jesus Christ have not been able to satisfy their fury.”

Posterity has not ratified this decision, and on the contrary, dating from this epoch the definitive formation of Protestantism, it has hailed in the Protest of Spires one of the greatest movements recorded in history.

Let us see to whom the chief glory of this act belongs. The part taken by the princes, and especially by the Elector of Saxony, in the German Reformation, must strike every impartial observer. These are the true Reformers—the true martyrs. The Holy Ghost, that bloweth where it listeth, had inspired them with the courage of the ancient confessors of the Church; and the God of election was glorified in them. Somewhat later, perhaps, this great part played by the princes may have produced deplorable consequences: there is no grace of God that man cannot pervert. But nothing should prevent us from rendering honour to whom honour is due, and from adoring the work of the eternal Spirit in these eminent men who, under God, were in the sixteenth century the liberators of Christendom. The Reformation had taken a bodily form. It was Luther alone who had said No at the Diet of Worms: but churches and ministers, princes and people, said No at the Diet of Spires. In no country had superstition, scholasticism, hierarchy, and popery, been so powerful as among the Germanic nations. These simple and candid people had humbly bent their neck to the yoke that came from the banks of the Tiber. But there was in them a depth, a life, a need of interior liberty, which, sanctified by the Word of God, might render them the most energetic organs of Christian truth. It was from them that was destined to emanate the reaction against that material, external, and legal system, which had taken the place of Christianity; it was they who were called to shatter in pieces the skeleton which had been substituted for the spirit and the life,

and restore to the heart of Christendom, ossified by the hierarchy, the generous beatings of which it had been deprived for so many ages. The universal Church will never forget the debt it owes to the princes of Spires and to Luther.

CHAPTER VII

Union necessary to Reform—Luther's Doctrine on the Lord's Supper—A Lutheran Warning—Proposed Conference at Marburg—Melancthon and Zwingle—Zwingle leaves Zurich—Rumours in Zurich—The Reformers at Marburg—Carlstadt's Petition—Preliminary discussions—Holy Ghost—Original Sin—Baptism—Luther, Melancthon, and Zwingle—Opening of the Conference—The Prayer of the Church—Hoc est Corpus Meam—Syllogism of Œcolampadius—The Flesh profiteth nothing—Lambert convinced—Luther's Old Song—Agitation in the Conference—Arrival of new Deputies—Christ's Humanity finite—Mathematics and Popery—Testimony of the Fathers—Testimony of Augustine—Argument of the Velvet Cover—End of the Conference—The Landgrave mediates—Necessity of Union—Luther rejects Zwingle's hand—Sectarian Spirit of the Germans—Bucer's Dilemma—Christian Charity prevails—Luther's Report—Unity of Doctrine—Unity in Diversity—Signatures—Two Extremes—Three Views—Germ of Popery—Departure—Luther's Dejection—Turks before Vienna—Luther's Battle-Sermon and Agony—Luther's Firmness—Victory—Exasperation of the Papists—Threatening Prospects The Protest of Spires had still further increased the indignation of the papal adherents; and Charles the Fifth, according to the oath he had made at Barcelona, set about preparing "a suitable antidote for the pestilential disease with which the Germans were attacked, and to avenge in a striking manner the insult offered to Jesus Christ." The pope, on his part, endeavoured to combine all the other princes of Christendom in this crusade; and the peace of Cambray, concluded on the 5th August, tended to the accomplishment of his cruel designs. It left the emperor's hands free against the heretics. After having entered their protest at Spires, it was necessary for the evangelicals to think of maintaining it. The protestant states that had already laid the foundations of an evangelical alliance at Spires, had agreed to send deputies to Rothach; but the elector, staggered by the representations of Luther, who was continually repeating to him, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength;" ordered his deputies to listen to the propositions of his allies, but to decide upon nothing. They adjourned to a new conference, which never took place. Luther triumphed; for human alliances failed. "Christ the Lord will know how to deliver us without the landgrave, and even against the landgrave," said he to his friends.3

Philip of Hesse, who was vexed at Luther's obstinacy, was convinced that it arose from a dispute about words. "They will hear no mention of alliances because of the Zwinglians," said he; "well then, let us put an end to the contradictions that separate them from Luther." The union of all the disciples of the Word of God seemed in fact a necessary condition to the success of the Reformation. How could the Protestants resist the power of Rome and of the empire, if they were divided? The landgrave no doubt wished to unite their minds, that he might afterwards he able to unite their arms; but the cause of Christ was not to triumph by the sword. If they should succeed in uniting their hearts and prayers, the Reformation would then find such strength in the faith of its children, that Philip's spearmen would no longer be necessary.

Unfortunately, this union of minds, that was now to be sought after above all things, was a very difficult task. Luther in 1519 had at first appeared not only to reform, but entirely renovate the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, as the Swiss did somewhat later. "I go to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper," he had said, "and I there receive a sign from God that Christ's righteousness and passion justify me; such is the use of the sacrament." This discourse, which had gone through several impressions in the cities of Upper Germany, had prepared men's minds for the doctrine of Zwingle. Accordingly Luther, astonished at the reputation he had gained, published this solemn declaration in 1527: "I protest before God and before the whole world that I have never walked with the sacramentarians."

Luther in fact was never Zwinglian as regards the Communion. Far from that, in 1519, he still believed in Transubstantiation. Why then should he speak of a sign? It was for this reason. While, according to Zwingle, the bread and wine are signs of the body and blood of Christ; according to Luther, the very body and blood of Jesus Christ are signs of God's grace. These opinions are widely different from one another.

Ere long this disagreement declared itself. In 1527 Zwingle, in his Friendly Exposition, refuted Luther's opinion with mildness and respect. Unluckily the pamphlet of the Saxon reformer, "against the enthusiasts," was then issuing from the press, and in it Luther expressed his indignation that his adversaries should dare to speak of christian unity and peace. "Well!" exclaimed he, "since they thus insult all reason, I will give them a Lutheran warning.3 Cursed be this concord! cursed be this charity! down, down with it to the bottomless pit of hell! If I should murder your father, your mother, your wife, your child, and then, wishing to murder you, I should say to you, Let us be at peace, my dear friend!' what answer would you make?—It is thus that the enthusiasts, who murder Jesus Christ my Lord, God the Father, and Christendom my mother, wish to murder me also; and then they say, Let us be friends!"

Zwingle wrote two replies "to the excellent Martin Luther," in a cold tone and with a haughty calmness more difficult to pardon than the invectives of the Saxon doctor. "We ought to esteem you a vessel of honour, and we do so with joy," said he, "notwithstanding your faults." Pamphlet, followed pamphlet Luther always writing with the same impetuosity, and Zwingle with unalterable coolness and irony.

Such were the doctors whom the landgrave undertook to reconcile. Already, during the sitting of the Diet of Spires, Philip of Hesse, who was afflicted at hearing the papists continually repeating, "You boast of your attachment to the pure Word of God, and yet you are nevertheless disunited," had made overtures to Zwingle in writing. He now went farther, and invited the theologians of the different parties to meet at Marburg. These invitations met with various receptions. Zwingle, whose heart was large and fraternal, answered the landgrave's call; but it was rejected by Luther, who discovered leagues and battles behind this pretended concord.

It seemed, however, that great difficulties would detain Zwingle. The road from Zurich to Marburg lay through the territories of the emperor and of other enemies to the Reformation; the landgrave himself did not conceal the dangers of the journey; but in order to obviate these difficulties, he promised an escort from Strasburg to Hesse, and for the rest "the protection of God."3 These precautions were not of a nature to reassure the Zurichers.

Reasons of another kind detained Luther and Melancthon. “It is not right,” said they, “that the landgrave has so much to do with the Zwinglians. Their error is of such a nature that people of acute minds are easily tainted by it. Reason loves what it understands, particularly when learned men clothe their ideas in a scriptural dress.”

Melancthon did not stop here, but put forth the very extraordinary notion of selecting papists as judges of the discussion. “If there were no impartial judges,” said he, “the Zwinglians would have a good chance of boasting of victory.” Thus, according to Melancthon, papists would be impartial judges when the real presence was the subject of discussion! He went still farther. “Let the elector,” he wrote on the 14th May to the Prince Electoral, “refuse to permit our journey to Marburg, so that we may be able to allege this excuse.” The elector would not lend himself to so disgraceful a proceeding; and the reformers of Wittemberg found themselves compelled to accede to the request of Philip of Hesse. But they did so with these words: “If the Swiss do not yield to us, all your trouble will be lost;” and they wrote to the theologians among their friends who were convoked by the prince: “Stay away if you can; your absence will be very useful to us.”

Zwingle, on the contrary, who would have gone to the end of the world, made every exertion to obtain permission from the magistrates of Zurich to visit Marburg. “I am convinced,” said he to the secret council, “that if we doctors meet face to face, the splendour of truth will illuminate our eyes.” But the council, that had only just signed the first religious peace,3 and who feared to see war burst out afresh positively refused to allow the departure of the reformer.

Upon this Zwingle decided for himself. He felt that his presence was necessary for the maintenance of peace in Zurich; but the welfare of all Christendom summoned him to Marburg. Accordingly, raising his eyes towards heaven, he resolved to depart, exclaiming, “O God! thou hast never abandoned us; Thou wilt perform thy will for thine own glory.” During the night of the 31st August, Zwingle, who was unwilling to wait for the landgrave’s safe-conduct, prepared for his journey. Rodolph Collins, the Greek professor, was alone to accompany him. The reformer wrote to the Smaller and to the Great Council: “If I leave without informing you, it is not, most wise lords, because I despise your authority; but, knowing the love you bear towards me, I foresee that your anxiety will oppose my going.” As he was writing these words, a fourth message arrived from the landgrave, more pressing still than the preceding ones. The reformer sent the prince’s letter to the burgomaster with his own; he then quitted his house privily by night, concealing his departure both from friends, whose importunity he feared, and from enemies, whose snares he had good cause to dread. He did not even tell his wife where he was going, lest it should distress her. He and Collins then mounted two horses that had been hired for the purpose, and rode off rapidly in the direction of Basle.

During the day the rumour of Zwingle’s absence spread through Zurich, and his enemies were elated. “He has fled the country,” said they; “he has run away with a pack of scoundrels!” “As he was crossing the river at Bruck,” said others, “the boat upset and he was drowned.” “The devil,” affirmed many, with a malicious smile, “appeared to him bodily and carried him off.”—“There was no end to their stories,” says Bullinger. But the council immediately resolved on acceding to the wish of the reformer. On the very day of his departure they appointed one of the councillors, Ulrich Funck, to accompany him to Marburg, who forthwith set out with one domestic and an arquebusier. Strasburg and Basle in like manner sent statesmen in company with their

theologians, under the idea that this conference would doubtless have, also, a political object.

Zwingle arrived safely at Basle, and embarked on the river on the 6th September with Œcolampadius and several merchants. In thirteen hours they reached Strasburg, where the two reformers lodged in the house of Matthew Zell, the cathedral preacher. Catherine, the pastor's wife, prepared the dishes in the kitchen, waited at table, according to the ancient German manners,5 and then sitting down near Zwingle, listened attentively, and spoke with so much piety and knowledge, that the latter soon ranked her above many doctors.

After discussing with the magistrates the means of resisting the Romish league, and the organization to be given to the christian confederacy, Zwingle quitted Strasburg; and he and his friends, conducted along by-roads, through forests, over mountains and valleys, by secret but sure paths, at length reached Marburg, escorted by forty Hessian cavaliers.7

Luther, on his side, accompanied by Melancthon, Cruciger, and Jonas, had stopped on the Hessian frontier, declaring that nothing should induce him to cross it without a safe-conduct from the landgrave. This document being obtained, Luther arrived at Alsfeld, where the scholars, kneeling under the reformer's windows, chanted their pious hymns. He entered Marburg on the 30th September, a day after the arrival of the swiss. Both parties went to inns; but they had scarcely alighted, before the landgrave invited them to come and lodge in the castle, thinking by this means to bring the opposing parties closer together. Philip entertained them in a manner truly royal. "Ah!" said the pious Jonas, as he wandered through the halls of the palace, "it is not in honour of the Muses, but in honour of God and of his Christ, that we are so munificently treated in these forests of Hesse!" After dinner, on the first day, Œcolampadius, Hedio, and Bucer, desirous of entering into the prince's views, went and saluted Luther. The latter conversed affectionately with Œcolampadius in the castle-court; but Bucer, with whom he had once been very intimate, and who was now on Zwingle's side, having approached him, Luther said to him, smiling and making a sign with his hand: "As for you, you are a good-for-nothing fellow and a knave!"2 The unhappy Carlstadt, who had begun this dispute, was at that time in Friesland, preaching the spiritual presence of Christ, and living in such destitution that he had been forced to sell his Hebrew Bible to procure bread. The trial had crushed his pride, and he wrote to the landgrave: "We are but one body, one house, one people, one sacerdotal race; we live and die by one and the same Saviour. For this reason, I, poor and in exile, humbly pray your highness, by the blood of Jesus Christ, to allow me to be present at the disputation." But how bring Luther and Carlstadt face to face? and yet how repel the unhappy man? The landgrave, to extricate himself from this difficulty, referred him to the Saxon reformer. Carlstadt did not appear.

Philip of Hesse desired that, previously to the public conference, the theologians should have a private interview. It was however considered dangerous, says a contemporary, for Zwingle and Luther, who were both naturally violent, to contend with one another at the very beginning; and as Œcolampadius and Melancthon were the mildest, they were apportioned to the roughest champions. On Friday, the 1st October, after divine service, Luther and Œcolampadius were conducted into one chamber, and Zwingle and Melancthon into another. The combatants were then left to struggle two and two. The principal contest took place in the room of Zwingle and Melancthon. "It is affirmed," said Melancthon to Zwingle, "that some among you speak of God after the manner of the Jews, as if Christ was not essentially God." "I think on the Holy Trinity," replied

Zwingle, “with the Council of Nice and the Athanasian creed.” “Councils! creeds! What does that mean?” asked Melancthon. “Have you not continually repeated that you recognise no other authority than that of Scripture?” “We have never rejected the councils.” replied the Swiss reformer, “when they are based on the authority of the Word of God. The four first councils are truly sacred as regards doctrine, and none of the faithful have ever rejected them.” This important declaration, handed down to us by Œcolampadius, characterizes the reformed theology.2

“But you teach.” resumed Melancthon, “like Thomas Munster, that the Holy Ghost acts quite alone, independently of the sacraments and of the Word of God.” “The Holy Ghost.” replied Zwingle. “works in us justification by the Word, but by the Word preached and understood, by the soul and the marrow of the Word, by the mind and will of God clothed in human language.”

“At least,” continued Melancthon, “you deny original sin, and make sin consist only in actual and external works, like the Pelagians, the philosophers, and the Papists.” This was the principal difficulty. “Since man naturally loves himself,” replied Zwingle, “instead of loving God: in that there is a crime, a sin that condemns him.” He had more than once before expressed the same opinion:5 and yet Melancthon exulted on hearing him: “Our adversaries,” said he afterwards, “have given way on all these points!”

Luther had pursued the same method with Œcolampadius as Melancthon with Zwingle. The discussion had in particular turned on baptism. Luther complained that the Swiss would not acknowledge that by this simple sacrament a man became a member of the Church. “It is true,” said Œcolampadius, “that we require faith—either an actual or a future faith. Why should we deny it? Who is a Christian, if it be not he who believes in Christ? However I should be unwilling to deny that the water of baptism is in a certain sense a water of regeneration; for by it he, whom the Church knew not, becomes its child.”

These four theologians were in the very heat of their discussions, when domestics came to inform them that the prince’s dinner was on the table. They immediately arose and Zwingle and Melancthon meeting Luther and Œcolampadius, who were also quitting their chamber, the latter approached Zwingle, and whispered mournfully in his ear: “I have fallen a second time into the hands of Dr. Eck.” In the language of the reformers nothing stronger could be said.

It does not appear that the conference between Luther and Œcolampadius was resumed after dinner. Luther’s manner held out very little hope; but Melancthon and Zwingle returned to the discussion, and the Zurich doctor finding the Wittemberg professor escape him like an eel, as he said, and take, “like Proteus, a thousand different forms,” seized a pen in order to fix his antagonist. Zwingle committed to writing whatever Melancthon dictated, and then wrote his reply, giving it to the other to read. In this manner they spent six hours, three in the morning, and three in the afternoon.4 They prepared for the general conference.

Zwingle requested that it should be an open one; this Luther resisted. It was eventually resolved that the princes, nobles, deputies, and theologians, should be admitted; but a great crowd of citizens, and even many scholars and gentlemen, who had come from Frankfort, from the Rhine districts, from Strasburg, from Basle and other Swiss towns, were excluded. Brentz speaks of fifty or sixty hearers; Zwingle, of twenty-four only. On a gentle elevation, watered by the Lahn, is situated an old castle, overlooking the city of Marburg; in the distance may be seen the beautiful

valley of the Lahn, and beyond, the mountain-tops rising one above another, until they are lost in the horizon. It was beneath the vaults and Gothic arches of an antique chamber in this castle, known as the Knight's Hall, that the conference was to take place. On Saturday morning (2d October) the landgrave took his seat in the hall, surrounded by his court, but in so plain a dress that no one would have taken him for a prince. He wished to avoid all appearance of acting the part of a Constantine in the affairs of the Church. Before him was a table which Luther, Zwingle, Melancthon, and Œcolampadius approached. Luther, taking a piece of chalk, bent over the velvet cloth which covered it, and steadily wrote four words in large characters. All eyes followed the movement of his hand, and soon they read Hoc est Corpus Meum. Luther wished to have this declaration continually before him, that it might strengthen his own faith, and be a sign to his adversaries.

Behind these four theologians were seated their friends,—Hedio, Sturm, Funck, Frey, Eberhard, Thane, Jonas, Cruciger, and others besides. Jonas cast an inquiring glance upon the Swiss: "Zwingle," said he, "has a certain rusticity and arrogance; if he is well versed in letters, it is in spite of Minerva and of the muses. In Œcolampadius there is a natural goodness and admirable meekness. Hedio seems to have as much liberality as kindness; but Bucer possesses the cunning of a fox, that knows how to give himself an air of sense and prudence." Men of moderate sentiments often meet with worse treatment than those of the extreme parties.

Other feelings animated those who contemplated this assembly from a distance. The great men who had led the people in their footsteps on the plains of Saxony, on the banks of the Rhine, and in the lofty valleys of Switzerland, were there met face to face: the chiefs of Christendom who had separated from Rome, were come together to see if they could remain one. Accordingly, from all parts of Germany, prayers and anxious looks were directed towards Marburg. "Illustrious princes of the Word," cried the evangelical Church through the mouth of the poet Cordus, "penetrating Luther, mild Œcolampadius, magnanimous Zwingle, pious Snepf, eloquent Melancthon, courageous Bucer, candid Hedio, excellent Osiander, valiant Brentz, amiable Jonas, fiery Craton, Mænus, whose soul is stronger than his body, great Dionysius, and you Myconius—all you whom Prince Philip, that illustrious hero, has summoned, ministers and bishops, whom the christian cities have sent to terminate the schism, and to show us the way of truth; the suppliant Church falls weeping at your feet, and begs you by the bowels of Jesus Christ to bring this matter to a happy issue, that the world may acknowledge in your resolution the work of the Holy Ghost himself." The landgrave's chancellor, John Feige, having reminded them in the prince's name that the object of this colloquy was the re-establishment of union, "I protest," said Luther, "that I differ from my adversaries with regard to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, and that I shall always differ from them. Christ has said, This is my body. Let them show me that a body is not a body. I reject reason, common sense, carnal arguments, and mathematical proofs. God is above mathematics. We have the Word of God; we must adore it and perform it!"

It cannot be denied," said Œcolampadius, "that there are figures of speech in the Word of God; as John is Elias, the rock was Christ, I am the vine. The expression This is my body, is a figure of the same kind." Luther granted that there were figures in the Bible, but denied that this last expression was figurative.

All the various parties, however, of which the Christian Church is composed see a figure in these words. In fact, the Romanists declare that This is my body signifies not only “my body,” but also “my blood,” “my soul,” and even “my Divinity,” and “Christ wholly.” These words, therefore according to Rome, are a synecdoche, a figure by which a part is taken for the whole. And, as regards the Lutherans, the figure is still more evident.4 Whether it be synecdoche, metaphor, or metonymy, there is still a figure. In order to prove it, Œcolampadius employed this syllogism:—

“What Christ rejected in the sixth chapter of St. John, he could not admit in the words of the Eucharist.

“Now Christ, who said to the people of Capernaum, The flesh profiteth nothing, rejected by those very words the oral manducation of his body.

“Therefore he did not establish it at the institution of his Supper.”

Luther.—“I deny the minor (the second of these propositions); Christ has not rejected all oral manducation, but only a material manducation, like that of the flesh of oxen or of swine.”

Œcolampadius.—“There is danger in attributing too much to mere matter.”

Luther.—“Everything that God commands becomes spirit and life. If we lift up a straw, by the Lord’s order, in that very action we perform a spiritual work. We must pay attention to him who speaks, and not to what he says. God speaks: Men, worms, listen!—God commands: let the world obey! and let us altogether fall down and humbly kiss the Word.”

Œcolampadius.—“But since we have the spiritual eating, what need of the bodily one?”

Luther.—“I do not ask what need we have of it; but I see it written, Eat, this is my body. We must therefore believe and do. We must do—we must do!—If God should order me to eat dung, I would do it, with the assurance that it would be salutary.”4 At this point Zwingle interfered in the discussion.

We must explain Scripture by Scripture,” said he, “We cannot admit two kinds of corporeal manducation, as if Jesus had spoken of eating, and the Capernaites of tearing in pieces, for the same word is employed in both cases. Jesus says that to eat his flesh corporeally profiteth nothing (John, 6:63); whence it would result that he had given us in the Supper a thing that would be useless to us.—Besides, there are certain words that seem to me rather childish,—the dung, for instance. The oracles of the demons were obscure, not so are those of Jesus Christ.”

Luther.—“When Christ says the flesh profiteth nothing, he speaks not of his own flesh, but of ours.”

Zwingle.—“The soul is fed with the Spirit and not with the flesh.”

Luther.—“It is with the mouth that we eat the body; the soul does not eat it.”

Zwingle.—“Christ’s body is therefore a corporeal nourishment, and not a spiritual.”

Luther.—“You are captious.”

Zwingle.—“Not so; but you utter contradictory things.”

Luther.—“If God should present me wild apples, I should eat them spiritually. In the Eucharist, the mouth receives the body of Christ, and the soul believes in his words.”

Zwingle then quoted a great number of passages from the Holy Scriptures, in which the sign is described by the very thing signified; and thence concluded that, considering our Lord’s declaration in St. John, The flesh profiteth nothing, we must explain the words of the Eucharist in a similar manner.

Many hearers were struck by these arguments. Among the Marburg professors sat the Frenchman Lambert; his tail and spare frame was violently agitated. He had been at first of Luther’s opinion, and was then hesitating between the two reformers. As he went to the conference, he said: “I desire to be a sheet of blank paper, on which the finger of God may write his truth.” Erelong he exclaimed, after hearing Zwingle and Œcolampadius: “Yes! the Spirit, ’tis that which vivifies.”2 When this conversion was known, the Wittembergers, shrugging their shoulders, called it “Gallic fickleness.” “What!” replied Lambert, “was St. Paul fickle because he was converted from Pharisaism? And have we ourselves been fickle in abandoning the lost sects of popery?”

Luther was, however, by no means shaken. “This is my body,” repeated he, pointing with his finger to the words written before him. “This is my body. The devil himself shall not drive me from that. To seek to understand it, is to fall away from the faith.”

“But, doctor,” said Zwingle, “St. John explains how Christ’s body is eaten, and you will be obliged at last to leave off singing always the same song.”

“You make use of unmannerly expressions,” replied Luther. The Wittembergers themselves called Zwingle’s argument “his old song.”5 Zwingle continued without being disconcerted: “I ask you, doctor, whether Christ in the sixth chapter of St. John did not wish to reply to the question that had been put to him.

Luther.—“Master Zwingle, you wish to stop my mouth by the arrogancy of your language. That passage has nothing to do here.”

Zwingle, hastily.—“Pardon me, doctor, that passage breaks your neck.”

Luther.—“Do not boast so much! You are in Hesse, and not in Switzerland. In this country we do not break people’s necks.”

Then turning towards his friends, Luther complained bitterly of Zwingle; as if the latter had really wished to break his neck. “He makes use of camp terms and blood-stained words,” said he. Luther forgot that he had employed a similar expression in speaking of Carlstadt.

Zwingle resumed: “In Switzerland also there is strict justice, and we break no man’s neck without trial. That expression signifies merely that your cause is lost and hopeless.”

Great agitation prevailed in the Knight’s Hall. The roughness of the Swiss and the obstinacy of the Saxon had come into collision. The landgrave, fearing to behold the failure of his project of conciliation, nodded assent to Zwingle’s explanation. “Doctor,” said he to Luther, “you should not be offended at such common expressions.” It was in vain: the agitated sea could not again be calmed. The prince therefore arose, and they all repaired to the banqueting hall. After dinner they

resumed their tasks.

“I believe,” said Luther, “that Christ’s body is in heaven, but I also believe that it is in the sacrament. It concerns me little whether it be against nature, provided that it be not against faith. Christ is substantially in the sacrament, such as he was born of the Virgin.”

Œcolampadius, quoting a passage from St. Paul: “We know not Jesus Christ after the flesh.”

Luther.—“After the flesh means, in this passage, after our carnal affections.”

Œcolampadius.—“You will not allow that there is a metaphor in these words, This is my body, and yet you admit a synecdoche.”

Luther.—“Metaphor permits the existence of a sign only: but it is not so with synecdoche. If a man says he wishes to drink a bottle, we understand that he means the beer in the bottle. Christ’s body is in the bread, as a sword in the scabbard, or as the Holy Ghost in the dove.” The discussion was proceeding in this manner, when Osiander, pastor of Nuremberg, Stephen Agricola, pastor of Augsburg, and Brentz, pastor of Halle in Swabia, author of the famous Syngramma, entered the hall. These also had been invited by the landgrave. But Brentz, to whom Luther had written that he should take care not to appear, had no doubt by his indecision retarded his own departure as well as that of his friends. Places were assigned them near Luther and Melancthon. “Listen, and speak if necessary,” they were told. They took but little advantage of this permission. “All of us, except Luther,” said Melancthon, “were silent personages.” The struggle continued. When Zwingle saw that exegesis was not sufficient for Luther, he added dogmatical theology to it, and, subsidiarily, natural philosophy.

“I oppose you,” said he, “with this article of our faith; Ascendit in cœlum—he ascended into heaven. If Christ is in heaven as regards his body, how can he be in the bread? The Word of God teaches us that he was like his brethren in all things (Hebrews 2:17). He therefore cannot be in several places at once.”

Luther.—“Were I desirous of reasoning thus, I would undertake to prove that Jesus Christ had a wife; that he had black eyes, and lived in our good country of Germany.3 I care little about mathematics.”

“There is no question of mathematics here,” said Zwingle, “but of St. Paul, who writes to the Philippians, μορφ■ν δο■λου λαβ■ν.”

Luther, interrupting him.—“Read it to us in Latin or in, German, not in Greek.

Zwingle (in Latin).—“Pardon me: for twelve years past I have made use of the Greek Testament only.” Then continuing to read the passage, he concluded from it that Christ’s humanity is of a finite nature like our own.

Luther, pointing to the words written before him.—“Most dear sirs, since my Lord Jesus Christ says, Hoc est corpus meum, I believe that his body is really there.”

Here the scene grew animated. Zwingle started from his chair, sprung towards Luther, and said, striking the table before him:

“You maintain then, doctor, that Christ’s body is locally in the Eucharist; for you say Christ’s body is really there—there there,” repeated Zwingle. “There is an adverb of place. Christ’s body is then of such a nature as to exist in a place. If it is in a place, it is in heaven, whence it follows that it is not in the bread.”

Luther.—“I repeat that I have nothing to do with mathematical proofs. As soon as the words of consecration are pronounced over the bread, the body is there, however wicked be the priest who pronounces them.”

Zwingle.—“You are thus re-establishing Popery.”

Luther.—“This is not done through the priest’s merits, but because of Christ’s ordinance. I will not, when Christ’s body is in question, hear speak of a particular place. I absolutely will not.”

Zwingle.—“Must every thing, then, exist precisely as you will it?” The landgrave perceived that the discussion was growing hot; and as the repast was waiting, he broke off the contest. The conference was continued on the next day, Sunday, the 3d October, perhaps because of an epidemic (the Sweating Sickness) that had just broken out at Marburg, and which did not allow any great prolongation of the colloquy. Luther, returning to the discussion of the previous evening, said:

“Christ’s body is in the sacrament, but it is not there as in a place.”

Zwingle.—“Then it is not there at all.”

Luther.—“Sophists say, that a body may very well be in several places at once. The universe is a body, and yet we cannot assert that it is in a particular place.”

Zwingle.—“Ah! you speak of sophists, doctor; are you really after all obliged to return to the onions and flesh-pots of Egypt? As for what you say, that the universe is in no particular place, I beg all intelligent men to weigh this proof.” Then Zwingle, who, whatever Luther may have said, had more than one arrow in his quiver, after establishing his proposition by exegesis and philosophy, resolved on confirming it by the testimony of the Fathers of the Church.

“Listen,” said he, “to what Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspa in Numidia, said, in the fifth century, to Trasamond, king of the Vandals: ‘The Son of God took the attributes of true humanity, and did not lose those of true divinity. Born in time, according to his mother, he lives in eternity according to the divinity that he holds from the Father: coming from man, he is man, and consequently in a place; proceeding from the Father, he is God, and consequently present in every place. According to his human nature, he was absent from heaven while he was upon earth, and quitted the earth when he ascended into heaven; but, according to his divine nature, he remained in heaven, when he came down thence, and did not abandon the earth when he returned thither.’” But Luther still replied: “It is written, This is my body.” Zwingle, becoming impatient, said, “All that is idle wrangling. An obstinate disputant might also maintain this expression of our Saviour to his mother, Behold thy son, pointing to St. John. Vain would be every explanation, he would continue crying No, no! He said Ecce filius tuus, Behold thy son, behold thy son! Listen to a new testimony; it is from the great Augustine: ‘Let us not think,’ says he, ‘that Christ, according to his human form, is present in every place; let us beware, in our endeavour to establish his divinity, of taking away his truth from his body. Christ is now every where present, like God; and yet, in consequence of his

real body, he is in a definite part of heaven.'"

"St. Augustine," replied Luther, "is not here speaking of the Eucharist. Christ's body is not in the Eucharist, as in a place."

Œcolampadius saw that he might take advantage of this assertion of Luther's. "The body of Christ," said he, "is not locally in the Eucharist, therefore no real body is there; for every one knows that the essence of a body is its existence in a place."

Here finished the morning's discussion.

Œcolampadius, upon reflection, felt convinced that Luther's assertion might be looked upon as an approximation. "I remember," said he after dinner, "that the doctor conceded this morning that Christ's body was not in the sacrament as in a place. Let us therefore inquire amicably what is the nature of Christ's bodily presence."

"You will not make me take a step further," exclaimed Luther, who saw where they wished to drag him; "You have Fulgentius and Augustine on your side, but all the other Fathers are on ours."

Œcolampadius, who seemed to the Wittembergers to be vexatiously precise, then said, "Name these doctors. We will take upon ourselves to prove that they are of our opinion."

"We will not name them to you," said Luther. "It was in his youth," added he, "that Augustine wrote what you have quoted; and, besides, he is an obscure author." Then retreating to the ground which he had resolved never to quit, he was no longer content to point his finger at the inscription, Hoc est corpus meum, but seized the velvet cover on which the words were written, tore it off the table, held it up in front of Zwingle and Œcolampadius, and placing it before their eyes, "See!" said he, "see! This is our text: you have not yet driven us from it, as you had boasted, and we care for no other proofs."

"If this be the case," said Œcolampadius, "we had better leave off the discussion. But I will first declare, that, if we quote the Fathers, it is only to free our doctrine from the reproach of novelty, and not to support our cause by their authority." No better definition can be given of the legitimate use of the doctors of the Church.

There was no reason, in fact, for prolonging the conference. "As Luther was of an intractable and imperious disposition." says even his great apologist Seckendorf, "he did not cease from calling upon the Swiss to submit simply to his opinion." The chancellor, alarmed at such a termination of the colloquy, exhorted the theologians to come to some understanding. "I know but one means for that," said Luther; "and this it is: Let our adversaries believe as we do." "We cannot," answered the Swiss. "Well then," rejoined Luther, "I abandon you to God's judgment, and pray that he will enlighten you." "We will do the same," added Œcolampadius.

While these words were passing, Zwingle sat silent, motionless, and deeply moved; and the liveliness of his affections, of which he had given more than one proof during the conference, was then manifested in a very different manner. He burst into tears in the presence of all. The conference was ended. It had been in reality more tranquil than the documents seem to show, or perhaps the chroniclers appreciated such matters differently from ourselves. "With the exception of a few sallies, all had passed off quietly, in a courteous manner, and with very great gentleness,"

says an eye-witness. “During the colloquy no other words than these were heard: ‘Sir, and very dear friend, your charity,’ or other similar expressions. Not a word of sehism or of heresy. It might have been said that Luther and Zwingle were brothers, and not adversaries.” This is the testimony of Brentz. But these flowers concealed an abyss, and Jonas, also an eye-witness, styles the conference “a very sharp contest.”2 The contagion that had suddenly broken out in Marburg was creating frightful ravages, and filled everybody with alarm. All were anxious to leave the city. “Sirs,” remarked the landgrave, “you cannot separate thus.” And desirous of giving the doctors an opportunity of meeting one another with minds unoccupied with theological debates, he invited them to his table. This was Sunday night.

Philip of Hesse had all along shown the most constant attention, and each one imagined him to be on his side. “I would rather place my trust in the simple words of Christ, than in the subtle thoughts of man,” was a remark he made according to Jonas; but Zwingle affirmed that this prince entertained the same opinions as himself, although with regard to certain persons he dissembled the change. Luther, sensible of the weakness of his defence as to the declarations of the Fathers, transmitted a note to Philip, in which several passages were pointed out from Hilary, Chrysostom, Cyprian, Irenæus, and Ambrose, which he thought were in his favour. The time of departure drew near, and nothing had been done. The landgrave toiled earnestly at the union, as Luther wrote to his wife. He invited the theologians one after another into his closet;6 he pressed, entreated, warned, exhorted, and conjured them. “Think,” said he, “of the salvation of the christian republic, and remove all discord from its bosom.” Never had general at the head of an army taken such pains to win a battle. A final meeting took place, and undoubtedly the Church has seldom witnessed one of greater solemnity. Luther and Zwingle, Saxony and Switzerland, met for the last time. The sweating sickness was carrying off men around them by thousands; Charles the Fifth and the pope were uniting in Italy; Ferdinand and the Roman Catholic princes were preparing to tear in pieces the Protest of Spires; the thunder-cloud became more threatening every day; union alone seemed capable of saving the Protestants, and the hour of departure was about to strike—an hour that would separate them perhaps for ever.

“Let us confess our union in all things in which we agree,” said Zwingle; “and as for the rest, let us remember that we are brothers. There will never be peace between the churches if, while we maintain the grand doctrine of salvation by faith, we cannot differ on secondary points.” Such is, in fact, the true principle of Christian union. The sixteenth century was still too deeply sunk in scholasticism to understand this: let us hope that the nineteenth century will comprehend it better.

“Yes, yes!” exclaimed the landgrave; “you agree! Give then a testimony of your unity, and recognise one another as brothers.”—“There is no one upon earth with whom I more desire to be united, than with you,” said Zwingle, approaching the Wittemberg doctors. Œcolampadius, Bucer, and Hedio said the same.

“Acknowledge them! acknowledge them as brothers!” continued the landgrave. Their hearts were moved; they were en the eve of unity: Zwingle, bursting into tears, in the presence of the prince, the courtiers, and divines (it is Luther himself who records this),4 approached Luther, and held out his hand. The two families of the Reformation were about to be united: long quarrels were about to be stifled in their cradle; but Luther rejected the hand that was offered him: “You have a different spirit from ours,” said he. These words communicated to the Swiss, as it were, an electric shock.

Their hearts sunk each time Luther repeated them, and he did so frequently. He himself is our informant. A brief consultation took place among the Wittemberg doctors. Luther, Melancthon, Agricola, Brentz, Jonas, and Osiander, conferred together. Convinced that their peculiar doctrine on the eucharist was essential to salvation, they considered all those who rejected it as without the pale of the faith. “What folly!” said Melancthon, who afterwards nearly coincided with Zwingle’s sentiments: “they condemn us. and yet they desire we should consider them as our brothers!” “What versatility!” added Brentz: “they accused us but lately of worshipping a bread-god, and they now ask for communion with us!” Then, turning towards Zwingle and his friends, the Wittembergers said: “You do not belong to the communion of the Christian Church; we cannot acknowledge you as brethren!”2 The Swiss were far from partaking of this sectarian spirit. “We think,” said Bucer, “that your doctrine strikes at the glory of Jesus Christ, who now reigns at the right hand of the Father. But seeing that in all things you acknowledge your dependence on the Lord, we look at your conscience, which compels you to receive the doctrine you profess, and we do not doubt that you belong to Christ.”

“And we,” said Luther—“we declare to you once more that our conscience opposes our receiving you as brethren.”—“If such is the case,” replied Bucer, “it would be folly to ask it.”

“I am exceedingly astonished that you wish to consider me as your brother,” pursued Luther. “It shows clearly that you do not attach much importance to your own doctrine.”

“Take your choice,” said Bucer, proposing a dilemma to the reformer: “either you should not acknowledge as brethren those who differ from you on any point—and if so, you will not find a single brother in your own ranks—or else you will receive some of those who differ from you, and then you ought to receive us.” The Swiss had exhausted their solicitations. “We are conscious,” said they, “of having acted as if in the presence of God. Posterity will be our witness.” They were on the point of retiring: Luther remained like a rock, to the landgrave’s great indignation.5 The Hessian divines, Kraft, Lambert, Snepf, Lonicer, and Melander, united their exertions to those of the prince.

Luther was staggered, and conferred anew with his colleagues. “Let us beware,” said he to his friends, “of wiping our noses too roughly, lest blood should come.”

Then turning to Zwingle and Œcolampadius, they said: “We acknowledge you as friends; we do not consider you as brothers and members of Christ’s Church. But we do not exclude you from that universal charity which we owe even to our enemies.”8 The hearts of Zwingle, Œcolampadius, and Bucer, were ready to burst, for this concession was almost a new insult. “Let us carefully avoid all harsh and violent words and writings,” said they; “and let each one defend himself without railing.”2

Luther then advanced towards the Swiss, and said: “We consent, and I offer you the hand of peace and charity.” The Swiss rushed in great emotion towards the Wittembergers, and all shook hands. Luther himself was softened: christian charity resumed her rights in his heart. “Assuredly,” said he, “a great portion of the scandal is taken away by the suppression of our fierce debates; we could not have hoped for so much. May Christ’s hand remove the last obstacle that separates us.4 There is now a friendly concord between us, and if we persevere in prayer, brotherhood will come.”

It was desirable to confirm this important result by a report. “We must let the christian world know,” said the landgrave, “that, except the manner of the presence of the body and blood in the eucharist, you are agreed in all the articles of faith.” This was resolved on; but who should be charged with drawing up the paper? All eyes were turned upon Luther.6 The Swiss themselves appealed to his impartiality.

Luther retired to his closet, lost in thought, uneasy, and finding the task very difficult. “On the one hand,” said he, “I should like to spare their weakness; but, on the other, I would not in the least degree strike at the holy doctrine of Christ.” He did not know how to set about it, and his anguish increased. He got free at last. “I will draw up the articles,” said he, “in the most accurate manner. Do I not know that whatever I may write, they will never sign them?” Erelong fifteen articles were committed to paper, and Luther, holding them in his hand, repaired to the theologians of the two parties.

These articles are of importance. The two doctrines that were evolved in Switzerland and in Saxony, independently of each other, were brought together and compared. If they were of man, there would be found in them a servile uniformity, or a remarkable opposition. This was not the case. A great unity was found between the German and the Swiss Reformations, for they both proceeded from the same Divine teaching; and a diversity on secondary points, for it was by man’s in strumentality that God had effected them.

Luther took his paper, and reading the first article, said:

“First, we believe that there is one sole, true, and natural God, creator of heaven and earth and of all creatures; and that this same God, one in essence and in nature, is three-fold in person, that is to say, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as was declared in the Nicene Council, and as all the Christian Church professes. To this the Swiss gave their assent.

They were agreed also on the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ; on his death and resurrection, on original sin, justification by faith, the operation of the Holy Ghost and of the Word of God, baptism, good works, confession, civil order, and tradition.

Thus far all were united. The Wittembergers could not recover from their astonishment. The two parties had rejected, on the one hand, the errors of the papists, who make religion little more than an outward form; and, on the other, those of the Enthusiasts, who speak exclusively of internal feelings; and they were found drawn up under the same banners between these two camps. But the moment was come that would separate them. Luther had kept till the last the article on the Eucharist. The reformer resumed:

“We all believe with regard to the Lord’s Supper, that it ought to be celebrated in both kinds, according to the primitive institution; that the mass is not a work by which a Christian obtains pardon for another man, whether dead or alive; that the sacrament of the altar is the sacrament of the very body and very blood of Jesus Christ; and that the spiritual manducation of this body and blood is specially necessary to every true Christian.”

It was now the turn of the Swiss to be astonished. Luther continued:

“In like manner, as to the use of the sacrament, we are agreed that, like the Word, it was ordained of Almighty God, in order that weak consciences might be excited by the Holy Ghost to faith and

charity." The joy of the Swiss was redoubled. Luther continued: "And although at present we are not agreed on the question whether the real body and blood of Christ are corporeally present in the bread and wine, yet both the interested parties shall cherish more and more a truly christian charity for one another, so far as conscience permits; and we will all earnestly implore the Lord to condescend by his Spirit to confirm us in the sound doctrine." The Swiss obtained what they had asked: unity in diversity. It was immediately resolved to hold a solemn meeting for the signature of the articles.

They were read over again. Œcolampadius, Zwingle, Bucer, and Hedio, signed them first on one copy; while Luther, Melancthon, Jonas, Osiander, Brentz, and Agricola, wrote their names on the other; both parties then subscribed the copy of their adversaries, and this important document was sent to the press.

Thus the Reformation had made a sensible step at Marburg. The opinion of Zwingle on the spiritual presence, and of Luther on the bodily presence, are both found in Christian antiquity; but both the extreme doctrines have been always rejected: that of the Rationalists, on the one hand, who behold in the Eucharist nothing but a simple commemoration; and of the Papists, on the other, who adore in it a transubstantiation. These are both errors; while the doctrines of Luther and Zwingle, and the medium taken by Calvin, already maintained by some of the Fathers, were considered in ancient times as different views of the same truth. If Luther had yielded, it might have been feared that the Church would fall into the extreme of rationalism; if Zwingle, that it would rush into the extreme of popery. It is a salutary thing for the Church that these different views should be entertained; but it is a pernicious thing for individuals to attach themselves to one of them in such a manner as to anathematize the other. "There is only this little stumbling-block," wrote Melancthon, "that embarrasses the Church of our Lord."

All,—Romanists and Evangelicals, Saxons and Swiss,—admitted the presence, and even the real presence of Christ; but here was the essential point of separation: Is this presence effected by the faith of the communicant, or by the opus operatum of the priest? The germs of Popery, Sacerdotalism, Puseyism, are inevitably contained in this latter thesis. If it is maintained that a wicked priest (as has been said) operates this real presence of Christ by three words, we enter the church of the pope. Luther appeared sometimes to admit this doctrine, but he has often spoken in a more spiritual manner; and taking this great man in his best moments, we behold merely an essential unity and a secondary diversity in the two parties of the Reformation. Undoubtedly the Lord has left his Church outward seals of his grace; but he has not attached salvation to these signs. The essential point in the connection of the faithful with the Word, with the Holy Ghost, with the Head of the Church. This is the great truth which the Swiss Reform proclaims, and which Lutheranism itself recognises. After the Marburg conference, the controversy became more moderate.

There was another advantage. The evangelical divines at Marburg marked with one accord their separation from the Papacy. Zwingle was not without fear (unfounded, no doubt) with regard to Luther: these fears were dispersed. "Now that we are agreed," said he, "the Papists will no longer hope that Luther will ever be one of them." The Marburg articles were the first bulwark erected in common by the reformers against Rome.

It was not, then, in vain that, after the Protest of Spires, Philip of Hesse endeavoured, at Marburg, to bring together the friends of the Gospel. But, if the religious object was partially attained, the political object almost entirely failed. They could not arrive at a confederation of Switzerland and Germany. Nevertheless, Philip of Hesse and Zwingle, with a view to this, had numerous secret conversations, which made the Saxons uneasy, as they were not less opposed to Zwingle's politics than to his theology. "When you have reformed the peasant's cap," said Jonas to him, "you will also claim to reform the sable hat of princes." The landgrave having collected all the doctors at his table on the last day, they shook hands in a friendly manner, and each one thought of leaving the town. On Tuesday the 5th October, Philip of Hesse quitted Marburg early, and in the afternoon of the same day Luther departed, accompanied by his colleagues; but he did not go forth as a conqueror. A spirit of dejection and alarm had taken possession of his mind. He writhed in the dust, like a worm, according to his own expression. He fancied he should never see his wife and children again, and cried out that he, "the consoler of so many tortured souls, was now without any consolation!"2 This state might partly arise from Luther's want of brotherly feeling; but it had other causes also. Soliman had come to fulfil a promise made to King Ferdinand. The latter having demanded, in 1528, the surrender of Belgrade, the sultan had haughtily replied that he would bring the keys himself to Vienna. In fact, the Grand Turk, crossing the frontiers of Germany, had invaded countries "on which the hoofs of the Mussulman war-horses had never trod," and eight days before the conference at Marburg, he had covered with his innumerable tents the plain and the fertile hills in the midst of which rise the walls of Vienna. The struggle had begun under ground, the two parties having dug deep galleries beneath the ramparts. Three different times the Turkish mines were exploded; the walls were thrown down; "the balls flew through the air like a flight of small birds," says a Turkish historian: and there was a horrible banquet, at which the genii of death joyously drained their glasses."4

Luther did not keep in the background. He had already written against the Turks, and now he published a Battle-Sermon. "Mahomet," said he, "exalts Christ as being without sin; but he denies that he was the true God; he is therefore His enemy. Alas! to this hour the world is such that it seems everywhere to rain disciples of Mahomet. Two men ought to oppose the Turks; the first is Christian, that is to say, Prayer; the second is Charles, that is to say, The sword." And in another place, "I know my dear Germans well, fat and well-fed swine as they are; no sooner is the danger removed than they think only of eating and sleeping. Wretched man! if thou dost not take up arms, the Turk will come; he will carry thee away into his Turkey; he will there sell thee like a dog; and thou shalt serve him night and day, under the rod and the cudgel, for a glass of water and a morsel of bread. Think on this; be converted, and implore the Lord not to give thee the Turk for thy schoolmaster." The two arms pointed out by Luther were, in reality, vigorously employed; and Soliman, perceiving at last that he was not the soul of the universe," as his poets had styled him, but that there was a strength in the world superior to his own, raised the siege of Vienna on the 16th October; and "the shadow of God over the two worlds," as he called himself, "disappeared and vanished in the Bosphorus." But Luther imagined that, when retiring from before the walls of Vienna, "the Turk, or at least his god, who is the devil," had rushed upon him; and that it was this enemy of Christ and of Christ's servants that he was destined to combat and vanquish in his frightful agony. There is an immediate reaction of the violated law upon him who violates it. Now Luther had transgressed the royal law, which is charity, and he suffered the penalty. At last he re-entered Wittemberg, and flung himself into the arms of his friends, "tormented by the angel of

death."3

Let us not, however, overlook the essential qualities of a reformer that Luther manifested at Marburg. There are in God's work, as in a drama, different parts. What various characters we see among the Apostles and among the Reformers! It has been said that the same characters and the same parts were assigned to St. Peter and to Luther, at the time of the Formation and of the Reformation of the Church. They were both in fact men of the initiative, who start forward quite alone, but around whom an army soon collects at the sight of the standard which they wave. But there was perhaps in the reformer a characteristic not existing to the same degree in the apostle: this was firmness. As for Zwingle, he quitted Marburg in alarm at Luther's intolerance. "Lutheranism," wrote he to the landgrave, "will lie as heavy upon us as popery." He reached Zurich on the 19th October. "The truth," said he to his friends, "has prevailed so manifestly, that if ever any one has been defeated before all the world, it is Luther, although he constantly exclaimed that he was invincible." On his side, Luther spoke in a similar strain. "It is through fear of their fellow-citizens," added he, "that the Swiss, although vanquished, are unwilling to retract."

If it should be asked on which side the victory really was, perhaps we ought to say that Luther assumed the air of a conqueror, but Zwingle was so in reality. The conference propagated through all Germany the doctrine of the Swiss, which had been little known there until then, and it was adopted by an immense number of persons. Among these were Laffards, first rector of St. Martin's school at Brunswick, Dionysius Melander, Justus Lening, Hartmann, Ibach, and many others. The landgrave himself, a short time before his death, declared that this conference had induced him to renounce the oral manducation of Christ.

Still the dominant principle at this celebrated epoch was unity. The adversaries are the best judges. The Roman Catholics were exasperated that the Lutherans and Zwinglians had agreed on all the essential points of faith. "They have a, fellow-feeling against the Catholic Church," said they, "as Herod and Pilate against Jesus Christ." The enthusiastic sects said the same, and the extreme hierarchical as well as the extreme radical party deprecated alike the unity of Marburg.

Erelong a greater agitation eclipsed all these rumours, and events which threatened the whole evangelical body, proclaimed its great and intimate union with new force. The emperor, it was everywhere said, exasperated by the protest of Spires, had landed at Genoa with the pomp of a conqueror. After having sworn at Barcelona to reduce the heretics under the power of the pope, he was going to visit this pontiff, humbly to bend the knee before him; and he would rise only to cross the Alps and accomplish his terrible designs. "The Emperor Charles," said Luther, a few days after the landing of this prince, "has determined to show himself more cruel against us than the Turk himself, and he has already uttered the most horrible threats. Behold the hour of Christ's agony and weakness. Let us pray for all those who will soon have to endure captivity and death."

Such was the news that then agitated all Germany. The grand question was, whether the Protest of Spires could be maintained against the power of the emperor and of the pope. This was seen in the year 1530.

BOOK XIV The Augsburg Confession.—1530

CHAPTER I

Two striking Lessons—Charles V. in Italy—The German Envoys—Their Boldness—The Landgrave's Present—The Envoys under arrest—Their Release and Departure—Meeting of Charles and Clement—Gattinara's Proposition—Clement's Arms—War imminent—Luther's Objections—The Saviour's Coming—Charles's conciliatory Language—The Emperor's Motives. The Reformation was accomplished in the name of a spiritual principle. It had proclaimed for its teacher the Word of God; for salvation, Faith; for King, Jesus Christ; for arms, the Holy Ghost; and had by these very means rejected all worldly elements. Rome had been established by the law of a carnal commandment; the Reformation, by the power of an endless life.

If there is any doctrine that distinguishes Christianity from every other religion, it is its spirituality. A heavenly life brought it down to man—such is its work; thus the opposition of the spirit of the Gospel to the spirit of the world, was the great fact which signalized the entrance of Christianity among the nations. But what its Founder had separated, had soon come together again; the Church had fallen into the arms of the world; and by this criminal union it had been reduced to the deplorable condition in which we find it at the era of the Reformation.

Thus one of the greatest tasks of the sixteenth century was to restore the spiritual element to its rights. The Gospel of the reformers had nothing to do with the world and with politics. While the Roman hierarchy had become a matter of diplomacy and a court intrigue, the Reformation was destined to exercise no other influence over princes and people than that which proceeds from the Gospel of peace.

If the Reformation, having attained a certain point, became untrue to its nature, began to parley and temporize with the world, and cease thus to follow up the spiritual principle that it had so loudly proclaimed, it was faithless to God and to itself.

Henceforward its decline was at hand.

It is impossible for a society to prosper if it be unfaithful to the principles it lays down. Having abandoned what constituted its life, it can find naught but death.

It was God's will that this great truth should be inscribed on the very threshold of the temple He was then raising in the world; and a striking contrast was to make this truth stand gloriously prominent.

One portion of the reform was to seek the alliance of the world, and in this alliance find a destruction full of desolation.

Another portion, looking up to God, was haughtily to reject the arm of the flesh, and by this very act of faith secure a noble victory.

If three centuries have gone astray, it is because they were unable to comprehend so holy and so solemn a lesson.

It was in the beginning of September 1529 that Charles V., the victor by battles or by treaties over the pope and the King of France, landed at Genoa. The shouts of the Spaniards had saluted him as he quitted the Iberian peninsula; but the dejected eyes, the bended heads, the silent lips of the Italians given over to his hands, alone welcomed him to the foot of the Apennines. Every thing led to the belief that Charles would indemnify himself on them for the apparent generosity with which

he had treated the pope.

They were deceived. Instead of those barbarous chiefs of the Goths and Huns,—instead of those proud and fierce emperors, who more than once had crossed the Alps and rushed upon Italy, sword in hand and with cries of vengeance, the Italians saw among them a young and graceful prince, with pale features, a delicate frame, and weak voice, of winning manners, having more the air of a courtier than of a warrior, scrupulously performing all the duties of the Romish religion, and leading in his train no terrible cohorts of German barbarians, but a brilliant retinue of Spanish grandees, who condescendingly paraded the pride of their race and the splendour of their nation. This prince, the victor of Europe, spoke only of peace and amnesty; and even the Duke of Ferrara, who of all the Italian princes had most cause of fear, having at Modena placed the keys of the city in his hands, heard from his friendly lips the most unexpected encouragements.

Whence did this strange conduct proceed? Charles had shown plainly enough, at the time of the captivity of Francis I., that generosity towards his enemies was not his dominant virtue. It was not long before this mystery was explained.

Almost at the same time with Charles there arrived in Italy, by way of Lyons and Genoa, three German burgesses, whose whole equipage consisted of six horses. These were John Ehinger, burgomaster of Memmingen, who carried his head high, scattered money around him, and who was not remarkable for great sobriety; Michael Caden, syndic of Nuremberg, a worthy, pious, and brave man, but detested by the Count of Nassau, the most influential of Charles's ministers; and, lastly, Alexis Frauentraut, secretary to the Margrave of Brandenburg, who, having married a nun, was in very bad odour among the Roman Catholics. Such were the three men whom the Protestant princes, assembled at Nuremberg, commissioned to bear to the emperor the famous Protest of Spires. They had purposely chosen these deputies from a middle station, under the impression that they would incur less danger.2 To carry such a message to Charles V. was, to say the truth, a task that few persons cared to execute. Accordingly a pension had been secured to the widows of these envoys in case of misfortune.

Charles was on his way from Genoa to Bologna, and staying at Piacenza, when the three Protestant deputies overtook him. These plain Germans presented a singular contrast in the midst of that Spanish pomp and Romish fervour by which the young prince was surrounded. Cardinal Gattinara, the emperor's chancellor, who sincerely desired a reform of the Church, procured them an audience of Charles V. for the 22d of September; but they were recommended to be sparing in their words, for there was nothing the emperor so much disliked as a Protestant sermon. The deputies were not checked by these intimations; and, after handing the protest to Charles, Frauentraut began to speak: "It is to the Supreme Judge that each one of us must render an account," said he, "and not to creatures who turn at every wind. It is better to fall into the most cruel necessity, than to incur the anger of God. Our nation will obey no decrees that are based on any other foundation than the Holy Scriptures."

Such was the proud tone held by these German citizens to the emperor of the west. Charles said not a word—it would have been paying them too much honour; but he charged one of his secretaries to announce an answer at some future time.

There was no hurry to send back these paltry ambassadors. In vain did they renew their solicitations daily. Gattinara treated them with kindness, but Nassau sent them away with bitter words. A workman, the armourer to the court, having to visit Augsburg to purchase arms, begged the Count of Nassau to despatch the Protestant deputies. “You may tell them,” replied the minister of Charles V., “that we will terminate their business in order that you may have travelling companions. But the armourer having found other company, they were compelled to wait.

These envoys endeavoured at least to make a good use of their time. “Take this book,” said the landgrave to Caden at the very moment of departure, giving him a French work bound in velvet, and richly ornamented, “and deliver it to the emperor.” It was a summary of the Christian Faith which the landgrave had received from Francis Lambert, and which had probably been written by that doctor. Caden sought an opportunity of presenting this treatise; and did so one day, as Charles was going publicly to mass. The emperor took the book, and passed it immediately to a Spanish bishop. The Spaniard began to read it,3 and lighted upon that passage of Scripture in which Christ enjoins his apostles not to exercise lordship. The author took advantage of it to maintain that the minister, charged with spiritual matters, should not interfere with those which are temporal. The papist prelate bit his lips, and Charles, who perceived it, having asked, “Well, what is the matter?” the bishop in confusion had recourse to a falsehood.5 “This treatise,” replied he, “takes the sword from the christian magistrate, and grants it only to nations that are strangers to the faith.” Immediately there was a great uproar: the Spaniards above all were beside themselves. “The wretches that have endeavoured to mislead so young a prince,” said they, “deserve to be hung on the first tree by the wayside!” Charles swore, in fact, that the bearer should suffer the penalty of his audacity. At length, on the 12th October, Alexander Schweiss, imperial secretary, transmitted the emperor’s reply to the deputies. It said that the minority ought to submit to the decrees passed in diet, and that if the Duke of Saxony and his allies were contumacious, means would not be wanting to compel them.

Upon this Ehinger and Caden read aloud the appeal to the emperor drawn up at Spires, whilst Frauentraut, who had renounced his quality of deputy and assumed that of a notary, took notes of what was passing. When the reading was finished, the deputies advanced towards Sehweiss, and presented the appeal. The imperial secretary rejected the document with amazement; the deputies insisted; Sehweiss continued firm. They then laid the appeal on the table. Sehweiss was staggered; he took the paper, and carried it to the emperor.

After dinner, just as one of the deputies (Caden) had gone out, a tumult in the hotel announced some catastrophe. It was the imperial secretary who returned duly accompanied. “The emperor is exceedingly irritated against you on account of this appeal,” said he to the Protestants; “and he forbids you, under pain of confiscation and death, to leave your hotel, to write to Germany, or to send any message whatsoever.” Thus Charles put ambassadors under arrest, as he would the officers of his guard, desirous in this manner of showing his contempt, and of frightening the princes.

Caden’s servant slipped in alarm out of the hotel, and ran to his master. The latter, still considering himself free, wrote a hasty acount of the whole business to the senate of Nuremberg, sent off his letters by express, and returned to share in the arrest of his colleagues. On the 23d of October, the emperor left Piacenza, carrying the three Germans with him. But on the 30th he released Ehinger

and Frauentraut, who, mounting their horses in the middle of the night, rushed at full speed along a rout thronged with soldiers and robbers. “As for you,” said Granvelle to Caden, “you will stay under pain of death. The emperor expects that the book you presented to him will be given to the pope.” Perhaps Charles thought it pleasant to show the Roman pontiff this prohibition issued against the ministers of God to mingle in the government of nations. But Caden, profitting by the confusion of the court, secretly procured a horse, and fled to Ferrara, thence to Venice, from which place he returned to Nuremberg.6 The more Charles appeared irritated against Germany, the greater moderation he showed towards the Italians; heavy pecuniary contributions were all that he required. It was beyond the Alps, in the centre of Christendom, by means of these very religious controversies, that he desired to establish his power. He pressed on, and required only two things: behind him,—peace; with him,—money. On the 5th of November he entered Bologna. Everything was striking about him: the crowd of nobles, the splendour of the equipages, the haughtiness of the Spanish troops, the four thousand ducats that were scattered by handfuls among the people; but above all, the majesty and magnificence of the young emperor. The two chiefs of Romish Christendom were about to meet. The pope quitted his palace with all his court; and Charles, at the head of an army which would have conquered the whole of Italy in a few days, affecting the humility of a child, fell on his knees, and kissed the pontiff’s feet. The emperor and the pope resided at Bologna in two adjoining palaces, separated by a single wall, through which a doorway had been opened, of which each had a key; and the young and politic emperor was often seen visiting the old and crafty pontiff, carrying papers in his hand.

Clement obtained Sforza’s forgiveness, who appeared before the emperor sick and leaning on a staff. Venice also was forgiven: a million of crowns arranged these two matters. But Charles could not obtain from the pope the pardon of Florence. That illustrious city was sacrificed to the Medici, “considering,” it was said, “that it was impossible for Christ’s vicar to demand anything that is unjust.” The most important affair was the Reformation. Some represented to the emperor that, victor over all his enemies, he should carry matters with a high hand, and constrain the Protestants by force of arms. Charles was more moderate he preferred weakening the Protestants by the Papists, and then the Papists by the Protestants, and by this means raising his power above them both. A wiser course was nevertheless proposed in a solemn conference. “The Church is torn in pieces,” said Chancellor Gattinara. “You (Charles) are the head of the empire; you (the pope) the head of the Church. It is your duty to provide by common accord against unprecedented wants. Assemble the pious men of all nations, and let a free council, deduce from the Word of God a scheme of doctrine such as may be received by every people.” A thunderbolt, falling at Clement’s feet could not have startled him more. The offspring of an illegitimate union, and having obtained the papacy by means far from honourable, and squandered the treasures of the Church in an unjust war, this pontiff had a thousand personal motives for dreading an assembly of Christendom. “Large congregations,” replied he, “serve only to introduce popular opinions. It is not by the decrees of councils, but with the edge of the sword, that we should decide controversies.” As Gattinara still persisted: “What!” said the pope, angrily interrupting him, “you dare contradict me, and excite your master against me!” Charles rose up; all the assembly preserved profound silence, and the prince resuming his seat, seconded his chancellor’s request. Clement was content to say that he would reflect upon it. He then began to work upon the young emperor in their private conferences, and Charles promised at last to constrain the heretics by violence, while the pope should summon all other princes to his aid. “To overcome Germany by force, and then erase it

from the surface of the earth, is the sole object of the Italians," they wrote from Venice to the elector.4

Such was the sinister news which, by spreading alarm among the Protestants, should also have united them. Unfortunately a contrary movement was then taking place. Luther and some of his friends had revised the Marburg articles in a sense exclusively Lutheran, and the ministers of the Elector of Saxony had presented them to the conference at Schwabach. The reformed deputies from Ulm and Strasburg had immediately withdrawn, and the conference was broken up. But new conferences had erelong become necessary. The express that Caden had forwarded from Piacenza had reached Nuremberg. Every one in Germany understood that the arrest of the princes' deputies was a declaration of war. The elector was staggered, and ordered his chancellor to consult the theologians of Wittemberg.

"We cannot on our conscience," replied Luther on the 18th November, "approve of the proposed alliance. We would rather die ten times than see our Gospel cause one drop of blood to be shed. Our part is to be like lambs of the slaughter. The cross of Christ must be borne. Let your highness be without fear. We shall do more by our prayers than all our enemies by their boastings. Only let not your hands be stained with the blood of your brethren! If the emperor requires us to be given up to his tribunals, we are ready to appear. You cannot defend our faith: each one should believe at his own risk and peril."2 On the 29th November an evangelical congress was opened at Smalkald, and an unexpected event rendered this meeting still more important. Ehinger, Caden, and Frauentraut, who had escaped from the grasp of Charles V., appeared before them. The landgrave had no further doubts of the success of his plan.

He was deceived. No agreement between contrary doctrines, no alliance between politics and religion—were Luther's two principles, and they still prevailed. It was agreed that those who felt disposed to sign the articles of Schwabach, and those only, should meet at Nuremberg on the 6th of January. The horizon became hourly more threatening. The papists of Germany wrote one to another these few but significant words: "The Saviour is coming." "Alas" exclaimed Luther, "what a pitiless saviour! He will devour them all, as well as us." In effect, two Italian bishops, authorized by Charles V., demanded in the pope's name all the gold and silver from the churches, and a third part of the ecclesiastical revenues: a proceeding which caused an immense sensation. "Let the pope go to the devil," replied a canon of Paderborn, a little too freely.5 "Yes, yes!" archly replied Luther, "this is your saviour that is coming!" The people already began to talk of frightful omens. It was not only the living who were agitated: a child still in its mother's womb had uttered horrible shrieks. "All is accomplished," said Luther; "the Turk has reached the highest degree of his power, the glory of the papacy is declining, and the world is splitting on every side."7 The reformer, dreading lest the end of the world should arrive before he had translated all the Bible, published the prophecies of Daniel separately,—"a work," said he, "for these latter times." Historians tell us," he added, "that Alexander the Great always placed Homer under his pillow: the prophet Daniel is worthy not only that kings and princes should lay him under their heads, but carry him in their hearts; for he will teach them that the government of nations proceeds from the power of God. We are balanced in the hand of the Lord, as a ship upon the sea, or a cloud in the sky."

Yet the frightful phantom that Philip of Hesse had not ceased to point out to his allies, and whose threatening jaws seemed already opening, suddenly vanished, and they discovered in its place the

graceful image of the most amiable of princes. On the 21st January, Charles had summoned all the states of the empire to Augsburg, and had endeavoured to employ the most conciliatory language. “Let us put an end to all discord,” he said, “let us renounce our antipathies, let us offer to our Saviour the sacrifice of all our errors, let us make it our business to comprehend and weigh with meekness the opinions of others. Let us annihilate all that has been said or done on both sides contrary to right, and let us seek after christian truth. Let us all fight under one and the same leader, Jesus Christ, and let us strive thus to meet in one communion, one church, and one unity.”

What language! How was it that this prince, who hitherto had spoken only of the sword, should now speak only of peace? Some may say that the wise Gattinara had a share in it; that the act of convocation was drawn up under the impression of the terror caused by the Turkish invasion; that the emperor already saw with how little eagerness the Roman Catholics of Germany seconded his views; that he wished to intimidate the pope; that this language, so full of graciousness, was but a mask which Charles employed to deceive his enemies; that he wished to manage religion in true imperial fashion, like Theodosius and Constantine, and seek first to unite both parties by the influence of his wisdom and of his favours, reserving to himself, if kindness should fail, to employ force afterwards. It is possible that each of these motives may have exercised a certain influence on Charles, but the latter appears to us nearer the truth, and more conformable to the character of this prince.

If Charles, however, showed any inclination to mildness, the fanatical Ferdinand was at hand to bring him back. “I will continue negotiating without coming to any conclusion,” wrote he to his brother; “and should I even be reduced to that, do not fear; pretexts will not be wanting to chastise these rebels, and you will find men enough who will be happy to aid you in your revenge.”

CHAPTER II The Coronation—The Emperor made a Deacon—The Romish Church and the State—Alarm of the Protestants—Luther advocates Passive Resistance—Bruck’s noble Advice—Articles of Faith prepared—Luther’s Strong Tower—Luther at Coburg—Charles at Innspruck—Two Parties at Court—Gattinara—The King of Denmark won over by Charles—Piety of the Elector—Wiles of the Romanists.

Charles, like Charlemagne in former times, and Napoleon in later days, desired to be crowned by the pope, and had at first thought of visiting Rome for that purpose; but Ferdinand’s pressing letters compelled him to choose Bologna. He appointed the 22d February for receiving the iron crown as king of Lombardy, and resolved to assume the golden crown, as emperor of the Romans, on the 24th of the same month—his birthday and the anniversary of the battle of Pavia, and which he thought was always fortunate to him. The offices of honour that belonged to the electors of the empire were given to strangers; in the coronation of the Emperor of Germany all was Spanish or Italian. The sceptre was carried by the Marquis of Montferrat, the sword by the Duke of Urbino, and the golden crown by the Duke of Savoy. One single German prince of little importance, the Count-palatine Philip, was present: he carried the orb. After these lords came the emperor himself between two cardinals; then the members of his council. All this procession defiled across a magnificent temporary bridge erected between the palace and the church. At the very moment the emperor drew near the church of San Petronio, where the coronation was to take place, the scaffolding cracked behind him and gave way: many of his train were wounded, and the multitude fled in alarm. Charles calmly turned back and smiled, not doubting that his lucky star had

saved him. At length Charles V. arrived in front of the throne on which Clement was seated. But before being made emperor, it was necessary that he should be promoted to the sacred orders. The pope presented him with the surplice and the amice to make him a canon of St. Peter's and of St. John Lateranus, and the canons of these two churches immediately stripped him of his royal ornaments, and robed him with the sacerdotal garments. The pope went to the altar and began mass, the new canon drawing near to wait upon him. After the offertory, the imperial deacon presented the water to the pontiff; and then kneeling down between two cardinals, he communicated from the pope's hand. The emperor now returned to his throne, where the princes robed him with the imperial mantle brought from Constantinople, all sparkling with diamonds, and Charles humbly bent the knee before Clement VII. The pontiff, having anointed him with oil and given him the sceptre, presented him with a naked sword, saying: "Make use of it in defence of the Church against the enemies of the faith!" Next taking the golden orb, studded with jewels, which the count-palatine held, he said: "Govern the world with piety and firmness!" Last came the Duke of Savoy, who carried the golden crown enriched with diamonds. The prince bent down, and Clement put the diadem on his head, saying: "Charles, emperor invincible, receive this crown which we place on your head, as a sign to all the earth of the authority that is conferred upon you." The emperor then kissed the white cross embroidered on the pope's red slipper, and exclaimed: "I swear to be, with all my powers and resources, the perpetual defender of the pontifical dignity and of the Church of Rome." The two princes now took their seats under the same canopy, but on thrones of unequal height, the emperor's being half a foot lower than the pontiff's, and the cardinal deacon proclaimed to the people "The invincible emperor, Defender of the Faith." For the next half-hour nothing was heard but the noise of musketry, trumpets, drums, and fifes, all the bells of the city, and the shouts of the multitude. Thus was proclaimed anew the close union of politics with religion. The mighty emperor, transformed to a Roman deacon and humbly serving mass, like a canon of St. Peter's, had typified and declared the indissoluble union of the Romish Church with the State. This is one of the essential doctrines of Popery, and one of the most striking characteristics that distinguish it from the evangelical and the Christian Church.

Nevertheless, during the whole of the ceremony, the pope seemed ill at ease, and sighed as soon as men's eyes ceased to gaze on him. Accordingly, the French ambassador wrote to his court that these four months which the emperor and pope had spent together at Bologna, would bear fruit of which the King of France would assuredly have no cause to complain.

Scarcely had Charles V. risen from before the altar of San Petronio, ere he turned his face towards Germany, and appeared on the Alps as the anointed of the Papacy. The letter of convocation, so indulgent and benign, seemed forgotten: all things were made new since the pope's blessings: there was but one thought in the imperial train, the necessity of rigorous measures; and the legate Campeggio ceased not to insinuate irritating words into Charles's ear. "At the first rumour of the storm that threatens them," said Granvelle, "we shall sec the Protestants flying on every side, like timid doves upon which the Alpine eagle pounces."

Great indeed was the alarm throughout the empire; already even the affrighted people, apprehensive of the greatest disasters, repeated everywhere that Luther and Melancthon were dead. "Alas!" "said Melancthon, consumed by sorrow, when he heard these reports, "the rumour is but too true, for I die daily." But Luther, on the contrary, boldly raising the eye of faith towards heaven, exclaimed: "Our enemies triumph, but erelong to perish." In truth the councils of the

elector displayed an unprecedented boldness. “Let us collect our troops,” said they; “let us march on the Tyrol, and close the passage of the Alps against the emperor.”4 Philip of Hesse uttered a cry of joy when he heard of this. The sword of Charles had aroused his indolent allies at last. Immediately fresh couriers from Ferdinand were sent to hasten the arrival of Charles, and all Germany was in expectation.

Before carrying out this gigantic design, the elector desired to consult Luther once more. The emperor in the midst of the electors was only the first among his equals; and independent princes were allowed to resist another prince, even if he were of higher rank than themselves. But Luther, dreading above all things the intervention of the secular arm in church affairs, was led to reply on the 6th March in this extraordinary manner: “Our prince’s subjects are also the emperor’s subjects, and even more so than princes are. To protect by arms the emperor’s subjects against the emperor, would be as if the burgomaster of Torgau wished to protect by force his citizens against the elector.”

“What must be done then?”—“Listen,” replied Luther. “If the emperor desires to march against us, let no prince undertake our defence. God is faithful: he will not abandon us.” All preparations for war were immediately suspended, the landgrave received a polite refusal, and the confederation was dissolved. It was the will of God that his cause should appear before the emperor without league and without soldiers, having faith alone for its shield.

Never perhaps has such boldness been witnessed in feeble and unarmed men; but never, although under an appearance of blindness, was there so much wisdom and understanding. The question next discussed in the elector’s council was, whether he should go to the diet. The majority of the councillors opposed it. “Is it not risking everything,” said they “to go and shut oneself up within the walls of a city with a powerful enemy?” Bruck and the prince-electoral were of a different opinion. Duty in their eyes was a better councillor than fear. “What!” said they, “would the emperor insist so much on the presence of the princes at Augsburg only to draw them into a snare? We cannot impute such perfidy to him.” The landgrave, on the contrary, seconded the opinion of the majority. “Remember Piacenza,” said he. “Some unforeseen circumstance may lead the emperor to take all his enemies in one cast of the net.” The chancellor stood firm. “Let the princes only comport themselves with courage,” said he, “and God’s cause is saved.” The decision was in favour of the nobler plan. This diet was to be a lay council, or at the very least a national convention. The Protestants foresaw that a few unimportant concessions would be made to them at first, and then that they would be required to sacrifice their faith. It was therefore necessary to settle what were the essential articles of Christian truth, in order to know whether, by what means, and how far they might come to an understanding with their adversaries. The elector accordingly had letters sent on the 14th March to the four principal theologians of Wittemberg, setting them this task before all other business. Thus, instead of collecting soldiers, this prince drew up articles: they were the best armament.

Luther, Jonas, and Melancthon (Pomeranus remaining at Wittemberg,) arrived at Torgau in Easter week, asking leave to deliver their articles in person to Charles the Fifth. “God forbid!” replied the elector, “I also desire to confess my Lord.”

John having then confided to Melancthon the definitive arrangement of the confession, and ordered general prayers to be offered up, began his journey on the 3d April, with one hundred and

sixty horsemen, clad in rich scarlet cloaks embroidered with gold.

Every man was aware of the dangers that threatened the elector, and hence many in his escort marched with downcast eyes and sinking hearts. But Luther, full of faith, revived the courage of his friends, by composing and singing with his fine voice that beautiful hymn, since become so famous: Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gotte, Our God is a strong tower. Never did soul that knew his own weakness, but which, looking to God, despised every fear, find such noble accents. With our own strength we nought can do, Destruction yawns on every side:

He fights for us, our champion true, Elect of God to be our guide.

What is his name? The anointed One, The God of armies he; Of earth and heaven the Lord alone— With him, on field of battle won, Abideth victory. This hymn was sung during the diet, not only at Augsburg, but in all the churches of Saxony, and its energetic strains were often seen to revive and inspirit the most dejected minds. On Easter-eve the troop reached Coburg, and on the 23d April the elector resumed his journey; but at the very moment of departure Luther received an order to remain. "Some one has said, 'Hold your tongue, you have a harsh voice,'" wrote he to a friend. He submitted, however, without hesitation, setting an example of that passive obedience which he so boldly advocated. The elector feared that Luther's presence would still further exasperate his adversaries, and drive Charles to extreme measures: the city of Augsburg had also written to him to that effect. But at the same time John was anxious to keep the reformer within reach, that he might be able to consult him. He was therefore left at Coburg, in the castle overlooking the town and the river Itz, in the upper story on the south side. It was from this place he wrote those numerous letters dated from the region of birds; and it was there that for many months he had to maintain with his old enemy of the Wartburg, Satan, a struggle full of darkness and of anguish. On the second May the elector reached Augsburg; it had been expected that he would stay away, and to the great astonishment of all, he was the first at the rendezvous. He immediately sent Dolzig, marshal of the court, to meet the emperor and to compliment him. On the 12th May Philip of Hesse, who had at last resolved on not separating himself from his ally, arrived with an escort of one hundred and ninety horsemen; and almost at the same time the emperor entered Innspruck, in the Tyrol, accompanied by his brother, the queens of Hungary and Bohemia, the ambassadors of France, England, and Portugal, Campeggio the papal legate, and other cardinals, with many princes and nobles of Germany, Spain, and Italy.

How to bring back the heretics to obedience to the Church was the great topic of conversation in this brilliant court among nobles and priests, ladies and soldiers, councillors and ambassadors. They, or Charles at least, were not for making them ascend the scaffold, but they wished to act in such a manner, that, untrue to their faith, they should bend the knee to the pope. Charles stopt at Innspruck to study the situation of Germany, and ensure the success of his schemes.

Scarcely was his arrival known ere a crowd of people, high and low, flocked round him on every side, and more than 270,000 crowns, previously raised in Italy, served to make the Germans understand the justice of Rome's cause. "All these heretics," was the cry, "will fall to the ground and crawl to the feet of the pope."

Charles did not think so. He was, on the contrary, astonished to see what power the Reformation had gained. He momentarily even entertained the idea of leaving Augsburg alone, and of going

straight to Cologne, and there proclaiming his brother king of the Romans. Thus, religious interests would have given way to dynastic interests, at least so ran the report. But Charles the Fifth did not stop at this idea. The question of the Reformation was there before him, increasing hourly in strength, and it could not be eluded.

Two parties divided the imperial court. The one, numerous and active, called upon the emperor to revive simply the edict of Worms, and, without hearing the Protestants, condemn their cause. The legate was at the head of this party. “Do not hesitate,” said he to Charles; “confiscate their property, establish the inquisition, and punish these obstinate heretics with fire and sword.”3 The Spaniards, who strongly seconded these exhortations, gave way to their accustomed debauchery, and many of them were arrested for seduction. This was a sad specimen of the faith they wished to impose on Germany. Rome has always thought lightly of morality.

Gattinara, although sick, had painfully followed in Charles’s train to neutralize the influence of the legate. A determined adversary of the Roman policy, he thought that the Protestants might render important services to Christendom. “There is nothing I desire so much,” said he, “as to see the Elector of Saxony and his allies persevere courageously in the profession of the Gospel, and call for a free religious council. If they allow themselves to be checked by promises or threats, I hesitate myself, I stagger, and I doubt of the means of salvation.” The enlightened and honest members of the Papal Church (and of whom there is always a small number) necessarily sympathize with the Reformation.

Charles V., exposed to these contrary influences, desired to restore Germany to religious unity by his personal intervention: for a moment he thought himself on the eve of success.

Amongst the persons who crowded to Innspruck was the unfortunate Christian, king of Denmark, Charles’s brother-in-law. In vain had he proposed to his subjects undertaking a pilgrimage to Rome in expiation of the cruelties of which he was accused: his people had expelled him. Having repaired to Saxony, to his uncle the elector, he had there heard Luther, and had embraced the evangelical doctrines, as far at least as external profession goes. This poor dethroned monarch could not resist the eloquence of the powerful ruler of two worlds, and Christian, won over by Charles the Fifth, publicly placed himself again under the sceptre of the Roman hierarchy. All the papal party uttered a shout of triumph. Nothing equals their credulity, and the importance they attach to such valueless accessions. “I cannot describe the emotion with which this news has filled me,” wrote Clement VII. to Charles, his hand trembling with joy; “the brightness of your majesty’s virtues begins at last to scatter the darkness: this example will lead to numberless conversions.”

Things were in this state when Duke George of Saxony, Duke William of Bavaria, and the Elector Joachim of Brandenburg, the three German princes who were the greatest enemies to the Reformation, hastily arrived at Innspruck. The tranquillity of the elector, whom they had seen at Augsburg, had alarmed them, for they knew not the source whence John derived his courage: they fancied he was meditating some perfidious design. “It is not without reason,” said they to Charles, “that the elector John has repaired the first to Augsburg, and that he appeared there with a considerable train: he wishes to seize your person. Act then with energy, and allow us to offer your majesty a guard of six thousand horse.” Conference upon conference immediately took place. The Protestants were affrighted. “They are holding a diet at Innspruck,” said Melancthon, “on the best means of having our heads.”2 But Gattinara prevailed on Charles to preserve his neutrality.

While this agitation prevailed in the Tyrol, the evangelical Christians, instead of mustering in arms, as they were accused, sent up their prayers to heaven, and the Protestant princes were preparing to render an account of their faith. The Elector of Saxony held the first rank among them. Sincere, upright, and pure from his youth, early disgusted with the brilliant tourneys in which he had at first taken part, John of Saxony had joyfully hailed the day of the Reformation, and the Gospel light had gradually penetrated his serious and reflective mind. His great pleasure was to have the Holy Scriptures read to him during the latter hours of the day. It is true that, having arrived at an advanced age, the pious elector sometimes fell asleep, but he soon awoke with a start, and repeated the last passage aloud. Although moderate and a friend of peace, he yet possessed an energy that was powerfully aroused by the great interests of the faith. There is no prince in the sixteenth century, and none perhaps since the primitive times of the Church, who has done so much as John of Saxony for the cause of the Gospel. Accordingly it was against him that the first efforts of the Papists were directed. In order to gain him over, they wished to put in operation very different tactics from those which had been previously employed. At Spires the evangelicals had met with angry looks in every quarter; at Augsburg, on the contrary, the Papists gave them a hearty welcome; they represented the distance that separated the two parties as very trifling, and in their private conversations made use of the mildest language, “seeking thus to entice the credulous Protestants to take the bait,” says an historian. The latter yielded with simplicity to these skilful manœuvres.

Charles the Fifth was convinced that the simple Germans would not be able to resist his star. “The king of Denmark has been converted,” said his courtiers to him, “why should not the elector follow his example? Let us draw him into the imperial atmosphere.” John was immediately invited to come and converse familiarly with the emperor at Innspruck, with an assurance that he might reckon on Charles’s particular favour. The prince-electoral, John Frederick, who on seeing the advances of the Papists had at first exclaimed: “We conduct our affairs with such awkwardness, that it is quite pitiable!” allowed himself to be caught by this stratagem. “The Papist princes,” said he to his father, “exert every means of blackening our characters. Go to Innspruck in order to put a stop to these underhand practices; or if you are unwilling, send me in your place.” This time the prudent elector moderated his son’s precipitancy, and replied to Charles’s ministers, that it was not proper to treat of the affairs of the diet in any other place than that which the emperor had himself appointed, and begged in consequence, that his majesty would hasten his arrival. This was the first check that Charles met with.

CHAPTER III

Augsburg—The Gospel preached—The Emperor’s Message—The Sermons prohibited—Firmness of the Elector—The Elector’s Reply—Preparation of the Confession—Luther’s Sinai—His Son and his Father—Luther’s Merriment—Luther’s Diet at Coburg—Saxony, a Paradise below—To the Bishops—Travail of the Church—Charles—The Pope’s Letter—Melancthon on Fasting—The Church, the Judge—The Landgrave’s catholic Spirit.

Meantime Augsburg was filling more and more every day. Princes, bishops, deputies, gentlemen, cavaliers, soldiers in rich uniforms, entered by every gate, and thronged the streets, the public places, inns, churches, and palaces. All that was most magnificent in Germany was there about to be collected. The critical circumstances in which the empire and Christendom were placed, the

presence of Charles V. and his kindly manners, the love of novelty, of grand shows, and of lively emotions, tore the Germans from their homes. All those who had great interests to discuss, without reckoning a crowd of idlers, flocked from the various provinces of the empire, and hastily made their way towards this illustrious city. In the midst of the crowd the elector and the landgrave were resolved to confess Jesus Christ, and to take advantage of this convocation in order to convert the empire. Scarcely had John arrived when he ordered one of his theologians to preach daily with open doors in the church of the Dominicans. On Sunday the 8th May, the same was done in the church of St. Catherine; on the 13th, Philip of Hesse opened the gates of the cathedral, and his chaplain Snepff there proclaimed the Word of Salvation; and on the following Sunday (May 15) this prince ordered Cellarius, minister of Augsburg and a follower of Zwingle, to preach in the same temple. Somewhat later the landgrave firmly settled himself in the church of St. Ulric, and the elector in that of St. Catherine. These were the two positions taken up by these illustrious princes. Every day the Gospel was preached in these places to an immense and attentive crowd. The partisans of Rome were amazed. They expected to see criminals endeavouring to dissemble their faults, and they met with confessors of Christ with uplifted heads and words of power. Desirous of counterbalancing these sermons, the Bishop of Augsburg ordered his suffragan and his chaplain to ascend the pulpit. But the Romish priests understood better how to say mass than to preach the Gospel. “They shout, they bawl,” said some. “They are stupid fellows,” added all their hearers, shrugging their shoulders. The Romanists, ashamed of their own priests, began to grow angry, and unable to hold their ground by preaching, had recourse to the secular power. “The priests are setting wondrous machines at work to gain Cæsar’s mind,” said Melancthon.3 They succeeded, and Charles made known his displeasure at the hardihood of the princes. The friends of the pope then drew near the Protestants, and whispered into their ears, “that the emperor, victor over the King of France and the Roman Pontiff, would appear in Germany to crush all the Gospellers.” The anxious elector demanded the advice of his theologians.

Before the answer was ready, Charles’s orders arrived, brought by two of his most influential ministers, the Counts of Nassau and of Nuenar. A more skilful choice could not have been made. These two nobles, although devoted to Charles, were favourable to the Gospel, which they professed not long after. The elector was therefore fully disposed to listen to their counsel. On the 24th May, the two counts delivered their letters to John of Saxony, and declared to him the emperor’s exceeding grief that religious controversies should disturb the good understanding which had for so many years united the houses of Saxony and Austria; that he was astonished at seeing the elector oppose an edict (that of Worms) which had been unanimously passed by all the states of the empire; and that the alliances he had made tended to tear asunder the unity of Germany, and might inundate it with blood. They required at last that the elector would immediately put a stop to the evangelical preachings, and added, in a confidential tone, that they trembled at the thought of the immediate and deplorable consequences which would certainly follow the elector’s refusal. “This,” said they, “is only the expression of our own personal sentiments.” It was a diplomatic manœuvre, the emperor having enjoined them to give utterance to a few threats, but solely as if proceeding from themselves. The elector was greatly agitated. “If his majesty forbids the preaching of the Gospel,” exclaimed he, “I shall immediately return home.” He waited however for the advice of his theologians.

Luther's answer was ready first. "The emperor is our master," said he; "the town and all that is in it belong to him. If your highness should give orders at Torgau for this to be done, and for that to be left undone, the people ought not to resist. I should prefer endeavouring to change his majesty's decision by humble and respectful solicitation; but if he persists, might makes right; we have but done our duty." Thus spoke the man who has often been represented as a rebel.

Melancthon and the others were nearly of the same opinion, except that they insisted more on the necessity of representing to the emperor, "that in their sermons nothing controversial was introduced, but they were content simply to teach the doctrine of Christ the Saviour. Let us beware, above all," continued they, "of leaving the city. Let your highness with an intrepid heart confess in presence of his majesty by what wonderful ways you have attained to a right understanding of the truth,5 and do not allow yourself to be alarmed at these thunder-claps that fall from the lips of our enemies." To confess the truth—such was the object to which, according to the Reformers, everything else should be subordinate. Will the elector yield to this first demand of Charles, and thus begin, even before the emperor's arrival, that list of sacrifices, the end of which cannot be foreseen? No one in Augsburg was firmer than John. In vain did the reformers represent that they were in the emperor's city, and only strangers: the elector shook his head. "Melancthon in despair wrote to Luther: "Alas! how untractable is our old man!"7 Nevertheless he again returned to the charge. Fortunately there was an intrepid man at the elector's right hand, the chancellor Bruck, who feeling convinced that policy, honour, and above all, duty, bound the friends of the Reformation to resist the menaces of Charles, said to the elector: "The emperor's demand is but a worthy beginning to bring about the definitive abolition of the Gospel. If we yield at present, they will crush us by and by. Let us therefore humbly beg his majesty to permit the continuance of the sermons." Thus, at that time, a statesman stood in the foremost rank of the confessors of Jesus Christ. This is one of the characteristic features of this great age, and it must not be forgotten, if we would understand its history aright. On the 31st May, the elector sent his answer in writing to Charles's ministers. "It is not true," it bore, "that the edict of Worms was approved of by the six electors. How could the elector, my brother, and myself, by approving it, have opposed the everlasting word of Almighty God? Accordingly, succeeding diets have declared this edict impossible to to be executed. As for the relations of friendship that I have formed, their only aim is to protect me against acts of violence. Let my accusers lay before the eyes of his majesty the alliances they have made; I am ready to produce mine, and the emperor shall decide between us.—Finally, as to the demand to suspend our preachings, nothing is proclaimed in them but the glorious truth of God, and never was it so necessary to us. We cannot therefore do without it! This reply must necessarily hasten the arrival of Charles; and it was urgent they should be prepared to receive him. To proclaim their belief, and then be silent, was the whole plan of the protestant campaign. A Confession was therefore necessary. One man, of small stature, frail, timid, and in great alarm, was commissioned to prepare this instrument of war. Philip Melancthon worked at it night and day: he weighed every expression, softened it down, changed it, and then frequently returned to his first idea. He was wasting away his strength; his friends trembled lest he should die over his task; and Luther enjoined him, as early as the 12th of May, under pain of anathema, to take measures for the preservation of "his little body," and not "to commit suicide for the love of God." "God is as usefully served by repose," added he, "and indeed man never serves him better than by keeping himself tranquil. It is for this reason God willed that the Sabbath should be so strictly observed."4

Notwithstanding these solicitations, Melancthon's application augmented, and he set about an exposition of the christian faith at once mild, moderate, and as little removed as possible from the doctrine of the Latin Church. At Coburg he had already put his hand to the task, and traced out in the first part the doctrines of the faith, according to the articles of Schwabach; and in the second, the abuses of the Church according to the articles of Torgau, making altogether quite a new work. At Augsburg he gave a more correct and elegant form to this Confession. The Apology, as it was then called, was completed on the 11th May; and the elector sent it to Luther, begging him to mark what ought to be changed. "I have said what I thought most useful," added Melancthon, who feared that his friend would find the Confession too weak; "for Eck ceases not to circulate against us the most diabolical calumnies, and I have endeavoured to oppose an antidote to his poisons."

Luther replied to the elector on the 15th May: "I have read Master Philip's Apology; I like it well enough, and have no corrections to make. Besides, that would hardly suit me, for I cannot walk so meekly and so silently. May Christ our Lord grant that this work may produce much and great fruit."

Each day, however, the elector's councillors and theologians, in concert with Melancthon, improved the Confession, and endeavoured to render it such that the charmed diet should, in its own despite, hear it to the very end.

While the struggle was thus preparing at Augsburg, Luther at Coburg, on the summit of the hill, "on his Sinai," as he called it, raised his hands like Moses towards heaven. He was the real general of the spiritual war that was then waging; his letters ceased not to bear to the combatants the directions which they needed, and numerous pamphlets issuing from his stronghold, like discharges of musketry, spread confusion in the enemy's camp. The place where he had been left was, by its solitude, favourable to study and to meditation. "I shall make a Zion of this Sinai," said he on the 22d April, "and I shall build here three tabernacles; one to the Psalms, another to the Prophets, and a third——to Esop!" This last word may well startle us. The association belongs neither to the language nor the spirit of the Apostles. It is true that Esop was not to be his principal study: the fables were soon laid aside, and truth alone engaged Luther. "I shall weep, I shall pray, I shall never be silent," wrote he, "until I know that my cry has been heard in heaven."

Besides, by way of relaxation, he had something better than Esop; he had those domestic joys whose precious treasures the Reformation had opened to the ministers of the Word. It was at this time he wrote that charming letter to his infant son, in which he describes a delightful garden where children dressed in gold are sporting about, picking up apples, pears, cherries, and plums; they sing, dance, and enjoy themselves, and ride pretty little horses, with golden bridles and silver saddles. But the reformer was soon drawn away from these pleasing images. About this time he learnt that his father had gently fallen asleep in the faith which is in Jesus Christ. "Alas!" exclaimed he, shedding tears of filial love, "it is by the sweat of his brow that he made me what I am." Other trials assailed him; and to bodily pains were added the phantoms of his imagination. One night in particular he saw three torches pass rapidly before his eyes, and at the same moment heard claps of thunder in his head, which he ascribed to the devil. His servant ran in at the moment he fainted, and after having restored him to animation, read to him the Epistle to the Galatians. Luther, who had fallen asleep, said as he awoke: "Come, and despite of the devil let us sing the Psalm, Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord!" They both sang the hymn. While Luther was thus

tormented by these internal noises, he translated the prophet Jeremiah, and yet he often deplored his idleness.

He soon devoted himself to other studies, and poured out the floods of his irony on the mundane practices of courts. He saw Venice, the pope, and the King of France, giving their hands to Charles V. to crush the Gospel. Then, alone in his chamber in the old castle, he burst into irresistible laughter. “Mr. Par-ma-foy (it was thus he designated Francis I.), In-nomine-Domini (the pope), and the republic of Venice, pledge their goods and their bodies to the emperor…. Sanctissimum fœdus. A most holy alliance truly! This league between these four powers belongs to the chapter Non-credimus. Venice, the pope, and France become imperialists!…. But these are three persons in one substance, filled with unspeakable hatred against the emperor. Mr. Par-ma-foy cannot forget his defeat at Pavia; Mr. In-nomine-Domini is, 1st, an Italian, which is already too much; 2d, a Florentine, which is worse; 3d, a bastard—that is to say a child of the devil; 4th, he will never forget the disgrace of the sack of Rome. As for the Venetians: they are Venetians: that is quite enough; and they have good reason to avenge themselves on the posterity of Maximilian. All this belongs to the chapter Firmiter-credimus. But God will help the pious Charles, who is a sheep among wolves. Amen.” The ex-monk of Erfurth had a surer political foresight than many diplomatists of his age.

Impatient at seeing the diet put off from day to day, Luther formed his resolution, and ended by convoking it even at Coburg. “We are already in full assembly,” wrote he on the 28th April and the 9th May. “You might here see kings, dukes, and other grandees, deliberating on the affairs of their kingdom, and with indefatigable voice publishing their dogmas and decrees in the air. They dwell not in those caverns which you decorate with the name of palaces: the heavens are their canopy; the leafy trees form a floor of a thousand colours, and their walls are the ends of the earth. They have a horror of all the unmeaning luxury of silk and gold; they ask neither courses nor armour, and have all the same clothing and the same colour. I have not seen or heard their emperor; but if I can understand them, they have determined this year to make a pitiless war upon——the most excellent fruits of the earth,—Ah! my dear friends,” said he to his colleagues, to whom he was writing, “these are the sophists, the papists, who are assembled before me from all quarters of the world to make me hear their sermons and their cries.” These two letters, dated from the “empire of ravens and crows,” finish in the following mournful strain, which shows us the reformer descending into himself after this play of his imagination: “Enough of jesting!—jesting which is, however, sometimes necessary to dispel the gloomy thoughts that overwhelm me.”

Luther soon returned to real life, and thrilled with joy at beholding the fruits that the Reformation was already bearing, and which were for him a more powerful “apology” than even the Confession of Melancthon. “Is there in the whole world a single country to be compared to your highness’s states,” wrote he to the elector, “and which possesses preachers of so pure a doctrine, or pastors so fitted to bring about the reign of peace? Where do we see, as in Saxony, boys and girls well instructed in the Holy Scriptures and in the Catechism, increasing in wisdom and in stature, praying, believing, talking of God and of Christ better than has been done hitherto by all the universities, convents, and chapters of Christendom?”—“My dear Duke John, says the Lord to you, I commend this paradise to thee, the most beautiful that exists in the world, that thou mayst be its gardener.” And then he added; “Alas! the madness of the papist princes changes this paradise of God into a dirty slough, and corrupting the youth, daily peoples with real devils their

states, their tables, and their palaces."

Luther, not content with encouraging his prince, desired also to frighten his adversaries. It was with this intent that he wrote at that time an address to the members of the clergy assembled at Augsburg. A crowd of thoughts, like lansquenets armed cap-a-pié, "rushed in to fatigue and bewilder him;" and in fact there is no want of barbed words in the discourse he addresses to the bishops. "In short," said he to them in conclusion, "we know and you know that we have the Word of God, and that you have it not. O pope! if I live I shall be a pestilence to thee; and if I die, I shall be thy death?"3

Thus was Luther present at Augsburg, although invisible; and he effected more by his words and by prayers than Agricola, Brentz, or Melancthon. These were the days of travail for the Gospel truth. It was about to appear in the world with a might, destined to eclipse all that had been done since the time of St. Paul; but Luther only announced and manifested the things that God was effecting: he did not execute them himself. He was, as regards the events of the Church, what Socrates was to philosophy: "I imitate my mother (she was a midwife)," this philosopher was in the habit of saying; "she does not travail herself, but she aids others." Luther—and he never ceased repeating it—has created nothing; but he has brought to light the precious seed, hidden for ages in the bosom of the Church. The man of God is not he who seeks to form his age according to his own peculiar ideas, but he who, distinctly perceiving God's truth, such as it is found in his Word, and as it is hidden in his Church, brings it to his contemporaries with courage and decision.

Never had these qualities been more necessary, for matters were taking an alarming aspect. On the 4th June died Chancellor Gattinara, who was to Charles the Fifth "what Ulpian was to Alexander Severus," says Melancthon, and with him all the human hopes of the Protestants vanished. "It is God," Luther had said, "who has raised up for us a Naaman in the court of the King of Syria." In truth Gattinara alone resisted the pope. When Charles brought to him the objections of Rome: "Remember," said the chancellor, "that you are master!" Henceforward everything seemed to take a new direction. The pope required that Charles should be satisfied with being his "lictor," as Luther says, to carry out his judgments against the heretics. Eck, whose name (according to Melancthon) was no bad imitation of the cry of Luther's crows, heaped one upon another2 a multitude of pretended heretical propositions, extracted from the reformer's writings. They amounted to four hundred and four, and yet he made excuse that, being taken unawares, he was forced to restrict himself to so small a number, and he called loudly for a disputation with the Lutherans. They retorted on these propositions by a number of ironical and biting theses on "wine, Venus, and baths, against John Eck;" and the poor doctor became the general laughing-stock. But others went to work more skilfully than he. Cochlœus, who became chaplain to Duke George of Saxony in 1527, begged an interview with Melancthon, "for," added he, "I cannot converse with your married ministers." Melancthon, who was looked upon with an evil eye at Augsburg, and who had complained of being more solitary there than Luther in his castle,4 was touched by this courtesy, and was still more fully penetrated with the idea that things should be ordered in the mildest manner possible. The Romish priests and laymen made a great uproar, because on fast days meat was usually caten at the elector's court. Melancthon advised his prince to restrict the liberty of his attendants in this respect. "This disorder," said he, "far from leading the simple-minded to the Gospel, scandalizes them." He added, in his ill-humour: "A fine holiness truly, to make it a matter of conscience to fast, and yet to be night and day given up to wine and

folly!" The elector did not yield to Melancthon's advice; it would have been a mark of weakness of which his adversaries would have known how to take advantage. On the 31st May, the Saxon Confession was at length communicated to the other Protestant states, who required that it should be presented in common in the name of them all. But at the same time they desired to make their reservations with regard to the influence of the state. "We appeal to a council," said Melancthon; "we will not receive the emperor as our judge; the ecclesiastical constitutions themselves forbid him to pronounce in spiritual matters.3 Moses declares that it is not the civil magistrate who decides, but the sons of Levi. St. Paul also says (1 Corinthians 14:1-40), 'let the others judge,' which cannot be understood except of an entire christian assembly; and the Saviour himself gives us this commandment: 'Tell it unto the Church.' We pledge, therefore, our obedience to the emperor in all civil matters; but as for the Word of God, we demand liberty."

All were agreed on this point; but the dissent came from another quarter. The Lutherans feared to compromise their cause if they went hand in hand with the Zwinglians. "This is Lutheran madness," replied Bucer: "it will perish of its own weight." But, far from allowing this madness "to perish," the reformed augmented the disunion by exaggerated complaints. "In Saxony they are beginning to sing Latin hymns again," said they; "the sacred vestments are resumed, and oblations are called for anew.5 We would rather be led to the slaughter, than be Christians after that fashion." The afflicted landgrave, says Bucer, was "between the hammer and the anvil;" and his allies caused him more uneasiness than his enemies. He applied to Rhegius, to Brentz, to Melancthon, declaring that it was his most earnest wish to see concord prevail among all the evangelical doctors. "If these fatal doctrines are not opposed," replied Melancthon, "there will be rents in the Church that will last to the end of the world. Do not the Zwinglians boast of their full coffers, of having soldiers prepared, and of foreign nations disposed to aid them? Do they not talk of sharing among them the rights and the property of the bishops, and of proclaiming liberty.—Good God! shall we not think of posterity, which, if we do not repress these guilty seditions, will be at once without throne and without altar?"—"No, no! we are one," replied this generous prince, who was so much in advance of his age; "we all confess the same Christ, we all profess that we must eat Jesus Christ, by faith, in the eucharist. Let us unite." All was unavailing. The time in which true catholicity was to replace this sectarian spirit, of which Rome is the most perfect expression, had not yet arrived.

CHAPTER IV

Agitation in Augsburg—Violence of the Imperialists—Charles at Munich—Charles's Arrival—The Nuncio's Blessing—The imperial Procession—Charles's Appearance—Enters Augsburg—Te Deum—The Benediction—Charles desires the Sermons to be discontinued—Brandenburg offers his head—The Emperor's Request for Corpus Christi—Refusal of the Princes—Agitation of Charles—The Princes oppose Tradition—Procession of Corpus Christi—Exasperation of Charles. In proportion as the emperor drew near Augsburg, the anxieties of the Protestants continued increasing. The burghers of this imperial city expected to see it become the theatre of strange events. Accordingly they said that if the elector, the landgrave, and other friends of the Reformation were not in the midst of them, they would all desert it. "A great destruction threatens us," was repeated on every side.3 One of Charles's haughty expressions above all disquieted the Protestants. "What do these electors want with me?" he had said impatiently; "I shall do what I please!" Thus arbitrary rule was the imperial law destined to prevail in the diet. To thus agitation of

men’s minds was added the agitation of the streets, or rather one led to the other. Masons and locksmiths were at work in all the public places and crossings, laboriously fastening barriers and chains to the walls, that might be closed or stretched at the first cry of alarm. At the same time about eight hundred foot and horse soldiers were seen patrolling the streets, dressed in velvet and silk, whom the magistrates had enrolled in order to receive the emperor with magnificence.

Matters were in this state, and it was about the middle of May, when a number of insolent Spanish quartermasters arrived, who, looking with contemptuous eyes on these wretched burghers, entered their houses, conducted themselves with violence, and even rudely tore down the arms of some of the princes. The magistrates having delegated councillors to treat with them, the Spaniards made an impudent reply. “Alas!” said the citizens, “if the servants are so, what will their masters be?” The ministers of Charles were grieved at their impertinence, and sent a German quartermaster, who employed the forms of German politeness to make them forget this Spanish haughtiness. That did not last long, and they soon felt more serious alarm. The Council of Augsburg were asked what was the meaning of these chains and soldiers, and they were ordered, in the emperor’s name, to take down the one and disband the other. The magistrates of the city answered in alarm, “For more than ten years past we have intended putting up these chains; and as for the soldiers, our object is simply to pay due honour to his majesty.” After many parleys it was agreed to dismiss the troops, and that the imperial commanders should select afresh a thousand men, who should make oath to the emperor, but be paid by the city of Augsburg. The imperial quartermasters then resumed all their insolence; and no longer giving themselves the trouble of entering the houses and the shops, they tore down the signboards of the Augsburg citizens, and wrote in their place how many men and horses the latter would be required to lodge.

Such were the preludes to the work of conciliation that Charles V. had announced, and that he was so slow in beginning. Accordingly his delay, attributed by some to the crowds of people who surrounded him with their acclamations; by others to the solicitations of the priests, who opposed his entry into Augsburg, until he had imposed silence on the ministers; and by others, finally, to the lessons the pope had given him in the arts of policy and stratagem, still more estranged the elector and his allies. At last Charles, having quitted Innspruck two days after Gattinara’s death, arrived at Munich on the 10th June. His reception was magnificent. About two miles from the town a temporary fortress had been erected, around which a sham fight took place. Soldiers mounted to the assault, mines were exploded; discharges of artillery, clouds of smoke, the clash of arms, the shouts of the combatants, delighted the eyes and ears of the emperor; within the city, theatres had been raised in the open air, in which the Jewish Esther, the Persian Cambyses, and other pieces not less famous, were represented; and the whole, combined with splendid fire-works, formed the welcome given by the adherents of the pope to him whom they styled their saviour.

Charles was not far distant from Augsburg. As early as the 11th June, every day and every hour, members of the imperial household, carriages, waggons, and baggage entered the city, to the sound of the clacking whip and of the horn; and the burghers in amazement gazed with dejected eyes on all this insolent train, that fell upon their city like a flight af locusts.3 At five o’clock in the morning of the 15th June, the elector, the princes, and their councillors, assembled at the townhall, and ere long arrived the imperial commissaries, with orders for them to go out and meet Charles. At three in the afternoon the princes and deputies quitted the city, and, having reached a little bridge across the river Lech, they were halted and waited for the emperor. The eyes of every

member of the brilliant assemblage, thus stopping on the smiling banks of an alpine torrent, were directed along the road to Munich. At length, after waiting two or three hours, clouds of dust, and a loud noise announced the emperor. Two thousand of the imperial guard marched first; and as soon as Charles had come to within fifty paces of the river, the electors and princes alighted. Their sons, who had advanced beyond the bridge, perceiving the emperor preparing to do the same, ran to him and begged him to remain on horseback:5 but Charles dismounted without hesitation, and approaching the princes with an amiable smile, cordially shook hands with them. Albert of Mentz, in his quality of arch-chancellor of the empire, now welcomed the emperor, and the Count-palatine Frederick replied in behalf of Charles.

While this was passing, three individuals remained apart on a little elevation; these were the Roman legate, proudly seated on a mule, glittering with purple, and accompanied by two other cardinals, the Archbishop of Salzburg and the Bishop of Trent. The Nuncio, beholding all these great personages on the road, raised his hands, and gave them his blessing. Immediately the emperor, the king, and the princes who submitted to the pope, fell on their knees; the Spaniards, Italians, Netherlanders, and Germans in their train imitated their movements, casting however a side-glance on the Protestants, who, in the midst of this humbly prostrate crowd, alone remained standing.2 Charles did not appear to notice this, but he doubtless understood what it meant. The Elector of Brandenburg then delivered a Latin speech to the legate. He had been selected because he spoke this language better than the princes of the Church; and accordingly, Charles, when praising his eloquence, slily put in a word about the negligence of the prelates. The emperor now prepared to remount his horse; the Prince-electoral of Saxony, and the young princes of Luneburg, Mecklenburg, Brandenburg, and Anhalt, rushed towards him to aid him in getting into his saddle: one held the bridle, another the stirrup, and all were charmed at the magnificent appearance of their powerful sovereign.4 The procession began to move on.

First came two companies of lansquenets, commanded by Simon Seitz, a citizen of Augsburg, who had made the campaign of Italy, and was returning home laden with gold. Next advanced the households of the six electors, composed of princes, counts, councillors, gentlemen, and soldiers; the household of the Dukes of Bavaria had slipped into their ranks, and the four hundred and fifty horsemen that composed it marched five abreast, covered with bright cuirasses, and wearing red doublets, while over their heads floated handsome many-coloured plumes. Bavaria was already in this age the main support of Rome in Germany.

Immediately after came the households of the emperor and of his brother in striking contrast with this warlike show. They were composed of Turkish, Polish, Arabian, and other led horses; then followed a multitude of young pages, clad in yellow or red velvet, with Spanish, Bohemian, and Austrian nobles in robes of silk and velvet; among these the Bohemians had the most martial air, and gracefully rode their superb and prancing coursers. Last the trumpeters, drummers, heralds, grooms, footmen, and the legate’s cross-bearers, announced the approach of the princes. In fact these powerful lords, whose contentions had so often filled Germany with confusion and war, now advanced riding peacefully side by side. After the princes appeared the electors; and the Elector of Saxony, according to custom, carried the naked and glittering imperial sword immediately before the emperor.

Last came the prince, on whom all eyes were fixed. Thirty years of age, of distinguished port and pleasing features, robed in golden garments that glittered all over with precious stones,3 wearing a small Spanish hat on the crown of his head, mounted on a beautiful Polish hackney of the most brilliant whiteness, riding beneath a rich canopy of red, white, and green damask borne by six senators of Augsburg, and casting around him looks in which gentleness was mingled with gravity, Charles excited the liveliest enthusiasm, and every one exclaimed that he was the handsomest man in the empire, as well as the mightiest prince in the world.

He had at first desired to place his brother and the legate at his side; but the Elector of Mentz, attended by two hundred guards arrayed in silk, had claimed the Emperor's right hand; and the Elector of Cologne, with a hundred well-armed attendants, had taken his station on the left. King Ferdinand and the legate came next; to whom succeeded the cardinals, ambassadors, and prelates, among whom was remarked the haughty Bishop of Osma, the emperor's confessor. The imperial cavalry and the troops of Augsburg closed the procession.

Never, according to the historians, had anything so magnificent been seen in the empire; but they advanced slowly, and it was between eight and nine o'clock in the evening before they reached the gates of Augsburg. Here they met the burgomaster and councillors, who prostrated themselves before Charles, and at the same time the cannon from the ramparts, the bells from all the steeples in full peel, the noise of trumpets and kettle-drums, and the joyful acclamations of the people, re-echoed with loud din. Stadion, bishop of Augsburg, and his clergy robed in white, struck up the Advenisti desirabilis; and six canons, advancing with a magnificent canopy, prepared to conduct the emperor to the cathedral, when Charles's horse, startled at this unusual sight, suddenly reared, and the emperor had some difficulty in mastering him. At length Charles entered the minster, which was ornamented with garlands and flowers, and suddenly illuminated by a thousand torches. The emperor went up to the altar, and falling on his knees, raised his hands towards heaven. During the Te Deum, the Protestants observed with anxiety that Charles kept conversing in a low tone with the Archbishop of Mentz; that he bent his ear to the legate who approached to speak to him, and nodded in a friendly manner to Duke George. All this appeared to them of evil omen; but at the moment when the priests sang the Te ergo quœsumus, Charles breaking off his conversations, suddenly rose, and one of the acolytes running to him with a gold-embroidered cushion, the emperor put it aside, and knelt on the bare stones of the church. All the assembly knelt with him; the elector and the landgrave alone remained standing. Duke George, astonished at such boldness, cast a threatening glance at his cousin. The Margrave of Brandenburg, carried away by the crowd, had fallen on his knees; but having seen his two allies standing, he hastily rose up again. The Cardinal-archbishop of Salzburg then proceeded to pronounce the benediction; but Campeggio, impatient at having as yet taken no part in the ceremony, hastened to the altar, and rudely thrusting the archbishop aside, said sharply to him: "This office belongs to me and not to you." The other gave way, the emperor bent down, and the landgrave, with difficulty concealing a smile, hid himself behind a candelabrum. The bells now rang out anew, the procession recommenced its march, and the princes conducted the emperor to the palatinate (the name given to the bishop's palace), which had been prepared for him. The crowd now dispersed: it was after ten at night. The hour was come in which the partizans of the papacy flattered themselves with the prospect of rendering the Protestants untrue to their faith. The arrival of the emperor, the procession of the holy sacrament that was preparing, the late

hour,—all had been calculated beforehand; “the nocturns of treason were about to begin,” said Spalatin. A few minutes of general conversation took place in the emperor’s apartments; the princes of the Romish party were then allowed to retire; but Charles had given a sign to the Elector of Saxony, to the Landgrave of Hesse, to George, margrave of Brandenburg, to the Prince of Anhalt, and to the Duke of Luneburg, to follow him into his private chamber. His brother Ferdinand, who was to serve as interpreter, alone went in with them. Charles thought that so long as the Protestant princes were before the world, they would not yield; but that in a private and friendly interview, he might obtain all he desired of them.

“His majesty requests you to discontinue the sermon,” said Ferdinand. On hearing these words the two elder princes (the elector and the margrave) turned pale and did not speak; there was a long silence. At last the landgrave said: “We entreat your majesty to withdraw your request, for our ministers preach only the pure Word of God, as did the ancient doctors of the Church, St. Augustine, St. Hilary, and so many others. Of this your majesty may easily convince yourself. We cannot deprive ourselves of the food of the Word of God, and deny his Gospel.”

Ferdinand, resuming the conversation in French (for it was in this language that he conversed with his brother), informed the emperor of the landgrave’s answer. Nothing was more displeasing to Charles than these citations of Hilary and Augustine; the colour mounted to his cheeks, and he was nearly giving way to his anger.5 “His majesty,” said Ferdinand in a more positive tone, “cannot desist from his demand”—“Your conscience,” quickly replied the landgrave, “has no right to command ours.” As Ferdinand still persisted, the margrave, who had been silent until then, could contain himself no longer; and without caring for interpreters, stretched out his neck towards Charles, exclaiming in deep emotion: “Rather than allow the Word of the Lord to be taken from me, rather than deny my God, I would kneel down before your majesty and have my head cut off!” As he uttered these simple and magnanimous words, says a contemporary,7 the prince accompanied them with a significant gesture, and let his hands fall on his neck like the headsman’s axe. The excitement of the princes was at its height: had it been necessary, they would all four have instantly walked to the scaffold. Charles was moved by it; surprised and agitated, he hastily cried out in his bad German, making a show of checking the landgrave: “Dear prince, not the head! not the head!” But he had scarcely uttered these few words when he checked himself.

These were the only words that Charles pronounced before the princes during all the diet. His ignorance of the German language, and sometimes also the etiquette of the Escurial, compelled him to speak only by the mouth of his brother or of the count-palatine. As he was in the habit of consecrating four hours daily to divine worship, the people said: “He talks more with God than with men.” This habitual silence was not favourable to his plans. They required activity and eloquence; but instead of that the Germans saw in the dumb countenance of their youthful emperor, a mere puppet, nodding his head and winking his eyes. Charles sometimes felt very keenly the faults of this position: “To be able to speak German,” said he, “I would willingly sacrifice any other language, even were it Spanish or French, and more than that, one of my states.”

Ferdinand saw that it was useless to insist on the cessation of these meetings; but he had another arrow in his quiver. The next day was the festival of Corpus Christi, and by a custom that had never as yet been infringed, all the princes and deputies present at the diet were expected to take part in the procession. Would the Protestants refuse this act of courtesy at the very opening of a

diet to which each one came in a conciliatory spirit? Have they not declared that the body and blood of Christ are really in the Host? Do they not boast of their opposition to Zwingle, and can they stand aloof, without being tainted with heresy? Now, if they share in the pomp that surrounds “the Lord’s body;” if they mingle with that crowd of clergy, glittering in luxury and swelling with pride, who carry about the God whom they have created; if they are present when the people bow down; will they not irrevocably compromise their faith? The machine is well prepared; its movements cannot fail; there is no more doubt! The craft of the Italians is about to triumph over the simplicity of these German boors!

Ferdinand therefore resumes, and making a weapon of the very refusal that he had just met with: “Since the emperor,” said he, “cannot obtain from you the suspension of your assemblies, he begs at least that you will accompany him tomorrow, according to custom, in the procession of the Holy Sacrament. Do so, if not from regard to him, at least for the honour of Almighty God.” The princes were still more irritated and alarmed. “Christ,” said they, “did not institute his sacrament to be worshipped.” Charles persevered in his demand, and the Protestants in their refusal. Upon this the emperor declared that he would not accept their excuse, that he would give them time for reflection, and that they must be prepared to reply early on the morrow.

They separated in the greatest agitation. The prince-electoral, who had waited for his father in the first hall along with other lords, sought, at the moment the princes issued from the emperor’s chamber, to read on their countenance what had taken place. Judging from the emotion depicted on their features that the struggle had been severe, he thought that his father was incurring the greatest dangers, and accordingly, grasping him by the hand, dragged him to the staircase of the palace, exclaiming in affright, as if Charles’s satellites were already at his heels, “Come, come quickly!”

Charles, who had expected no such resistance, was in truth confounded, and the legate endeavoured to exasperate him still more.” Agitated, filled with anger and vexation, and uttering the most terrible threats,4 the young emperor paced hastily to and fro the halls of his palace; and unable to wait for the answer until the morrow, he sent in the middle of the night to demand the elector’s final decision. “At present we require sleep,” replied the latter; “to-morrow we will let you know our determination.” As for the landgrave, he could not rest any more than Charles. Scarcely had he returned home, when he sent his chancellor to the Nuremberg deputies, and had them awoke to make them acquainted with what had taken place.6 At the same time Charles’s demand was laid before the theologians, and Spalatin, taking the pen, drew up their opinion during the night. “The sacrament,” it bore, “was not instituted to be worshipped, as the Jews worshipped the brazen image. We are here to confess the truth, and not for the confirmation of abuses. Let us therefore stay away!” This opinion confirmed the evangelical princes in their determination; and the day of the 16th June began. The elector of Saxony, feeling indisposed during the night commissioned his son to represent him; and at seven o’clock the princes and councillors repaired on horseback to the emperor’s palace. The Margrave of Brandenburg was their spokesman. “You know,” said he to Charles, “how, at the risk of our lives, my ancestors and myself have supported your august house. But, in the things of God, the commands of God himself oblige me to put aside all commandment of man. We are told that death awaits those who shall persevere in the sound doctrine: I am ready to suffer it.” He then presented the declaration of the evangelical princes to the emperor. “We will not countenance by our presence,” said they, “these impious human

traditions, which are opposed to the word of God. We declare, on the contrary, without hesitation, and with one accord, that we must expel them from the Church, lest those of its members that are still sound should be infected by this deadly poison." "If you will not accompany his majesty for the love of God," said Ferdinand, "do so at least for the love of the emperor, and as vassals of the empire.3 His majesty commands you." "An act of worship is in question," replied the princes, "our conscience forbids it." Then Ferdinand and Charles having conversed together in a low tone: "His majesty desires to see," said the king, "whether you will obey him or not." At the same time the emperor and his brother quitted the room; but the princes, instead of following him as Charles had hoped, returned full of joy to their palaces. The procession did not begin till noon. Immediately behind the canopy under which the elector of Mentz carried the host, came the emperor alone, with a devout air, bearing a taper in his hand, his head bare and shorn like a priest's, although the noon-day sun darted on him its most ardent rays. By exposing himself to these fatigues, Charles desired to profess aloud his faith in what constitutes the essence of Roman-catholicism. In proportion as the spirit and the life had escaped from the primitive churches, they had striven to replace it by forms, shows, and ceremonies. The essential cause of the Romish worship is found in that decline of charity and faith which catholic Christians of the first ages have often deplored; and the history of Rome is summed up in this expression of St. Paul, Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. But as the power was then beginning to revive in the Church, the form began also to decline. Barely a hundred citizens of Augsburg had joined in the procession of the 16th June. It was no longer the pomp of former times: the christian people had learned anew to love and to believe.

Charles, however, under an air of devotion concealed a wounded heart. The legate was less able to command himself, and said aloud that this obstinacy of the princes would be the cause of great mischief to the pope. When the procession was over (it had lasted an hour), Charles could no longer master his extreme irritation; and he had scarcely returned to his palace, when he declared that he would give the protestant princes a safe-conduct, and that on the very next day these obstinate and rebellious men should quit Augsburg;3 the diet would then take such resolutions as were required for the safety of the Church and of the Empire. It was no doubt the legate who had given Charles this idea, which, if executed, would infallibly have led to a religious war. But some of the princes of the Roman party, desirous of preserving peace, succeeded, though not without difficulty, in getting the emperor to withdraw his threatening order.

CHAPTER V The Sermons prohibited—Compromise proposed and accepted—The Herald—Curiosity of the Citizens—The New Preachers—The Medley of Popery—Luther encourages the Princes—Veni Spiritus—Mass of the Holy Ghost—The Sermon—Opening of the Diet—The Elector's Prayer—Insidious Plan of the Romanists—Valdez and Melancthon—No Public Discussion—Evangelical Firmness prevails.

Charles, being defeated on the subject of the procession, resolved to take his revenge on the assemblies, for nothing galled him like these sermons. The crowd ceased not to fill the vast church of the Franciscans, where a Zwinglian minister of lively and penetrating eloquence was preaching on the Book of Joshua. He placed the kings of Canaan and the children of Israel before them: his congregation heard them speak and saw them act, and every one recognized in the kings of Canaan the emperor and the ultra-montane princes, and in the people of God, the adherents of the Reformation. In consequence, his hearers quitted the church enthusiastic in their faith, and

filled with the desire of seeing the abominations of the idolaters fall to the ground. On the 16th June, the Protestants deliberated on Charles's demand, and it was rejected by the majority. "It is only a scarecrow," said they, "the Papists only desire to see if the nail shakes in the wall, and if they can start the hare from the thicket." The next morning (17th June) before breakfast, the princes replied to the emperor. "To forbid our ministers to preach purely the holy Gospel would be rebellion against God, who wills not that his Word be bound. Poor sinners that we are we have need of this Divine Word to surmount our troubles. Moreover, his majesty has declared, that in this diet each doctrine should be examined with impartiality. Now, to order us henceforward to suspend the sermons would be to condemn ours beforehand."

Charles immediately convoked the other temporal and spiritual princes, who arrived at mid-day at the palatine palace, and remained sitting until the evening; the discussion was exceedingly animated. "This very morning," said some of the speakers, "the Protestant princes, as they quitted the emperor, had sermons delivered in public."3 Exasperated at this new affront, Charles with difficulty contained himself. Some of the princes, however, entreated him to accept their mediation, to which he consented: but the Protestants were immovable. Did these heretics, whom they imagined to reduce so easily, appear in Augsburg only to humiliate Charles? The honour of the chief of the empire must be saved at any cost. "Let us ourselves renounce our preachers," said the princes; "the Protestants will not then persist in keeping theirs!" The committee accordingly proposed that the emperor should set aside both Papist and Lutheran preachers, and should nominate a few chaplains, with authority to announce the pure Word of God, without attacking either of the two parties. "They shall be neutral men," said they to the Protestants; neither Faber nor his partisans shall be admitted."—"But they will condemn our doctrine."—"By no means. The preacher shall do nothing but read the text of the Gospels, Epistles, and a general confession of sins." The evangelical states required time to reflect upon it.

"We must accept it," said Melancthon; "for if our obstinacy should lead the emperor to refuse hearing our confession, the evil would be greater still."

"We are called to Augsburg," said Agricola, "to give an account of our doctrine, and not to preach."

"There is no little disorder in the city," remarked Spalatin. "The sacramentarians and enthusiasts preach here as well as we: we must get out of this confusion."

"What do the papists propose?" said other theologians; "to read the Gospels and Epistles without explanation. But is not that a victory? What! we protest against the interpretations of the Church; and lo! priests who are to read the Word of God without their notes and commentaries, that is to say, transforming themselves into protestant ministers!" O! admirable wisdom of the courtiers!" exclaimed Melancthon, smiling. To these motives were added the opinions of the lawyers. As the emperor ought to be considered the rightful magistrate of an imperial city, so long as he made it his residence, all jurisdiction in Augsburg really belonged to him.

"Well, then," said the protestant princes, "we agree to silence our preachers, in the hope that we shall hear nothing offensive to our consciences. If it were otherwise, we should feel ourselves constrained to repel so serious an insult. Besides," added the elector, as he withdrew, "we expect that if at any time we desire to hear one of our chaplains in our own palace, we shall be free to do so."5

They hastened to the emperor, who desired nothing better than to come to an understanding with the Protestants on this subject, and who ratified everything. This was Saturday. An imperial herald was immediately sent out, who, parading the streets of the city at seven in the evening to the sound of trumpets, made the following proclamation:—“O yes, O yes!7 Thus ordains his imperial majesty, our most gracious lord: no one shall be allowed to preach in Augsburg except by his majesty’s nomination, under penalty of incurring the displeasure and punishment of his majesty. A thousand different remarks were exchanged in the houses of the citizens of Augsburg. “We were very impatient,” said they, “to see the preachers appointed by the emperor, and who will preach, (O! unprecedented wonder!) neither against the evangelical doctrine nor against the doctrine of the pope!” “We must expect,” added another, “to behold some Telegraph or some chimera with the head of a lion, a goat’s body, and a dragon’s tail.”2 The Spaniards appeared well satisfied with this agreement, for many of them had never heard a single sermon in their lives; it was not the custom in Spain; but Zwingle’s friends were filled with indignation and alarm. At length Sunday the 19th June arrived; every one hastened to the churches, and the people who filled them, with eyes fixed on the priest, and with attentive ears, prepared to listen to what these new and strange preachers would say.5 It was generally believed that their task would be to make an evangelico-papistical discourse, and they were very impatient to hear this marvel. But “The mountain in labour gave birth to a mouse.” The preacher first read the common prayer; he then added the Gospel of the day, finished with a general confession of sins, and dismissed his congregation. People looked at one another in surprise: “Verily,” said they, “here is a preacher that is neither Gospeller nor Papist, but strictly textual.” At last all burst into laughter; “and truly,” adds Brentz, “there was reason enough.”7 In some churches, however, the chaplains, after reading the Gospel, added a few puerile words, void of Christianity and of consolation, and in no way founded on the holy Scripture.

After the so-called sermon, they proceeded to the mass. That in the cathedral was particularly noisy. The emperor was not present, for he was accustomed to sleep until nine or ten o’clock, and a late mass was performed for him; but Ferdinand and many of the princes were present. The pealing notes of the organ, the resounding voices of the choir, echoed through the minster, and a numerous and motley crowd, rushing in at all the doors, filled the aisles of the temple. One might have said that every nation in the world had agreed to meet in the cathedral of Augsburg. Here were Frenchmen, there Spaniards, Moors in one place, Moriscos in another, on one side Italians, on the other Turks, and even, says Brentz, those who are called Stratiots.2 This crowd was no bad representation of the medley of popery.

One priest alone, a fervent Romanist, dared to offer an apology for the mass in the church of the Holy Cross. Charles, wishing to maintain his authority, had him thrown into the Grayfriars’ prison, whence they contrived to let him escape. As for the evangelical pastors of Augsburg, almost all left the city to hear the Gospel elsewhere. The protestant princes were anxious to secure for their churches the assistance of such distinguished men. Discouragement and alarm followed close upon this step, and even the firmest were moved. The elector was inconsolable at the privation imposed upon him by the emperor. “Our Lord God,” said he, heaving a deep sigh, “has received an order to be silent at the Diet of Augsburg. From that time forward Luther lost the good opinion he had previously entertained of Charles, and foreboded the stormiest future. “See what will be the end of all this,” said he. “The emperor, who has ordered the elector to renounce the assemblies, will afterwards command him to renounce the doctrine; the diet will enter upon its paroxysm, and

nothing will remain for us but to rely upon the arm of the Lord." Then giving way to all his indignation, he added: "The papists, abandoned to devils, are transported with rage; and to live they must drink blood.4 They wish to give themselves an air of justice, by giving us one of obstinacy. At Augsburg you have not to deal with men, but with the very gates of hell." Melancthon himself saw his hopes vanish. "All except the emperor," said he, "hate us with the most violent hatred." The danger is great, very great, … Pray to Christ that he may save us!" But Luther, however full of sorrow he might be, far from being east down, raised his head and endeavoured to reanimate the courage of his brethren. "Be assured and doubt not," wrote he to them, "that you are the confessors of Jesus Christ, and the ambassadors of the Great King."2

They had need of these thoughts, for their adversaries, elated by this first success, neglected nothing that might destroy the Protestants, and taking another step forward, proposed forcing them to be present at the Romish ceremonies. "The Elector of Saxony," said the legate to Charles, "ought in virtue of his office of grand-marshal of the empire to carry the sword before you in all the ceremonies of the diet. Order him therefore to perform his duty at the mass of the Holy Ghost, which is to open the sittings." The emperor did so immediately, and the elector, uneasy at this message, called together his theologians. If he refused, his dignity would be taken away; and if he obeyed, he would trample his faith under foot (thought he), and would do dishonour to the Gospel. But the Lutheran divines removed the scruples of their prince. "It is for a ceremony of the empire," said they, "as grand-marshal, and not as a Christian, that you are summoned; the Word of God itself, in the history of Naaman, authorises you to comply with this invitation." The friends of Zwingle did not think so; their walk was more decided than that of Wittemberg. "The martyrs allowed themselves to be put to death," said they, "rather than burn a grain of incense before the idols." Even some of the Protestants, hearing that the Veni Spiritus was to be sung, said, wagging their heads: "We are very much afraid that the chariot of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, having been taken away by the papists, the Holy Ghost, despite their mass, will never reach Augsburg." Neither these fears nor these objections were listened to. On Monday the 20th June, the emperor and his brother, with the electors and princes of the empire, having entered the cathedral, took their seats on the right side of the choir; on the left were placed the legate, the archbishops, and bishops; in the middle were the ambassadors. Without the choir, in a gallery that overlooked it, were ranged the landgrave and other Protestants, who preferred being at a distance from the host. The elector, bearing the sword, remained upright near the altar at the moment of the adoration. The acolytes, having closed the gates of the choir immediately after,2 Vincent Pompinello, archbishop of Salerno, preached the sermon. He commenced with the Turks and their ravages, and then, by an unexpected turn, began suddenly to exalt the Turks even above the Germans. "The Turks," said he, "have but one prince whom they obey; but the Germans have many who obey no one. The Turks live under one sole law, one only custom, one only religion; but among the Germans there are some who are always wishing for new laws, new customs, new religions. They tear the seamless coat of Christ; they abolish by devilish inspirations the sacred doctrines established by unanimous consent, and substitute for them, alas! buffoonery and obscenity. Magnanimous emperor, powerful king!" said he, turning towards Charles and his brother, "sharpen your swords, wield them against these perfidious disturbers of religion, and thus bring them back into the fold of the Church.4 There is no peace for Germany so long as the sword shall not have entirely eradicated this heresy. O St. Peter and St. Paul! I call upon you; upon you, St. Peter, in order that you may open the stony hearts of these princes with your keys; and upon

you, St. Paul, that if they show themselves too rebellious, you may come with your sword, and cut in pieces this unexampled hardness. This discourse, intermingled with panegyrics of Aristides, Themistocles, Scipio, Cato, the Curtii and Scævola, being concluded, the emperor and princes arose to make their offerings. Pappenheim returned the sword to the elector, who had intrusted it to him; and the grand-marshal, as well as the margrave, went to the offertory, but with a smile, as it is reported. This fact is but little in harmony with the character of these princes. At length they quitted the cathedral. No one, except the friends of the nuncio, was pleased with the sermon. Even the Archbishop of Mentz was offended at it. “What does he mean,” exclaimed he, “by calling on St. Paul to cut the Germans with his sword?” Nothing but a few inarticulate sounds had been heard in the nave; the Protestants eagerly questioned those of their party who had been present in the choir. “The more these priests inflame people’s minds, and the more they urge their princes to bloody wars,” said Brentz at that time, “the more we must hinder ours from giving way to violence.” Thus spoke a minister of the Gospel of peace after the sermon of the priests of Rome.

After the mass of the Holy Ghost, the emperor entered his carriage, and having reached the town-hall, where the sittings of the diet were to take place, took his seat on a throne covered with cloth of gold, while his brother placed himself on a bench in front of him; then all around them were ranged the electors, forty-two sovereign princes, the deputies from the cities, the bishops, and ambassadors, forming indeed that illustrious assembly which Luther, six weeks before, had imagined he saw sitting in the air.3 The count-palatine read the imperial proposition. It referred to two points; the war against the Turks, and the religious controversy. “Sacrificing my private injuries and interests to the common good,” said the emperor, “I have quitted my hereditary kingdoms, to pass, not without great danger, into Italy, and from thence to Germany. I have heard with sorrow of the divisions that have broken out here, and which, striking not only at the imperial majesty, but still more at the commandments of Almighty God, must engender pillage, conflagration, war, and death.” At one o’clock the emperor, accompanied by all the princes, returned to his palace. On the same day the elector gathered around him all his co-religionists, whom the emperor’s speech had greatly excited, and exhorted them not to be turned aside by any threats from a cause which was that of God himself. All seemed penetrated with this expression of Scripture: “Speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us.”6 The elector had a heavy burden to bear. Not only had he to walk at the head of the princes, but he had further to defend himself against the enervating influence of Melancthon. Throughout the whole of the diet this prince offers to our notice no mere abstraction of the state, but the noblest individuality. Early on Tuesday morning, feeling the necessity of that invisible strength which, according to a beautiful figure in the Holy Scriptures, causes us to ride upon the high places of the earth; and seeing, as was usual, his domestics, his councillors, and his son assembled around him, John begged them affectionately to withdraw. He knew that it was only by kneeling humbly before God that he could stand with courage before Charles. Alone in his chamber, he opened and read the Psalms: then falling on his knees, he offered up the most fervent prayer to God;2 next, wishing to confirm himself in the immovable fidelity that he had just vowed to the Lord, he went to his desk, and there committed his resolutions to writing. Dolzig and Melancthon afterwards saw these lines, and were filled with admiration as they read them. Being thus tempered anew in heavenly thoughts, John took up the imperial proposition, and meditated over it, then, having called in his son and the chancellor Bruck, and Melancthon shortly after, they all agreed that the deliberations of the diet ought to commence with the affairs of religion; and his allies, who were consulted, concurred in this advice. The legate had

conceived a plan diametrically opposed to this. He desired to stifle the religious question, and for this end required that the princes should examine it in a secret committee. The evangelical Christians entertained no doubt that if the truth was proclaimed in the great council of the nation, it would gain the victory; but the more they desired a public confession, the more it was dreaded by the pope's friends. The latter wished to take their adversaries by silence, without confession, without discussion, as a city is taken by famine without fighting and without a storm: to gag the Reformation, and thus reduce it to powerlessness and death, were their tactics. To have silenced the preachers was not enough: the princes must be silenced also. They wished to shut up the Reformation as in a dungeon, and there leave it to die, thinking they would thus get rid of it more surely than by leading it to the scaffold. This plan was well conceived: it now remained to be put in execution, and for that purpose it was necessary to persuade the Protestants that such a method would be the surest for them. The person selected for this intrigue was Alphonso Valdez, secretary to Charles V., a Spanish gentleman, a worthy individual, and who afterwards showed a leaning towards the Reformation. Policy often makes use of good men for the most perfidious designs. It was decided that Valdez should address the most timid of the Protestants—Melancthon. On the 16th or 17th of June, immediately after the arrival of Charles, Valdez begged Melancthon to call on him. "The Spaniards," said he, "imagine that the Lutherans teach impious doctrines on the Holy Trinity, on Jesus Christ, on the blessed Mother of God. Accordingly, they think they do a more meritorious work in killing a Lutheran than in slaying a Turk."

"I know it," replied Melancthon, "and I have not yet been able to succeed in making your fellow-countrymen abandon that idea."

"But what, pray, do the Lutherans desire?"

"The Lutheran question is not so complicated and so unseemly as his majesty fancies. We do not attack the Catholic Church, as is commonly believed; and the whole controversy is reducible to these three points. The two kinds in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the marriage of pastors, and the abolition of private masses. If we could agree on these articles, it would be easy to come to an understanding on the others."

"Well, I will report this to his majesty."

Charles V. was charmed at this communication. "Go," said he to Valdez, "and impart these things to the legate, and ask Master Philip to transmit to you in writing a short exposition of what they believe and what they deny."

Valdez hastened to Campeggio. "What you relate pleases me tolerably," said the latter. "As for the two kinds in the sacrament, and the marriage of priests, there will be the means of accommodation; but we cannot consent to the abolition of private masses." This would have been in fact cutting off one of the greatest revenues of the Church. On Saturday, June 18, Valdez saw Melancthon again. "The emperor begs of you a moderate and concise exposition," said he, "and he is persuaded that it will be more advantageous to treat of this matter briefly and privately, avoiding all public hearing and prolix discussion, which would only engender anger and division."—"Well," said Melancthon, "I will reflect upon it."

Melancthon was almost won over; a secret conference agreed better with his disposition. Had he not often repeated that peace should be sought after above all things? Thus every thing induced

the legate to hope that a public struggle would be avoided, and that he might be content, as it were, to send mutes against the Reform, and strangle it in a dungeon.

Fortunately the chancellor and the Elector Frederick did not think fit to entertain the propositions with which Charles had commissioned the worthy Valdez. The resolution of these lay members of the Church saved it from the false step its doctors were about to take; and the wiles of the Italians failed against evangelical firmness. Melancthon was only permitted to lay the Confession before the Spaniard, that he might look into it, and in despite of the moderation employed in it, Valdez exclaimed: “These words are too bitter, and your adversaries will never put up with them!” Thus finished the legate’s manœuvre.

CHAPTER VI The Elector’s Zeal—The Signing of the Confession—Courage of the Princes—Melancthon’s Weakness—The Legate’s Speech—Delays—The Confession in Danger—The Protestants are firm—Melancthon’s Despondency—Luther’s Prayer and Anxiety—Luther’s Texts—His Letter to Melancthon—Faith.

Charles, compelled to resign himself to a public sitting ordered on Wednesday, 22d June, that the elector and his allies should have their Confession ready for the ensuing Friday. The Roman party were also invited to present a confession of faith; but they excused themselves, saying that they were satisfied with the Edict of Worms. The emperor’s order took the Protestants by surprise, for the negotiations between Valdez and Melancthon had prevented the latter from putting the finishing stroke to the Confession. It was not copied out fair; and the conclusions, as well as the exordium, were not definitively drawn up. In consequence of this, the Protestants begged the Archbishop of Mentz to obtain for them the delay of a day; but their petition was refused. They therefore laboured incessantly, even during the night, to correct and transcribe the Confession. On Thursday, 23d June, all the Protestant princes, deputies, councillors, and theologians met early at the elector’s. The Confession was read in German, and all gave their adhesion to it, except the landgrave and the Strasburgers, who required a change in the article on the sacrament. The princes rejected their demand. The Elector of Saxony was already preparing to sign it, when Melancthon stopped him: he feared giving too political a colouring to this religious business. In his idea it was the Church that should appear, and not the State. “It is for the theologians and ministers to propose these things,” said he; “let us reserve for other matters the authority of the mighty ones of the earth.”—“God forbid that you should exclude me,” replied the elector; “I am resolved to do what is right without troubling myself about my Crown. I desire to confess the Lord. My electoral hat and my ermine are not so precious to me as the cross of Jesus Christ. I shall leave on earth these marks of my greatness; but my Master’s cross will accompany me to heaven.”

How resist such christian language! Melancthon gave way. The elector then approached, signed, and handed the pen to the landgrave, who at first made some objections; however the enemy was at the door; was this a time for disunion? At last he signed, but with a declaration that the doctrine of the Eucharist did not please him. The margrave and Luneburg having joyfully subscribed their names, Anhalt took the pen in his turn, and said, “I have tilted more than once to please others; now, if the honour of my Lord Jesus Christ requires it, I am ready to saddle my horse, to leave my goods and life behind, and rush into eternity, towards an everlasting crown.” Then, having signed, this youthful prince said, turning to the theologians, “I would rather renounce my subjects and my

states, rather quit the country of my fathers staff in hand, rather gain my bread by cleaning the shoes of the foreigner, than receive any other doctrine than that which is contained in this Confession." Nuremberg and Reutlingen alone of the cities subscribed their signatures; and all resolved on demanding of the emperor that the Confession should be read publicly.2 The courage of the princes surprised every one. Rome had crushed the members of the Church, and had reduced them to a herd of slaves, whom she dragged silent and humiliated behind her: the Reformation enfranchised them, and with their rights it restored to them their duties. The priest no longer enjoyed the monopoly of religion; each head of a family again became priest in his own house, and all the members of the Church of God were thenceforward called to the rank of confessors. The laymen are nothing, or almost nothing, in the sect of Rome, but they are the essential portion of the Church of Jesus Christ. Wherever the priestly spirit is established, the Church dies; wherever laymen, as these Augsburg princes, understand their duty and their immediate dependence on Christ, the Church lives. The evangelical theologians were moved by the devotedness of the princes. "When I consider their firmness in the confession of the Gospel," said Brentz, "the colour mounts to my cheeks. What a disgrace that we, who are only beggars beside them, are so afraid of confessing Christ!" Brentz was then thinking of certain towns, particularly of Halle, of which he was pastor, but no doubt also of the theologians. The latter, in truth, without being deficient in devotedness, were sometimes wanting in courage. Melancthon was in constant agitation; he ran to and fro, slipping in everywhere (says Cochlœus in his Philippics), visiting not only the houses and mansions of private persons, but also insinuating himself into the palaces of cardinals and princes, nay, even into the court of the emperor; and, whether at table or in conversation, he spared no means of persuading every person, that nothing was more easy than to restore peace between the two parties.

One day he was with the archbishop of Salzburg, who in a long discourse gave an eloquent description of the troubles produced, as he said, by the Reformation, and ended with a peroration "written in blood," as Melancthon characterized it. Philip in agony had ventured during the conversation to slip in the word conscience. "Conscience!" hastily interrupted the archbishop, "Conscience!—What does that mean? I tell you plainly that the emperor will not allow confusion to be thus brought upon the empire."—Had I been in Melancthon's place," said Luther, "I should have immediately replied to the archbishop: And our Emperor, ours, will not tolerate such blasphemy."—"Alas," said Melancthon, "they are all as full of assurance as if there was no God."2

Another day Melancthon was with Campeggio, and conjured him to persevere in the moderate sentiments he appeared to entertain. And at another time, as it would seem, he was with the emperor himself. Alas! said the alarmed Zwinglians, "after having qualified one-half of the Gospel, Melancthon is sacrificing the other."4 The wiles of the Ultramontanists were added to Philip's dejection, in order to arrest the courageous proceedings of the princes. Friday, 24th June, was the day fixed for reading the Confession, but measures were taken to prevent it. The sitting of the diet did not begin till three in the afternoon; the legate was then announced; Charles went to meet him as far as the top of the grand staircase, and Campeggio, taking his seat in front of the emperor, in King Ferdinand's place, delivered a harangue in Ciceronian style. Never," said he, "has St. Peter's bark been so violently tossed by such various waves, whirlwinds, and abysses. The Holy Father has learnt these things with pain, and desires to drag the Church from these frightful gulfs. For the love of Jesus Christ, for the safety of your country and for your own, O mighty Prince! get rid of

these errors, deliver Germany, and save Christendom!”

After a temperate reply from Albert of Mentz, the legate quitted the town-hall, and the evangelical princes stood up; but a fresh obstacle had been provided. Deputies from Austria, Carinthia, and Carniola, first received a hearing.

Much time had thus elapsed. The evangelical princes, however, rose up again, and the Chancellor Brück said: “It is pretended that new doctrines not based on Scripture, that heresies and schisms, are spread among the people by us. Considering that such accusations compromise not only our good name, but also the safety of our souls, we beg his majesty will have the goodness to hear what are the doctrines we profess.” The emperor, no doubt, by arrangement with the legate, made reply that it was too late; besides, that this reading would be useless; and that the princes should be satisfied with putting in their Confession in writing. Thus the mine, so skilfully prepared, worked admirably; the Confession, once handed to the emperor, would be thrown aside, and the Reformation would be forced to retire, without the papists having even condescended to hear it, without defence, and overwhelmed with contumely. The protestant princes, uneasy and agitated, insisted. “Our honour is at stake,” said they; “our souls are endangered. We are accused publicly; publicly we ought to answer.” Charles was shaken; Ferdinand leant towards him, and whispered a few words in his ear:3 the emperor refused a second time.

Upon this the elector and princes, in still greater alarm, said for the third time, with emotion and earnestness: “For the love of God, let us read our Confession! No person is insulted in it.” Thus were seen, on the one hand, a few faithful men, desiring with loud cries to confess their faith; and on the other, the great emperor of the west, surrounded by a crowd of cardinals, prelates, and princes, endeavouring to stifle the manifestation of the truth.5 It was a serious, violent, and decisive struggle, in which the holiest interests were discussed! At last Charles appeared to yield: “His Majesty grants your request,” was the reply to the princes; but as it is now too late, he begs you to transmit him your written Confession, and to-morrow, at two o’clock, the diet will be prepared to hear it read at the Palatine Palace.” The princes were struck by these words, which, seeming to grant them everything, in reality granted nothing. In the first place, it was not in a public sitting at the town-hall, but privately in his own palace, that the emperor was willing to hear them; then they had no doubt that if the Confession left their hands it was all over with the public reading. They therefore remained firm. “The work has been done in great haste,” said they, and it was the truth; “pray leave it with us to-night, that we may revise it.” The emperor was obliged to yield, and the Protestants returned to their hotels full of joy; while the legate and his friends, perceiving that the Confession was inevitable, saw the morrow approach with continually increasing anxiety.

Among those who prepared to confess the evangelical truth, was one, however, whose heart was filled with sadness:—it was Melancthon. Placed between two fires, he saw the reformed, and many even of his own friends, reproach his weakness; while the opposite party detested what they called his hypocrisy. His friend Camerarius, who visited Augsburg about this time, often found him plunged in thought, uttering deep sighs, and shedding bitter tears. Brentz, moved with compassion, coming to the unhappy Philip, would sit down by his side and weep with him;3 and Jonas endeavoured to console him in another manner, by exhorting him to take the book of Psalms, and cry to God with all his heart, making use of David’s words rather than of his own.

One day intelligence arrived which formed a general topic of conversation in Augsburg, and which, by spreading terror among the partisans of the pope, gave a momentary relief to Melancthon. It was said that a mule in Rome had given birth to a colt with crane's feet. "This prodigy," said Melancthon thoughtfully, "announces that Rome is near its end;" perhaps because the crane is a bird of passage, and that the pope's mule thus gave signs of departure. Melancthon had immediately written to Luther, who replied that he was exceedingly rejoiced that God had given the pope so striking a sign of his approaching fall.5 It is good to recall to memory these puerilities of the age of the reformers, that we may better understand the high range of these men of God in matters of faith.

These idle Roman stories did not long console Melancthon. On the eve of the 25th of June, he was present in imagination at the reading of that Confession which he had drawn up, which was about to be proclaimed before the world, and in which one word too many or too few might decide on the approbation or the hatred of the princes, on the safety or ruin of the Reformation and of the empire. He could bear up no longer, and the feeble Atlas, crushed under the burden of the world upon his shoulders, gave utterance to a cry of anguish. "All my time here is spent in tears and mourning," wrote he to Vitus Diedrich, Luther's secretary in the castle of Coburg; and on the morrow he wrote to Luther himself: "My dwelling is in perpetual tears.2 My consternation is indescribable. O my father! I do not wish my words to exaggerate my sorrows; but without your consolations, it is impossible for me to enjoy here the least peace."

Nothing in fact presented so strong a contrast to Melancthon's distrust and dejection, as the faith, calmness, and exultation of Luther. It was of advantage to him that he was not then in the midst of the Augsburg vortex, and to be able from his stronghold to set his foot with tranquillity upon the rock of God's promises. He was sensible himself of the value of this peaceful hermitage, as he called it. "I cannot sufficiently admire," said Vitus Diedrich, "the firmness, cheerfulness, and faith of this man, so astonishing in such cruel times."

Luther, besides his constant reading of the Word of God, did not pass a day without devoting three hours at least to prayer, and they were hours selected from those the most favourable to study.6 One day, as Diedrich approached the reformer's chamber, he heard his voice, and remained motionless, holding his breath, a few steps from the door. Luther was praying, and his prayer (said the secretary) was full of adoration, fear, and hope, as when one speaks to a friend or to a father.8 "I know that thou art our Father and our God," said the reformer alone in his chamber, "and that thou wilt scatter the persecutors of thy children, for thou art thyself endangered with us. All this matter is thine, and it is only by thy constraint that we have put our hands to it. Defend us then, O Father!" The secretary, motionless as a statue, in the long gallery of the castle, lost not one of the words that the clear and resounding voice of Luther bore to his ears. The reformer was earnest with God, and called upon him with such unction to accomplish his promises, that Diedrich felt his heart glow within him.2 "Oh! exclaimed he, as he retired, "How could not these prayers but prevail in the desperate struggle at Augsburg!"

Luther might also have allowed himself to be overcome with fear, for he was left in complete ignorance of what was taking place in the diet. A Wittemberg messenger, who should have brought him forests of letters (according to his own expression), having presented himself: "Do you bring any letters?" asked Luther. "No!" "How are those gentlemen?" "Well!" Luther, grieved at such

silence, returned and shut himself up in his chamber.

Erelong there appeared a courier on horseback carrying despatches from the elector to Torgau; “Do you bring me any letter?” asked Luther, “No!” “How are those gentlemen?” continued he, fearfully. “Well!” “This is strange, thought the reformer. A waggon having left Coburg laden with flour (for they were almost in want of provisions at Augsburg), Luther impatiently awaited the return of the driver; but he returned empty. Luther then began to revolve the gloomiest thoughts in his mind, not doubting that they were concealing some misfortune from him. At last another individual, Jobst Nymptzen, having arrived from Augsburg, Luther rushed anew towards him, with his usual question: “Do you bring me any letters? He waited trembling for the reply. “No!” “And how are those gentlemen?” “Well!” The reformer withdrew, a prey to anger and to fear.

Then Luther opened his Bible, and to console himself for the silence of men, conversed with God. There were some passages of Scripture in particular that he read continually. We point them out below. He did more; he wrote with his own hand many declarations of Scripture over the doors and windows, and on the walls of the castle. In one place were these words from the 118th Psalm: I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. In another, those of the 12th chapter of Proverbs: The way of the wicked seduceth them; and over his bed, this passage from the 4th Psalm: I will lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou, O Lord, only makest me dwell in safety. Never perhaps did man so environ himself with the promises of the Lord, or so dwell in the atmosphere of his Word and live by his breath, as Luther at Coburg. At length letters came. “If the times in which we live were not opposed to it, I should have imagined some revenge,” wrote Luther to Jonas, “but prayer checked my anger, and anger checked my prayer. I am delighted at that tranquil mind which God gives our prince. As for Melancthon, it is his philosophy that tortures him, and nothing else. For our cause is in the very hands of Him who can say with unspeakable dignity: No one shall pluck it out of my hands. I would not have it in our hands, and it would not be desirable that it were so. I have had many things in my hands, and I have lost them all; but whatever I have been able to place in God’s, I still possess.” On learning that Melancthon’s anguish still continued, Luther wrote to him; and these are the words that should be preserved:—

“Grace and peace in Christ! in Christ, I say, and not in the world, Amen. I hate with exceeding hatred those extreme cares which consume me. If the cause is unjust, abandon it; if the cause is just, why should we belie the promises of Him who commands us to sleep without fear? Can the devil do more than kill us? Christ will not be wanting to the work of justice and of truth. He lives; he reigns; what fear, then, can we have? God is powerful to upraise his cause if it is overthrown, to make it proceed if it remains motionless, and if we are not worthy of it, he will do it by others.

“I have received your Apology, and I cannot understand what you mean, when you ask what we must concede to the papists. We have already conceded too much. Night and day I meditate on this affair, turning it over and over, diligently searching the Scriptures, and the conviction of the truth of our doctrine every day becomes stronger in my mind. With the help of God I will not permit a single letter of all that we have said to be torn from us.

“The issue of this affair torments you, because you cannot understand it. But if you could, I would not have the least share in it. God has put it in a ‘common place,’ that you will not find either in your rhetoric or in your philosophy: that place is called Faith. It is that in which subsist all things that we can neither understand nor see. Whoever wishes to touch them, as you do, will have tears

for his whole reward.

“If Christ is not with us, where is he in the whole universe? If we are not the Church, where, I pray, is the Church? Is it the Dukes of Bavaria, is it Ferdinand, is it the pope, is it the Turk, who is the Church? If we have not the Word of God, who is it that possesses it?

“Only we must have faith, lest the cause of faith should be found to be without faith.”

“If we fall, Christ falls with us, that is to say, the Master of the world. I would rather fall with Christ, than remain standing with Cæsar.”

Thus wrote Luther. The faith which animated him flowed from him like torrents of living water. He was indefatigable: in a single day he wrote to Melancthon, Spalatin, Brentz, Agricola, and John Frederick, and they were letters full of life. He was not alone in praying, speaking, and believing. At the same moment, the evangelical Christians exhorted one another every where to prayer. Such was the arsenal in which the weapons were forged that the confessors of Christ wielded before the Diet of Augsburg.

CHAPTER VII The 25th June 1530—The Palatine Chapel—Recollections and Contrast—The Confession—Prologue—Justification—The Church—Free Will and Works—Faith—Interest of the Hearers—The Princes become Preachers—The Confession—Abuses—Church and State—The two Governments—Epilogue—Argumentation—Prudence—Church and State—The Sword—Moderate Tone of the Confession—Its Defects—A new Baptism At length the 25th June arrived. This was destined to be the greatest day of the Reformation, and one of the most glorious in the history of Christianity and of mankind. As the chapel of the Palatine Palace, where the emperor had resolved to hear the Confession, could contain only about two hundred persons, before three o’clock a great crowd was to be seen surrounding the building and thronging the court, hoping by this means to catch a few words; and many having gained entrance to the chapel, all were turned out except those who were, at least, councillors to the princes.

Charles took his seat on the throne. The electors or their representatives were on his right and left hand; after them, the other princes and states of the empire. The legate had refused to appear in this solemnity, lest he should seem by his presence to authorize the reading of the Confession.

Then stood up John the elector of Saxony, with his son John Frederick, Philip landgrave of Hesse, the Margrave George of Brandenburg, Wolfgang prince of Anhalt, Ernest duke of Brunswick-Luneburg, and his brother Francis, and last of all the deputies of Nuremberg and Reutlingen. Their air was animated and their features radiant with joy. The apologies of the early Christians, of Tertullian and Justin Martyr, hardly reached in writing the sovereigns to whom they were addressed. But now, to hear the new apology of resuscitated Christianity, behold that puissant emperor, whose sceptre, stretching far beyond the Columns of Hercules, reaches the utmost limits of the world, his brother the King of the Romans, with electors, princes, prelates, deputies, ambassadors, all of whom desire to destroy the Gospel, but who are constrained by an invsible power to listen, and, by that very listening, to honour the Confession!

One thought was involuntarily present in the minds of the spectators,—the recollection of the Diet of Worms. Only nine years before, a poor monk stood alone for this same cause in a hall of the town-house at Worms, in presence of the empire. And now in his stead behold the foremost of the

electors, princes, and cities! What a victory is declared by this simple fact! No doubt Charles himself cannot escape from this recollection. The emperor, seeing the Protestants stand up, motioned them to sit down; and then the two chancellors of the elector, Bruck and Bayer, advanced to the middle of the chapel, and stood before the throne, holding in their hands, the former the Latin and the other the German copy of the Confession. The emperor required the Latin copy to be read. “We are Germans,” said the Elector of Saxony, “and on German soil; I hope therefore your majesty will allow us to speak German.” If the Confession had been read in Latin, a language unknown to most of the princes, the general effect would have been lost. This was another means of shutting the mouth of the Gospel. The emperor complied with the elector’s demand.

Bayer then began to read the evangelical Confession, slowly, seriously, distinctly, with a clear, strong, and sonorous voice, which re-echoed under the arched roof of the chapel, and carried even to the outside this great testimony paid to the truth.

“Most serene, most mighty, and invincible emperor and most gracious lord,” said he, “we who appear in your presence, declare ourselves ready to confer amicably with you on the fittest means of restoring one sole, true, and same faith, since it is for one sole and same Christ that we fight. And in case that these religious dissensions cannot be settled amicably, we then offer to your majesty to explain our cause in a general, free, and Christian council.”3 This prologue being ended, Bayer confessed the Holy Trinity, conformably with the Nicene Council, original and hereditary sin, “which bringeth eternal death to all who are not born again,”5 and the incarnation of the Son, “very God and very man,”

“We teach, moreover,” continued he, “that we cannot be justified before God by our own strength, our merits, or our works; but that we are justified freely for Christ’s sake through faith, when we believe that our sins are forgiven in virtue of Christ, who by his death has made satisfaction for our sins: this faith is the righteousness that God imputeth to the sinner.

“But we teach, at the same time, that this faith ought to bear good fruits, and that we must do all the good works commanded by God, for the love of God, and not by their means to gain the grace of God.” The Protestants next declared their faith in the Christian Church, “which is,” said they, “the assembly of all true believers and all the saints,” in the midst of whom there are, nevertheless, in this life, many false Christians, hypocrites even, and manifest sinners; and, they added, “that it is sufficient for the real unity of the Church that they agree on the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, without the rites and ceremonies instituted by men being everywhere the same.” They proclaimed the necessity of baptism, and declared “that the body and blood of Christ are really present and administered in the Lord’s Supper to those who partake of it.”2 The chancellor then successively confessed the faith of the evangelical Christians touching confession, penance, the nature of the sacraments, the government of the Church, ecclesiastical ordinances, political government, and the last judgment. “As regards free will,” continued he, “we confess that man’s will has a certain liberty of accomplishing civil justice, and of loving the things that reason comprehends; that man can do the good that is within the sphere of nature—plough his fields, eat, drink, have a friend, put on a coat, build a house, take a wife, feed cattle, exercise a calling; as also he can, of his own movement, do evil, kneel before an idol, and commit murder. But we maintain that without the Holy Ghost he cannot do what is righteous in the sight of God.”

Then, returning to the grand doctrine of the Reformation, and recalling to mind that the doctors of the pope “have never ceased impelling the faithful to puerile and useless works, as the custom of chaplets, invocations of saints, monastic vows, processions, fasts, feast-days, brotherhoods,” the Protestants added, that as for themselves, while urging the practice of truly christian works, of which little had been said before their time, “they taught that man is justified by faith alone; not by that faith which is a simple knowledge of the history, and which wicked men and even devils possess, but by faith, believes not only the history, but also the effect of the history,4 which believes that through Christ we obtain grace; which sees that in Christ we have a merciful Father; which knows this God; which calls upon him; in a word, which is not without God, as the heathen are.”

“Such,” said Bayer, “is a summary of the doctrine professed in our churches, by which it may be seen that this doctrine is by no means opposed to Scripture, to the universal Church, nor even to the Romish Church, such as the doctors describe it to us; and since it is so, to reject us as heretics is an offence against unity and charity.”

Here terminated the first part of the Confession, the aim of which was to explain the evangelical doctrine. The chancellor read with so distinct a voice, that the crowd, which was unable to enter the hall, and which filled the court and all the approaches of the episcopal palace, did not lose a word. This reading produced the most marvellous effect on the princes who thronged the chapel. Jonas watched every change in their countenances,3 and there beheld interest, astonishment, and even approbation depicted by turns. “The adversaries imagine they have done a wonderful thing by forbidding the preaching of the Gospel,” wrote Luther to the elector; “and they do not see, poor creatures! that by the reading of the Confession in the presence of the diet, there has been more preaching than in the sermons of ten doctors. Exquisite subtlety! admirable expedient! Master Agricola and the other ministers are reduced to silence; but in their place appear the Elector of Saxony and the other princes and lords, who preach before his imperial majesty and the members of the whole empire, freely, to their beard, and before their noses. Yes, Christ is in the diet, and he does not keep silence: the Word of God cannot be bound. They forbid it in the pulpit, and are forced to hear it in the palace; poor ministers cannot announce it, and great princes proclaim it; the servants are forbidden to listen to it, and their masters are compelled to hear it; they will have nothing to do with it during the whole course of the diet, and they are forced to submit to hear more in one day than is heard ordinarily in a whole year…. When all else is silent, the very stones cry out, as says our Lord Jesus Christ.” That part of the Confession destined to point out errors and abuses still remained. Bayer continued: he explained and demonstrated the doctrine of the two kinds; he attacked the compulsory celibacy of priests, maintained that the Lord’s Supper had been changed into a regular fair, in which it was merely a question of buying and selling, and that it had been re-established in its primitive purity by the Reformation, and was celebrated in the evangelical churches with entirely new devotion and gravity. He declared that the sacrament was administered to no one who had not first made confession of his faults, and he quoted this expression of Chrysostom: “Confess thyself to God the Lord, thy real Judge; tell thy sin, not with the tongue but in thy conscience and in thy heart.”

Bayer next came to the precepts on the distinction of meats and other Roman usages. “Celebrate such a festival” said he; “repeat such a prayer, or keep such a fast; be dressed in such a manner, and so many other ordinances of men—this is what is now styled a spiritual and christian life; while

the good works prescribed by God, as those of a father of a family who toils to support his wife, his sons, and his daughters—of a mother who brings children into the world, and takes care of them—of a prince or of a magistrate who governs his subjects, are looked upon as secular things, and of an imperfect nature." As for monastic vows in particular, he represented that, as the pope could give a dispensation from them, those vows ought therefore to be abolished. The last article of the Confession treated of the authority of the bishops: powerful princes crowned with the episcopal mitre were there; the Archbishop of Mentz, Cologne, Salzburg, and Bremen, with the Bishops of Bamberg, Wurzburg, Eichstadt, Worms, Spires, Strasburg, Augsburg, Constance, Coire, Passau, Liege, Trent, Brixen, and of Lebus and Ratzburg, fixed their eyes on the humble confessor. He fearlessly continued, and energetically protesting against that confusion of Church and State which had characterized the Middle Ages, he called for the distinction and independence of the two Societies.

"Many," said he, "have unskilfully confounded the episcopal and the temporal power; and from this confusion have resulted great wars, revolts, and seditions. It is for this reason, and to reassure men's consciences, that we find ourselves constrained to establish the difference, which exists between the power of the Church and the power of the sword.2

"We therefore teach that the power of the keys or of the bishops is conformably with the Word of the Lord, a commandment emanating from God, to preach the Gospel, to remit or retain sins, and to administer the Sacraments. This power has reference only to eternal goods, is exercised only by the minister of the Word and does not trouble itself with political administration. The political, administration on the other hand, is busied with, every thing else but the Gospel. The magistrate protects, not souls, but bodies and temporal possessions. He defends them against all attacks from without, and, by making use of the sword and of punishment, compels men to observe civil justice and peace.

"For this reason we must take particular care not to mingle the power of the Church with the power of the State. The power of the Church ought never to invade an office that is foreign to it; for Christ himself said: My kingdom is not of this world. And again: Who made me a judge over you? St. Paul said to the Philippians: Our citizenship is in heaven. And to the Corinthians: The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.

"It is thus that we distinguish the two governments and the two powers, and that we honour both as the most excellent gifts that God has given here on earth.

"The duty of the bishops is therefore to preach the Gospel, to forgive sins, and to exclude from the Christian Church all who rebel against the Lord, but without human power, and solely by the word of God. If the bishops act thus, the churches ought to be obedient to them, according to this declaration of Christ: Whoever heareth you heareth me.

"But if the bishops teach anything that is contrary to the Gospel, then the churches have an order from God which forbids them to obey (Matthew 7:15; Galatians 1:8; 2 Corinthians 13:8, 2 Corinthians 13:10). And St. Augustine himself, in his letter against Pertilian, writes: 'We must not obey the catholic bishops, if they go astray, and teach anything contrary to the canonical Scriptures of God."

After some remarks on the ordinances and traditions of the Church, Bayer came to the epilogue of the Confession.

“It is not from hatred that we have spoken,” added he, “nor to insult any one; but we have explained the doctrines that we maintain to be essential, in order that it may be understood that we admit of neither dogma nor ceremony which is contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and to the usage of the universal Church.”

Bayer then ceased to read. He had spoken for two hours: the silence and serious attention of the assembly were not once disturbed. This Confession of Augsburg will ever remain one of the masterpieces of the human mind enlightened by the Spirit of God. The language that had been adopted, while it was perfectly natural, was the result of a profound study of character. These princes, these warriors, these politicians who were sitting in the Palatine Palace, entirely ignorant as they were of divinity, easily understood the Protestant doctrine; for it was not explained to them in the style of the schools, but in that of everyday life, and with a simplicity and clearness that rendered all misunderstanding impossible. At the same time the power of argumentation was so much the more remarkable, as it was the more concealed. At one time Melancthon (for it was really he who spoke through the mouth of Bayer) was content to quote a single passage of Scripture or of the Fathers in favour of the doctrine he maintained; and at another he proved his thesis so much the more strongly, that he appeared only to be declaring it. With a single stroke he pointed out the sad consequences that would follow the rejection of the faith he professed, or with one word showed its importance for the prosperity of the Church; so that, while listening to him, the most violent enemies were obliged to acknowledge to themselves that there was really something to say in favour of the new sect. To this force of reasoning the apology added a prudence no less remarkable. Melancthon, while declining with firmness the errors attributed to his party, did not even appear to feel the injustice of these erroneous imputations; and while pointing out those of Popery, he did not say expressly they were those of his adversaries; thus carefully avoiding every thing that might irritate their minds. In this he showed himself wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove. But the most admirable thing of all is the fidelity with which the Confession explains the doctrines most essential to salvation. Rome is accustomed to represent the reformers as the creators of the Protestant doctrines; but it is not in the sixteenth century that we must look for the days of that creation. A bright track of light, of which Wickliffe and Augustine mark the most salient points, carries us back to the apostolic age: it was then that shone in all their brilliancy the creative days of evangelical truth. Yet it is true (and if this is what Rome means, we fully concur in the idea), never since the time of St. Paul had the Christian doctrine appeared with so much beauty, depth, and life, as in the days of the Reformation.

Among these doctrines, that of the Church, which had been so long disfigured, appeared at this time in all its native purity. With what wisdom, in particular, the confessors of Augsburg protest against that confusion of religion and politics which, since the deplorable epoch of Constantine, had changed the kingdom of God into an earthly and carnal institution! Undoubtedly what the Confession stigmatizes with the greatest energy is the intrusion of the Church into man to combat it. The evil of the three centuries which have passed away since then, is to have subjected the Church to the State; and we may believe that Luther and Melancthon would have found against this disorder thunders no less powerful. What they attack in a general sense, is the confusion of the two societies; what they demand, is their independence, I do not say their separation, for

separation of Church and State was quite unknown to the Reformers. If the Augsburg confessors were unwilling that things from above should monopolize those of the earth, they would have been still less willing for things of earth to oppress those from heaven.

There is a particular application of this principle, which the Confession points out. It wills the bishops should reprimand those who obey wickedness, “but without human power, and solely by the Word of God.” It therefore rejects the use of the sword in the chastisement of heretics. This we see is a primitive principle, fundamental and essential to the Reformation, as the contrary doctrine is a primitive principle, fundamental and essential to the Papacy. If among Protestants we find some writing, or even some example opposed to this, it is but an isolated fact, which cannot invalidate the official principles of the reform—it is one of those exceptions which always serve to confirm the rule.

Finally, the Augsburg Confession does not usurp the rights of the Word of God; it desires to be its handmaid and not its rival; it does not found, it does not regulate the faith, but simply professes it. “Our churches teach,” it says; and it will be remembered that Luther considered it only as a sermon preached by princes and kings. Had it desired more, as has since been maintained, by that very circumstance it would have been nullified.

Was, however, the Confession able to follow in all things the exact path of truth? We may be permitted to doubt it.

It professes not to separate from the teaching of the Catholic Church, and even from that of the Romish Church—by which is no doubt signified the ancient Roman Church—and rejects the popish particularism which for about eight centuries, imprisoned men’s consciences. The Confession, however, seems overlaid with superstitious fears when there is any question of deviating from the views entertained by some of the Fathers of the Church, of breaking the toils of the hierarchy, and of acting as regards Rome, without blamable forbearance. This, at least, is what its author, Melancthon, professes. “We do not put forward any dogma,” said he, “which is not founded on the Gospel or on the teaching of the Catholic Church; we are prepared to concede everything that is necessary for the episcopal dignity; and, provided the bishops do not condemn the Gospel, we preserve all the rites that appear indifferent to us. In a word, there is no burden that we reject, if we can bear it without guilt.”2

Many will think, no doubt, that a little more independence would have been proper in this matter, and that it would have been better to have passed over the ages that have followed the times of the apostles, and have frankly put in practice the grand principle which the Reformation had proclaimed: “There is for articles of faith no other foundation than the Word of God.

Melancthon’s moderation has been admired; and, in truth, while pointing out the abuses of Rome, he was silent on what is most revolting in them, on their disgraceful origin, their scandalous consequences, and is content to show that they are in contradiction to the Scripture. But he does more, he is silent on the divine right claimed by the pope, on the number of the sacraments, and on several other points. His great business is to justify the renovated, and not to attack the deformed, Church. “Peace, peace!” was his cry. But if, instead of all this circumspection, the Reformation had advanced with courage, had wholly unveiled the Word of God, and had made an energetic appeal to the sympathies of reform then, spread in men’s hearts, would it not have taken

a stronger and more honourable position, and would it not have secured more extensive conquests? The interest that Charles the Fifth showed in listening to the Confession seems doubtful. According to some, he endeavoured to understand that foreign language; according to others, he fell asleep.2 It is easy to reconcile these contradictory testimonies. When the reading was finished, Chancellor Bruck, with the two copies in his hand, advanced towards the emperor's secretary and presented them to him. Charles the Fifth, who was wide awake at this moment, himself took the two Confessions, handed the German copy, considered as official, to the Elector of Mentz, and kept the Latin one for himself. He then made reply to the Elector of Saxony and to his allies, that he had graciously heard their Confession;4 but as this affair was one of extreme importance, he required time to deliberate upon it. The joy with which the Protestants were filled shone in their eyes. God had been with them; and they saw that the striking act which had so recently been accomplished imposed on them the obligation of confessing the truth with immovable perseverance. "I am overjoyed," wrote Luther, "that I have lived until this hour, in which Christ has been publicly exalted by such illustrious confessors and in so glorious an assembly."6 The whole evangelical church, excited and renovated by this public confession of its representatives, was then more intimately united to its Divine Chief, and baptised with a new baptism. "Since the apostolic age," said they (these are the words of a contemporary), "there has never been a greater work or a more magnificent confession." The emperor, having descended from his throne, approached the Protestant princes, and begged them in a low tone not to publish the Confession; they acceded to his request, and every one withdrew.

CHAPTER VIII

Effect on the Romanists—Luther demands religious Liberty—His dominant Idea—Song of Triumph—Ingenuous Confessions—Hopes of the Protestants—Failure of the Popish Intrigues—The Emperor's Council—Violent Discussions—A Refutation proposed—Its Authors—Rome and the Civil Power—Perils of the Confessors—Melancthon's Minimum—The Emperor's Sister—Melancthon's Fall—Luther opposes Concession—The Legate repels Melancthon—The Pope's Decision—Question—Melancthon's School-matters—Answer. The Romanists had expected nothing like this. Instead of a hateful controversy, they had heard a striking confession of Jesus Christ; the most hostile minds were consequently disarmed. "We would not for a great deal," was the remark on every side, "have missed being present at this reading." The effect was so prompt, that for an instant the cause was thought to be definitely gained. The bishops themselves imposed silence on the sophisms and clamours of the Fabers and the Ecks.2 "All that the Lutherans have said is true," exclaimed the Bishop of Augsburg; "we cannot deny it."—"Well, doctor," said the Duke of Bavaria to Eck, in a reproachful tone, "you had given me a very different idea of this doctrine and of this affair."4 This was the general cry; accordingly the sophists, as they called them, were embarrassed. "But, after all," said the Duke of Bavaria to them, "can you refute by sound reasons the Confession made by the elector and his allies?"—"With the writings of the apostles and prophets—no!" replied Eck; "but with those of the Fathers and of the councils—yes!" "I understand," quickly replied the duke; "I understand. The Lutherans, according to you, are in Scripture; and we are outside." The Archbishop Hermann, elector of Cologne, the Count-palatine Frederick, Duke Erick of Brunswick-Luneburg, Duke Henry of Mecklenburg, and the Dukes of Pomerania, were gained over to the truth; and Hermann sought erelong to establish it in his electorate. The impression produced in other countries by the

Confession was perhaps still greater. Charles sent copies to all the courts; it was translated into French, Italian, and even into Spanish and Portuguese; it circulated through all Europe, and thus accomplished what Luther had said: “Our Confession will penetrate into every court, and the sound thereof will spread through the whole earth.” It destroyed the prejudicies that had been entertained, gave Europe a sounder idea of the Reformation, and prepared the most distant countries to receive the seeds of the Gospel.

Then Luther’s voice began to be heard again. He saw that it was a decisive moment, and that he ought now to give the impulse that would gain religious liberty. He boldly demanded this liberty of the Roman-catholic princes of the diet; and at the same time endeavoured to make his friends quit Augsburg. Jesus Christ had been boldly confessed. Instead of that long series of quarrels and discussions which was about to become connected with this courageous act, Luther would have wished for a striking rupture, even should he seal with his blood the testimony rendered to the Gospel. The stake, in his idea, would have been the real catastrophe of this tragedy. “I absolve you from this diet, in the name of the Lord,”3 wrote he to his friends. “Now home, return home, again I say home! Would to God that I were the sacrifice offered to this new council, as John Huss at Constance!” But Luther did not expect so glorious a conclusion: he compared the diet to a drama. First, there had been the exposition, then the prologue, afterwards the action, and now he waited for the tragic catastrophe, according to some, but which in his opinion, would be merely comic.5 Every thing, he thought, would be sacrificed to political peace, and dogmas would be set aside. This proceeding, which, even in our own days, would be in the eyes of the world the height of wisdom, was in Luther’s eyes the height of folly.

He was especially alarmed at the thought of Charles’s intervention. To withdraw the Church from all secular influence, and the governments from all clerical influence, was then one of the dominant ideas of the great reformer. “You see,” wrote he to Melancthon, “that they oppose to our cause the same argument as at Worms, to wit, still and for ever the judgment of the emperor. Thus Satan is always harping on the same string, and that emaciated strength of the civil power is the only one which this myriad-wiled spirit is able to find against Jesus Christ.” But Luther took courage, and boldly raised his head. “Christ is coming,” continued he; “he is coming, sitting at the right hand…. Of whom? not of the emperor, or we should long ago have been lost, but of God himself: let us fear nothing. Christ is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. If he loses this title at Augsburg, he must also lose it in all the earth, and in all the heavens.”

Thus a song of triumph was, on the part of the confessors of Augsburg, the first movement that followed this courageous act, unique doubtless in the annals of the Church. Some of their adversaries at first shared in their triumph, and the others were silent; but a powerful reaction took place erelong. On the following morning, Charles having risen in ill-humour and tired for want of sleep, the first of his ministers who appeared in the imperial apartments was the count-palatine, as wearied and embarrassed as his master. “We must yield something,” said he to Charles; “and I would remind your majesty that the Emperor Maximilian was willing to grant the two kinds in the Eucharist, the marriage of priests, and liberty with respect to the fasts.” Charles the Fifth eagerly seized at this proposition as a means of safety. But Granvelle and Campeggio soon arrived, who induced him to withdraw it.

Rome, bewildered for a moment by the blow that had struck her, rose up again with energy. “I stay with the mother,” exclaimed the bishop of Wartzburg, meaning by it the Church of Rome; “the mother, the mother!” “My lord,” wittily replied Brentz, “pray, do not, for the mother, forget either the Father or the Son!”—“Well! I grant it,” replied the Archbishop of Salzburg to one of his friends, “I also should desire the communion in both kinds, the marriage of priests, the reformation of the mass, and liberty as regards food and other traditions.… But that it should be a monk, a poor monk, who presumes to reform us all, is what we cannot tolerate.”—“I should have no objection,” said another bishop, “for Divine Worship to be celebrated everywhere as it is at Wittemberg; but we can never consent that this new doctrine should issue from such a corner.3 And Melancthon, insisting with the Archbishop of Salzburg on the necessity of a reform of the clergy: “Well! and how can you wish to reform us?” said the latter abruptly: “we priests have always been good for nothing.” This is one of the most ingenuous confessions that the Reformation has torn from the priests. Every day fanatical monks and doctors, brimful of sophisms, were seen arriving at Augsburg, who endeavoured to inflame the hatred of the emperor and of the princes. “If we formerly had friends,” said Melancthon on the morrow of the Confession, “now we possess them no longer. We are here alone, abandoned by all, and contending against measureless dangers.”2

Charles, impelled by these contrary parties, affected a great indifference. But without permitting it to be seen, he endeavoured, meanwhile, to examine this affair thoroughly. “Let there not a word be wanting,” he had said to his secretary, when requiring from him a French translation of the Confession. “He does not allow anything to be observed,” whispered the Protestants one to another, convinced that Charles was gained; “for if it were known, he would lose his Spanish states: let us maintain the most profound secrecy.” But the emperor’s courtiers, who perceived these strange hopes, smiled and shook their heads. “If you have money,” said Schepper, one of the secretaries of state, to Jonas and Melancthon, “it will be easy for you to buy from the Italians whatever religion you please; but if your purse is empty, your cause is lost.” Then assuming a more serious tone: “It is impossible,” said he, “for the emperor, surrounded as he is by bishops and cardinals, to approve of any other religion than that of the pope.” This was soon evident. On the day after the Confession (Sunday, 26th June), before the breakfast hour, all the deputations from the imperial cities were collected in the emperor’s antechamber. Charles, desirous of bringing back the states of the empire to unity, began with the weakest. “Some of the cities,” said the count-palatine, “have not adhered to the last Diet of Spires: the emperor calls upon them to submit to it.”

Strasburg, Nuremberg, Constance, Ulm, Reutlingen, Heilbronn, Memmingen, Lindau, Kempten, Windsheim, Isny, and Weissemburg, which were thus summoned to renounce the famous protest, thought the moment curiously chosen. They asked for time. The position was complicated: discord had been thrown in the midst of the cities, and intrigue was labouring daily to increase it. It was not only between the popish and the evangelical cities that disagreement existed; but also between the Zwinglian and the Lutheran cities, and even among the latter, those which had not adhered to the Confession of Augsburg manifested great ill-humour towards the deputies of Reutlingen and Nuremberg. This proceeding of Charles the Fifth was therefore skilfully calculated; for it was based on the old axiom, Divide et impera. But the enthusiasm of faith overcame all these stratagems, and on the next day (27th June), the deputies from the cities transmitted a reply to the emperor, in which they declared that they could not adhere to the Recess of Spires “without disobeying God,

and without compromising the salvation of their souls."

Charles, who desired to observe a just medium, more from policy than from equity, wavered between so many contrary convictions. Desirous nevertheless of essaying his meditating influence, he convoked the states faithful to Rome, on Sunday, 26th June, shortly after his conference with the cities.

All the princes were present: even the pope's legate and the most influential Roman divines appeared at this council, to the great scandal of the Protestants. "What reply should be made to the Confession?" was the question set by Charles the Fifth to the senate that surrounded him.

Three different opinions were proposed. "Let us beware," said the men of the papacy, "of discussing our adversaries' reasons, and let us be content with executing the edict of Worms against the Lutherans, and with constraining them by arms."—"Let us submit the Confession to the examination of impartial judges," said the men of the empire, "and refer the final decision to the emperor. Is not even the reading of the Confession an appeal of the Protestants to the imperial power?" Others, in the last place (and these were the men of tradition and of ecclesiastical doctrine), were desirous of commissioning certain doctors to compose a refutation, which should be read to the Protestants and ratified by Charles. The debate was very animated; the mild and the violent, the politic and the fanatical, took a decided course in the assembly. George of Saxony and Joachim of Brandenburg showed themselves the most inveterate, and surpassed in this respect even the ecclesiastical princes. "A certain clown, whom you know well, is pushing them all from behind,"2 wrote Melancthon to Luther; "and certain hypocritical theologians hold the torch and lead the whole band." This clown was doubtless Duke George. Even the princes of Bavaria, whom the Confession had staggered at first, immediately rallied round the chiefs of the Roman party. The Elector of Mentz, the Bishop of Augsburg, the Duke of Brunswick, showed themselves the least unfavourable to the evangelical cause. "I can by no means advise his majesty to employ force," said Albert. "If his majesty should constrain their consciences, and should afterwards quit the empire, the first victims sacrificed would be the priests; and who knows whether, in the midst of these discords, the Turks would not suddenly fall upon us?" But this somewhat interested wisdom of the archbishop did not find many supporters, and the men of war immediately plunged into the discussion with their harsh voices. "If there is any fighting against the Lutherans," said Count Felix of Werdenburg, "I gratuitously offer my sword, and I swear never to return it to its scabbard until it has overthrown the stronghold of Luther." This nobleman died suddenly a few days after, from the consequences of his intemperance. Then the moderate men again interfered: "The Lutherans attack no one article of the faith," said the Bishop of Augsburg; let us come to an arrangement with them; and to obtain peace, let us concede to them the sacrament in both kinds and the marriage of priests. I would even yield more, if it were necessary." Upon this loud cries arose: "He is a Lutheran," they exclaimed, "and you will see that he is fully prepared to sacrifice even the private masses!"—"The masses! we must not even think of it," remarked some with an ironical smile; "Rome will never give them up, for it is they which maintain her cardinals and her courtiers, with their luxury and their kitchens." The Archbishop of Salzburg and the Elector of Brandenburg replied with great violence to the motion of the Bishop of Augsburg. "The Lutherans," said they abruptly, "have laid before us a Confession written with black ink on white paper. Well: if I were emperor, I would answer them with red ink.—"Sirs," quickly replied the Bishop of Augsburg, "take care then that the red letters do not fly in your faces!" The Elector of Mentz was compelled to

interfere and calm the speakers. The emperor, desirous of playing the character of an umpire, would have wished the Roman party at least to have placed in his hands an act of accusation against the Reform: but all was now altered; the majority, becoming daily more compact since the diet of Spires, no longer sided with Charles. Full of the sentiment of their own strength, they refused to assume the title of a party, and to take the emperor as a judge. “What are you saying,” cried they, “of diversity between the members of the empire? There is but one legitimate party. It is not a question of deciding between two opinions whose rights are equal, but of crushing rebels, and of aiding those who have remained faithful to the constitution of the empire.” This haughty language enlightened Charles: he found they had outstripped him, and that, abandoning his lofty position of arbiter, he must submit merely to be the executer of the orders of the majority. It was this majority which henceforward commanded in Augsburg. They excluded the imperial councillors who advocated more equitable views, and the Archbishop of Mentz himself ceased for a time to appear in the diet. The majority ordered that a refutation of the Evangelical doctrine should be immediately drawn up by Romish theologians. If they had selected for this purpose moderate men like the Bishop of Augsburg, the Reformation would still have had some chance of success with the great principles of Christianity; but it was to the enemies of the Reform, to the old champions of Rome and of Aristotle, exasperated by so many defeats, that they resolved to intrust this task.

They were numerous at Augsburg, and not held in very great esteem. “The princes,” said Jonas, “have brought their learned men with them, and some even their unlearned and their fools.” Provost Faber and Doctor Eck led the troop; behind them was drawn up a cohort of monks, and above all of Dominicans, tools of the Inquisition, and impatient to recompense themselves for the opprobrium they had so long endured. There was the provincial of the Dominicans, Paul Hugo, their vicar John Bourkard, one of their priors Conrad Koelein, who had written against Luther’s marriage; with a number of Carthusians, Augustines, Franciscans, and the vicars of several bishops. Such were the men who, to the number of twenty, were commissioned to refute Melancthon.

One might beforehand have augured of the work by the workmen. Each one understood that it was a question, not of refuting the Confession, but of branding it. Campeggio, who doubtless suggested this ill-omened list to Charles, was well aware that these doctors were incapable of measuring themselves with Melancthon; but their names formed the most decided standard of popery, and announced to the world clearly and immediately what the diet proposed to do. This was the essential point. Rome would not leave Christendom even hope.

It was, however, requisite to know whether the diet, and the emperor who was its organ, had the right of pronouncing in this purely religious matter. Charles put the question both to the Evangelicals and to the Romanists.

“Your highness,” said Luther, who was consulted by the elector, “may reply with all assurance: “Yes, if the emperor wish it, let him be judge! I will bear everything on his part; but let him decide nothing contrary to the Word of God. Your highness cannot put the emperor above God himself. Does not the first commandment say, Thou shalt have no other Gods before me? The reply of the papal adherents was quite as positive in a contrary sense. “We think,” said they, “that his majesty, in accord with the electors, princes, and states of the empire, has the right to proceed in this affair, as Roman Emperor, guardian, advocate, and sovereign protector of the Church and of our most

holy faith." Thus, in the first days of the Reformation, the Evangelical Church frankly ranged itself under the throne of Jesus Christ, and the Roman Church under the sceptre of kings. Enlightened men, even among Protestants, have misunderstood this double nature of Protestantism and Popery. The philosophy of Aristotle and the hierarchy of Rome, thanks to this alliance with the civil power, were at length about to see the day of their long-expected triumph arrive. So long as the schoolmen had been left to the force of their syllogisms and of their abuse, they had been defeated; but now Charles the Fifth and the diet held out their hands to them; the reasonings of Faber, Eck, and Wimpina were about to be countersigned by the German chancellor, and confirmed by the great seals of the empire. Who could resist them? The Romish error has never had any strength except by its union with the secular arm; and its victories in the Old and in the New World are owing, even in our days, to state patronage.

These things did not escape the piercing eye of Luther. He saw at once the weakness of the argument of the papist doctors and the power of Charles's arm. "You are waiting for your adversaries' answer," wrote he to his friends in Augsburg; "it is already written, and here it is: The Fathers, the Fathers, the Fathers; the Church, the Church, the Church; usage, custom; but of the Scriptures—nothing!"—"Then the emperor, supported by the testimony of these arbiters, will pronounce against you;3 and then will you hear boastings from all sides that will ascend up to heaven, and threats that will descend even to hell."

Thus changed the situation of the Reform. Charles was obliged to acknowledge his weakness: and, to save the appearance of his power, he took a decisive part with the enemies of Luther. The emperor's impartiality disappeared: the state turned against the Gospel, and there remained for it no other saviour than God. At first many gave way to extreme dejection: above all, Melancthon, who had a nearer view of the cabals of the adversaries, exhausted moreover by long vigils, fell almost into despair. "In the presence of these formidable evils," cried he, "I see no more hope."5 And then, however, he added—"Except the help of God." The legate immediately set all his batteries to work. Already had Charles several times sent for the elector and the landgrave, and had used every exertion to detach them from the Evangelical Confession. Melancthon, uneasy at these secret conferences, reduced the Confession to its minimum, and entreated the elector to demand only the two kinds in the Eucharist and the marriage of priests. "To interdict the former of these points," said he, "would be to alienate a great number of Christians from the communion; and to forbid the second would be depriving the Church of all the pastors capable of edifying it. Will they destroy religion and kindle civil war, rather than apply to these purely ecclesiastical constitutions a mitigation that is neither contrary to sound morals nor to faith?" The protestant princes begged Melancthon to go himself and make these proposals to the legate.2

Melancthon agreed: he began to flatter himself with success; and, in truth, there were, even among the papists, individuals who were favourable to the Reformation. There had recently arrived at Augsburg, from beyond the Alps, certain propositions tolerably Lutheran, and one of the emperor's confessors boldly professed the doctrine of justification by faith, cursing "those asses of Germans," said he, "who are incessantly braying against this truth."4 One of Charles's chaplains approved even the whole of the confession. There was something farther still: Charles the Fifth having consulted the grandees of Spain, who were famous for their orthodoxy: "If the opinions of the Protestants are contrary to the articles of the faith," they had replied, let your Majesty employ all his power to destroy this faction; but if it is a question merely of certain changes in human

ordinances and external usages, let all violence be avoided." "Admirable reply!" exclaimed Melancthon, who persuaded himself that the Romish doctrine was at the bottom in accordance with the Gospel. The Reformation found defenders in even still higher stations. Mary, sister of Charles the Fifth, and widow of King Louis of Hungary, arriving at Augsburg three days after the reading of the Confession, with her sister-in-law the Queen of Bohemia, Ferdinand's wife, assiduously studied the Holy Scriptures; she carried them with her to the hunting parties, in which she found little pleasure, and had discovered therein the jewel of the Reform,—the doctrine of gratuitous salvation. This pious princess made her chaplain read evangelical sermons to her, and often endeavoured, although with prudence, to appease her brother Charles with regard to the Protestants.

Melancthon, encouraged by these demonstrations, and at the same time alarmed by the threats of war that the adversaries did not cease from uttering, thought it his duty to purchase peace at any cost, and resolved in consequence to descend in his propositions as low as possible. He therefore demanded an interview with the legate in a letter whose authenticity has been unreasonably doubted. At the decisive moment the heart of the reform champion fails,—his head turns—he staggers—he falls; and in his fall he runs the risk of dragging with him the cause which martyrs have already watered with their blood.

Thus speaks the representative of the Reformation to the representative of the papacy:—

"There is no doctrine in which we differ from the Roman Church; we venerate the universal authority of the Roman Pontiff, and we are ready to obey him, provided he does not reject us, and that of his clemency, which he is accustomed to show towards all nations, he will kindly pardon or approve certain little things that it is no longer possible for us to change.… Now then, will you reject those who appear as suppliants before you? Will you pursue them with fire and sword?… Alas! nothing draws upon us in Germany so much hatred, as the unshaken firmness with which we maintain the doctrines of the Roman Church.3 But with the aid of God, we will remain faithful, even unto death, to Christ and to the Roman Church, although you should reject us.

Thus did Melancthon humble himself. God permitted this fall, that future ages might clearly see how low the Reformation was willing to descend in order to maintain unity, and that no one might doubt that the schism had come from Rome; but also, assuredly, that they might learn how great, in every important work, is the weakness of the noblest instruments.

Fortunately there was then another man who upheld the honour of the Reformation. At this very time Luther wrote to Melancthon: "There can be no concord between Christ and Belial. As far as regards me, I will not yield a hair's breadth. Sooner than yield, I should prefer suffering everything, even the most terrible evils. Concede so much the less, as your adversaries require the more. God will not aid us until we are abandoned by all."6 And fearing some weakness on the part of his friends, Luther added: "If it were not tempting God, you would long ago have seen me at your side!"

Never, in fact, had Luther's presence been so necessary, for the legate had consented to an interview, and Melancthon was about to pay court to Campeggio. The 8th of July was the day appointed by the legate. His letter inspired Philip with the most sanguine hopes. "The cardinal assures me that he will accede the usage of the two kinds, and the marriage of priests," said he; "I

am eager to visit him!" This visit might decide the destiny of the Church. If the legate accepted Philip's ultimatum, the evangelical countries would be replaced under the power of the Romish bishops, and all would have been over with the Reformation; but it was saved through the pride and blindness of Rome. The Papists believing it on the brink of the abyss, thought that a last blow would settle it, and resolved, like Luther, to concede nothing, "not even a hair's breadth." The legate, however, even while refusing, assumed an air of kindness, and of yielding to foreign influence. "I might have the power of making certain concessions, but it would not be prudent to use it without the consent of the German princes; their will must be done; one of them in particular conjures the emperor to prevent us from yielding the least thing. I can grant nothing." The Roman prince, with the most amiable smile, then did all he could to gain the chief of the protestant teachers. Melancthon retired filled with shame at the advances he had made, but still deceived by Campeggio. "No doubt," said he, "Eck and Cochlœus have been beforehand with me at the legate's."3 Luther entertained a different opinion. "I do not trust to any of these Italians," said he; "they are scoundrels. When an Italian is good, he is very good; but then he is a black swan."

It was truly the Italians who were concerned. Shortly after the 12th of July arrived the pope's instructions. He had received the Confession by express, and sixteen days had sufficed for the transmission, the deliberation, and the return. Clement would hear no mention either of discussions or of council. Charles was to march straight to the mark, to send an army into Germany, and stifle the Reformation by force. At Augsburg, however, it was thought best not to go so quickly to work, and recourse was had to other means.

"Be quiet; we have them, said the Romish doctors. Sensible of the reproach that had been made against them, of having misrepresented the Reformation, they accused the Protestants themselves of being the cause. "These it is," they said, "who to give themselves an air of being in accord with us, now dissemble their heresy; but we will catch them in their own nets. If they confess to not having inserted in their Confession all that they reject, it will be proved that they are trifling with us. If, on the contrary, they pretend to have said everything, they will by that very circumstance be compelled to admit all that they have not condemned." The protestant princes were therefore called together, and they were asked if the Reformation was confined to the doctrines indicated in the Apology, or if there was something more. The snare was skilfully laid. The papacy had not even been mentioned in Melancthon's Confession; other errors besides had heen omitted, and Luther himself complained of it aloud. "Satan sees clearly," said he, "that your Apology has passed lightly over the articles of purgatory, the worship of saints, and, above all, of the Pope and of Antichrist." The princes requested to confer with their allies of the towns; and all the Protestants assembled to deliberate on this momentous incident.

They looked for Melancthon's explanation, who did not decline the responsibility of the affair. Easily dejected through his own anxiety, he became bold whenever he was directly attacked. "All the essential doctrines," said be, "have been set forth in the Confession, and every error and abuse that is opposed to them has been pointed out. But was it necessary to plunge into all those questions so full of contention and animosity, that are discussed in our universities? Was it necessary to ask if all Christians are priests, if the primacy of the pope is of right divine, if there can be indulgences, if every good work is a deadly sin, if there are more than seven sacraments, if they may be administered by a layman, if divine election has any foundation in our own merits, if sacerdotal consecration impresses an indelible character, if auricular confession is necessary to

salvation?… No, no! all these things are in the province of the schools, and by no means essential to faith."

It cannot be denied that in the questions thus pointed out by Melancthon there were important points. However that may be, the evangelical committee were soon agreed, and on the morrow they gave an answer to Charles's ministers, drawn up with as much frankness as firmness, in which they said "that the Protestants, desirous of arriving at a cordial understanding, had not wished to complicate their situation, and had proposed not to specify all the errors that had been introduced into the Church, but to confess all the doctrines that were essential to salvation; that if, nevertheless, the adverse party felt itself urged to maintain certain abuses, or to put forward any point not mentioned in the Confession, the Protestants declared themselves ready to reply in conformity with the Word of God." The tone of this answer showed pretty clearly that the evangelical Christians did not fear to follow their adversaries wherever the latter should call them. Accordingly the Roman party said no more on this business.

CHAPTER IX The Refutation—Charles's Dissatisfaction—Interview with the Princes—The Swiss at Augsburg—Tetrapolitan Confession—Zwingle's Confession—Afflicting Divisions—The Elector's Faith—His Peace—The Lion's Skin—The Refutation—One Concession—Scripture and the Hierarchy—Imperial Commands—Interview between Melancthon and Campeggio—Policy of Charles—Stormy Meeting—Resolutions of the Consistory—Prayers of the Church—Two Miracles—The Emperor's Menace—The Princes' Courage—The Mask—Negotiations—The Spectres at Spires—Tumult in Augsburg The commission charged to refute the Confession met twice a-day, and each of the theologians who composed it added to it his refutations and his hatred. On the 13th July the work was finished. "Eck with his band," said Melancthon, "transmitted it to the emperor." Great was the astonishment of this prince and of his ministers at seeing a work of two hundred and eighty pages filled with abuse.4 "Bad workmen waste much wood," said Luther, "and impious writers soil much paper." This was not all: to the Refutation were subjoined eight appendices on the heresies that Melancthon had dissembled (as they said), and wherein they exposed the contradictions and "the horrible sects" to which Lutheranism had given birth. Lastly, not confining themselves to this official answer, the Romish theologians, who saw the sun of power shining upon them, filled Augsburg with insolent and abusive pamphlets.

There was but one opinion on the Papist Refutation; it was found confused, violent, thirsting for blood. Charles the Fifth had too much good taste not to perceive the difference that existed between this coarse work and the noble dignity of Melancthon's Confession. He rolled, handled, crushed, and so damaged the two hundred and eighty pages of his doctors, that when he returned them two days after, says Spalatin, there were not more than twelve entire. Charles would have been ashamed to have such a pamphlet read in the diet, and he required, in consequence, that it should be drawn up anew, shorter and in more moderate language.2 That was not easy, "for the adversaries, confused and stupified," says Brentz, "by the noble simplicity of the evangelical Confession, neither knew where to begin nor where to end; they accordingly took nearly three weeks to do their work over again."

Charles and his ministers had great doubts of its success; leaving, therefore, the theologians for a moment, they imagined another manœuvre. "Let us take each of the protestant princes separately," said they: "isolated, they will not resist." Accordingly, on the 15th July, the Margrave of

Brandenburg was visited by his two cousins, the Electors of Mentz and of Brandenburg, and by his two brothers the Margraves Frederick and John Albert. “Abandon this new faith,” said they to him, “and return to that which existed a century ago. If you do so, there are no favours that you may not expect from the emperor; if not, dread his anger.”

Shortly after, the Duke Frederick of Bavaria, the Count of Nassau, De Rogendorf, and Truchses, were announced to the Elector on the part of Charles. “You have solicited the emperor,” said they, “to confirm the marriage of your son with the Princess of Juliers, and to invest you with the electoral dignity; but his majesty declares, that if you do not renounce the heresy of Luther, of which you are the principal abettor, he cannot accede to your demand.” At the same time the Duke of Bavaria, employing the most urgent solicitations, accompanied with the most animated gestures and the most sinister threats,6 called upon the elector to abandon his faith.” “It is asserted,” added Charles’s envoys, “that you have made an alliance with the Swiss. The emperor cannot believe it; and he orders you to let him know the truth.” The Swiss! it was the same thing as rebellion. This alliance was the phantom incessantly invoked at Augsburg to alarm Charles the Fifth. And in reality deputies or at least friends of the Swiss, had already appeared in that city, and thus rendered the position still more serious.

Bucer had arrived two days before the reading of the Confession, and Capito on the day subsequent to it. There was even a report that Zwingle would join them.2 But for a long time all in Augsburg, except the Strasburg deputation, were ignorant of the presence of these doctors. It was only twenty-one days after their arrival that Melancthon learnt it positively,4 so great was the mystery in which the Zwinglians were forced to enshroud themselves. This was not without reason; a conference with Melancthon having been requested by them: “Let them write,” replied he; “I should compromise our cause by an interview with them.”

Bucer and Capito in their retreat, which was like a prison to them, had taken advantage of their leisure to draw up the Tetrapolitan Confession, or the confession of the four cities. The deputies of Strasburg, Constance, Memmingen, and Lindau, presented it to the emperor. These cities purged themselves from the reproach of war and revolt that had been continually objected against them. They declared that their only motive was Christ’s glory, and professed the truth “freely, boldly, but without insolence and without scurrility.”6

Zwingle about the same time caused a private confession to be communicated to Charles, which excited a general uproar. “Does he not dare to say,” exclaimed the Romanists, “that the mitred and withered race (by which he means the bishops) is in the Church what hump-backs and the scrofula are in the body?”—“Does he not insinuate,” said the Lutherans; “that we are beginning to look back after the onions and garlic of Egypt?”—“One might say with great truth that he had lost his senses,” exclaimed Melancthon. “All ceremonies, according to him, ought to be abolished; all the bishops ought to be suppressed. In a word, all is perfectly Helvetic, that is to say, supremely barbarous.”

One man formed an exception to this concert of reproaches, and this was Luther. “Zwingle pleases me tolerably,” wrote he to Jonas, “as well as Bucer.” By Bucer, he meant no doubt the Tetrapolitan Confession: this expression should be noted.

Thus three Confessions, laid at the feet of Charles the Fifth, attested the divisions that were rending Protestantism. In vain did Bucer and Capito endeavour to come to an understanding with Melancthon, and write to him: “We will meet where you will, and when you will; we will bring Sturm alone with us, and if you desire it, we will not even bring him.” all was unavailing. It is not enough for a Christian to confess Christ; one disciple should confess another disciple, even if the latter lies under the shame of the world; but they did not then comprehend this duty. “Schism is in the schism,” said the Romanists, and the emperor flattered himself with an easy victory. “Return to the Church,” was the cry from every side, “which means,” interrupted the Strasburgers, “let us put the bit in your mouths, that we may lead you as we please.”4

All these things deeply afflicted the elector, who was besides still under the burden of Charles’s demands and threats. The emperor had not once spoken to him, and it was everywhere said that his cousin George of Saxony would be proclaimed elector in his stead. On the 28th July, there was a great festival at the court. Charles, robed in his imperial garments, whose value was said to exceed 200,000 gold ducats, and displaying an air of majesty which impressed respect and fear, conferred on many princes the investiture of their dignities; the elector alone was excluded from these favours. Erelong he was made to understand more plainly what was reserved for him, and it was insinuated, that if he did not submit, the emperor would expel him from his states, and inflict upon him the severest punishment.”7 The elector turned pale, for he doubted not that such would certainly be the termination. How with his small territory could he resist that powerful monarch who had just vanquished France and Italy, and now saw Germany at his feet? And besides, if he could do it, had he the right? Frightful nightmares pursued John in his dreams. He beheld himself stretched beneath an immense mountain under which he lay painfully struggling, while his cousin George of Saxony stood on the summit and seemed to brave him.

John at length came forth from this furnace. “I must either renounce God or the world,” said he. “Well! my choice is not doubtful. It is God who made me elector,—me, who was not worthy of it. I fling myself into his arms, and let him do with me what shall seem good to him.” Thus the elector by faith stopped the mouths of lions and subdued kingdoms.”

All evangelical Christendom had taken part in the struggle of John the Persevering. It was seen that if he should now fall, all would fall with him; and they endeavoured to support him. “Fear not,” cried the Christians of Magdeburg, “for your highness is under Christ’s banner.” “Italy is in expectation,” wrote they from Venice; “if for Christ’s glory you must die, fear nothing.”3 But it was from a higher source that John’s courage was derived. “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,” said his Master. The elector, in like manner, beheld in his dreams George fall from the top of the mountain, and lie dashed in pieces at his feet.

Once resolved to lose every thing, John, free, happy, and tranquil, assembled his theologians. These generous men desired to save their master. “Gracious lord,” said Spalatin, “recollect that the Word of God, being the sword of the Spirit, must be upheld, not by the secular power, but by the hand of the Almighty.”—“Yes!” said all the doctors, “we do not wish that, to save us, you should risk your children, your subjects, your states, your crown.… We will rather give ourselves into the hands of the enemy, and conjure him to be satisfied with our blood.”6 John, touched by this language, refused, however, their solicitations, and firmly repeated these words, which had become his device: “I also desire to confess my Saviour.”

It was on the 20th July that he replied to the pressing arguments by which Charles had endeavoured to shake him. He proved to the emperor that, being his brother's legitimate heir, he could not refuse him the investiture, which, besides, the Diet of Worms had secured to him. He added, that he did not blindly believe what his doctors said, but that, having recognised the Word of God to be the foundation of their teaching, he confessed anew, and without any hesitation, all the articles of the Apology. "I therefore entreat your majesty," continued he, "to permit me and mine to render an account to God alone of what concerns the salvation of our souls." The Margrave of Brandenburg made the same reply. Thus failed this skilful manœuvre, by which the Romanists had hoped to break the strength of the Reformation.

Six weeks had elapsed since the Confession, and as yet there was no reply. "The Papists, from the moment they heard the Apology," it was said, "suddenly lost their voice." At length the Romish theologians handed their revised and corrected performance to the emperor, and persuaded this prince to present it in his own name. The mantle of the state seemed to them admirably adapted to the movements of Rome. "These sycophants," said Melancthon, "have desired to clothe themselves with the lion's skin, to appear to us so much the more terrible."3 All the states of the empire were convoked for the next day but one. On Wednesday, 3d August, at two o'clock in the afternoon, the emperor, sitting on his throne in the chapel of the Palatinate Palace, attended by his brother, with the electors, princes, and deputies, the elector of Saxony and his allies were introduced, and the count-palatine, who was called "Charles's mouth-piece," said to them: "His majesty having handed your Confession to several doctors of different nations, illustrious by their knowledge, their morals, and their impartiality, has read their reply with the greatest care, and submits it to you as his own."

Alexander Schweiss then took the papers and read the Refutation. The Roman party approved some articles of the Confession, condemned others, and in certain less salient passages, it distinguished between what must be rejected and what accepted.

It gave way on an important point; the opus operatum. The Protestants having said in their 13th Article that faith was necessary in the sacrament, the Romish party assented to it; thus abandoning an error which the papacy had so earnestly defended against Luther in that very city of Augsburg, by the mouth of Cajetan.

Moreover, they recognised as truly christian the evangelical doctrine on the Trinity, on Christ, on baptism, on eternal punishment, and on the origin of evil. But on all the other points, Charles, his princes, and his theologians, declared themselves immovable. They maintained that men are born with the fear of God, that good works are meritorious, and that they justify in union with faith. They upheld the seven sacraments, the mass, transubstantiation, the withdrawal of the cup, the celibacy of priests, the invocation of saints, and denied that the Church was an assembly of the saints. This Refutation was skilful in some respects, and, above all, in what concerned the doctrine of works and of faith. But on other points, in particular on the withdrawal of the cup and the celibacy of priests, its arguments were lamentably weak, and contrary to the well known facts of history.

While the Protestants had taken their stand on the Scriptures, their adversaries supported the divine origin of the hierarchy, and laid down absolute submission to its laws. Thus, the essential character, which still distinguishes Rome from the Reformation, stood prominently forth in this first combat.

Among the auditors who filled the chapel of the Palatinate Palace, concealed in the midst of the deputies of Nuremberg, was Joachim Camerarius, who, while Schweiss was reading, leant over his tablets, and carefully noted down all he could collect. At the same time others of the Protestants, speaking to one another, were indignant, and even laughed, as one of their opponents assures us. “Really,” said they with one consent, “the whole of this Refutation is worthy of Eck, Faber, and Cochlœus!” As for Charles, little pleased with these theological dissertations, he slept during the reading; but he awoke when Schweiss had finished, and his awakening was that of a lion. The count-palatine then declared that his majesty found the articles of this Refutation orthodox, catholic, and conformable to the Gospel; that he therefore required the Protestants to abandon their Confession, now refuted, and to adhere to all the articles which had just been set forth; that, if they refused, the emperor would remember his office, and would know how to show himself the advocate and defender of the Roman Church. This language was clear enough: the adversaries imagined they had refuted the Protestants by commanding the latter to consider themselves beaten. Violence—arms—war—were all contained in these cruel words of Charles’s minister. The princes represented that, as the Refutation adopted some of their articles, and rejected others, it required a careful examination, and they consequently begged a copy should he given them. The Romish party had a long conference on this demand: night was at hand; the count-palatine replied that, considering the late hour and the importance of this affair, the emperor would make known his pleasure somewhat later. The diet separated, and Charles the Fifth, exasperated at the audacity of the evangelical princes, says Cochlœus, returned in ill humour to his apartments. The Protestants, on the contrary, withdrew full of peace; the reading of the Refutation having given them as much confidence as that of the Confession itself. They saw in their adversaries a strong attachment to the hierarchy, but a great ignorance of the Gospel—a characteristic feature of the Romish party; and this thought encouraged them. “Certainly,” said they, “the Church cannot be where there is no knowledge of Christ.”5

Melancthon alone was still alarmed: he walked by sight and not by faith, and, remembering the legate’s smiles, he had another interview with him, as early as the 4th August, still demanding the cup for the laity, and lawful wives for the priests. “Then,” said he, “our pastors will place themselves again under the government of bishops, and we shall be able to prevent those innumerable sects with which posterity is threatened.” Melancthon’s glance into the future is remarkable: it does not, however, mean that he, like many others, preferred a dead unity to a living diversity.

Campeggio, now certain of triumphing by the sword, disdainfully handed this paper to Cochlœus, who hastened to refute it. It is hard to say whether Melancthon or Campeggio was the more infatuated. God did not permit an arrangement that would have enslaved his Church.

Charles passed the whole of the 4th and the morning of the 5th August in consultation with the Ultramontane party. “It will never be by discussion that we shall come to an understanding, said some; and if the Protestants do not submit voluntarily, it only remains for us to compel them.” They nevertheless decided, on account of the Refutation, to adopt a middle course. During the whole of the diet, Charles pursued a skilful policy. At first, he refused every thing, hoping to lead away the princes by violence; then he conceded a few unimportant points, under the impression that the Protestants, having lost all hope, would esteem so much the more the little he yielded to them. This was what he did again under the present circumstances. In the afternoon of the fifth, the

count-palatine announced that the emperor would give them a copy of the Refutation, but on these conditions; namely, that the Protestants should not reply, that they should speedily agree with the emperor, and that they would not print or communicate to any one the Refutation that should be confided to them. This communication excited murmurs among the Protestants. “These conditions,” said they all, “are inadmissible.”—“The Papists present us with their paper,” added the Chancellor Bruck, “as the fox offered a thin broth to his gossip the stork.” The savoury broth upon a plate by Reynard was served up, But Mistress Stork, with her long beak, she could not get a sup.

“If the Refutation,” continued he, “should come to be known without our participation (and how can we prevent it?), we shall be charged with it as a crime. Let us beware of accepting so perfidious an offer. We already possess in the notes of Camerarius several articles of this paper, and if we omit any point, no one will have the right to reproach us with it.” On the next day (6th August) the Protestants declared to the diet that they preferred declining the copy thus offered to them, and appealed to God and to his majesty. They thus rejected all that the emperor proposed to them, even what he considered as a favour.

Agitation, anger, and affright were manifested on every bench of that august assembly. This reply of the evangelicals was war—was rebellion. George of Saxony, the Princes of Bavaria, all the violent adherents of Rome, trembled with indignation; there was a sudden, an impetuous movement, an explosion of murmurs and of hatred; and it might have been feared that the two parties would have come to blows in the very presence of the emperor, if Archbishop Albert, the Elector of Brandenburg, and the Dukes of Brunswick, Pomerania, and Mecklenburg, rushing between them, had not conjured the Protestants to put an end to this deplorable combat, and not drive the emperor to extremities.2 The diet separated, their hearts filled with emotion, apprehension, and trouble.

Never had the diet proposed such fatal alternatives. The hopes of agreement, set forth in the edict of convocation, had only been a deceitful lure: now the mask was thrown aside; submission or the sword—such was the dilemma offered to the Reformation. All announced that the day of tentatives was passed, and that they were beginning one of violence. In truth, on the 6th July, the pope had assembled the consistory of cardinals in his palace at Rome, and had made known to them the protestant ultimatum; namely, the cup for the laity, the marriage of priests, the omission of the invocation of saints in the sacrifice of the mass, the use of ecclesiastical property already secularised, and for the rest, the convocation of a council. “These concessions,” said the cardinals, “are opposed to the religion, discipline, and laws of the Church. We reject them, and vote our thanks to the emperor for the zeal which he employs in bringing back the deserters.” The pope having thus decided, every attempt at conciliation became useless.

Campeggio, on his side, redoubled in zeal. He spoke as if in his person the pope himself were present at Augsburg. “Let the emperor and the right-thinking princes form a league,” said he to Charles; “and if these rebels equally insensible to threats and promises, obstinately persist in their diabolical course, then let his majesty seize fire and sword, let him take possession of all the property of the hereties, and utterly eradicate these venomous plants.5 Then let him appoint holy inquisitors, who shall go on the track of the Remnants of Reformation, and proceed against them, as in Spain against the Moors. Let him put the university of Wittemberg under ban, burn the heretical books, and send back the fugitive monks to their convents. But this plan must be

executed with courage."

Thus the jurisprudence of Rome consisted, according to a prophecy uttered against the city which is seated on seven hills, in adorning itself with pearls that it had stolen, and in becoming drunk with the blood of the saints.

While Charles was thus urged on with blind fury by the diet and the pope, the protestant princes, restrained by a mute indignation, did not open their mouths, and hence they seemed to betray a weakness of which the emperor was eager to profit. But there was also strength concealed under this weakness. "We have nothing left," exclaimed Melancthon, "but to embrace our Saviour's knees." In this they laboured earnestly. Melancthon begged for Luther's prayers; Brentz for those of his own church: a general cry of distress and of faith ran through evangelical Germany. "You shall have sheep," said Brentz, "if you will send us sheep: you know what I mean."3 The sheep that were to be offered in sacrifice were the prayers of the saints. The Church was not wanting to itself. "Assembled every day," wrote certain cities to the electors, "we beg for you strength, grace, and victory,—victory full of joy." But the man of prayer and faith was especially Luther. A calm and sublime courage, in which firmness shines at the side of joy—a courage that rises and exults in proportion as the danger increases—is what Luther's letters at this time present in every line. The most poetical images are pale beside those energetic expressions which issue in a boiling torrent from the reformer's soul. "I have recently witnessed two miracles," wrote he on the 5th August to chancellor Bruck; "this is the first. As I was at my window, I saw the stars, and the sky, and that vast and magnificent firmament in which the Lord has placed them. I could nowhere discover the columns on which the Master has supported this immense vault, and yet the heavens did not fall …

"And here is the second. I beheld thick clouds hanging above us like a vast sea. I could neither perceive ground on which they reposed, nor cords by which they were suspended; and yet they did not fall upon us, but saluted us rapidly and fled away.

"God," continued he, "will choose the manner, the time, and the place suitable for deliverance, and he will not linger. What the men of blood have begun, they have not yet finished … Our rainbow is faint … their clouds are threatening … the enemy comes against us with frightful machines … But at last it will be seen to whom belong the ballistæ, and from what hands the javelins are launched. It is no matter if Luther perishes: if Christ is conqueror, Luther is conqueror also."2 The Roman party, who did not know what was the victory of faith, imagined themselves certain of success. The doctors having refuted the Confession, the Protestants ought, they imagined, to declare themselves convinced, and all would then be restored to its ancient footing: such was the plan of the emperor's campaign. He therefore urged and called upon the Protestants; but instead of submitting, they announced a refutation of the Refutation. Upon this Charles looked at his sword, and all the princes who surrounded him did the same.

John of Saxony understood what that meant, but he remained firm. "The straight line," said he (the axiom was familiar to him), "is the shortest road." It is this indomitable firmness that has secured for him in history the name of John the Persevering. He was not alone: all those protestant princes who had grown up in the midst of courts, and who were habituated to pay an humble obedience to the emperor, at that time found in their faith a noble independence that confounded Charles the Fifth. With the design of gaining the Marquis of Brandenburg, they opened to him the possibility of

according him some possessions in Silesia on which he had claims. “If Christ is Christ,” replied he, “the doctrine that I have confessed is truth.”—“But do you know,” quickly replied his cousin the Elector Joachim, “what is your stake?”—“Certainly,” replied the margrave, “it is said I shall be expelled from this country. Well! may God protect me!” One day Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt met Doctor Eck. “Doctor,” said he, “you are exciting to war, but you will find those who will not be behindhand with you. I have broken many a lance for my friends in my time. My Lord Jesus Christ is assuredly worthy I should do as much for him.” At the sight of this resolution, each one asked himself whether Charles, instead of curing the disease was not augmenting it. Reflections, critisims, jests, passed between the citizens; and the good sense of the people manifested in its own fashion what they thought of the folly of their chief. We will adduce one instance.

It is said that one day, as the emperor was at table with several Roman-catholic princes, he was informed that some comedians begged permission (according to custom) to amuse their lordships. First appeared an old man wearing a mask, and dressed in a doctor’s robe, who advanced with difficulty carrying a bundle of sticks in his arms, some straight and some crooked. He approached the wide fireplace of the Gothic hall, threw down his load in disorder, and immediately withdrew. Charles and the courtiers read on his back the inscription—John Reuchlin. Then appeared another mask with an intelligent look, who made every exertion to pare the straight and the crooked pieces; but finding his labour useless, he shook his head, turned to the door, and disappeared. They read—Erasmus of Rotterdam. Almost immediately after advanced a monk with bright eye and decided gait, carrying a brasier of lighted coals. He put the wood in order, set fire to it, blew and stirred it up, so that the flame rose bright and sparkling into the air. He then retired, and on his back were the words—Martin Luther.

Next approached a magnificent personage, covered with all the imperial insignia, who, seeing the fire so bright, drew his sword, and endeavoured by violent thrusts to extinguish it; but the more he struck, the fiercer burnt the flames, and at last he quitted the hall in indignation. His name, as it would seem, was not made known to the spectators, but all divined it. The general attention was soon attracted by a new character. A man, wearing a surplice and a mantle of red velvet, with an alb of white wool that reached to his heels, and having a stole around his neck, the ends ornamented with pearls, advanced majestically. Beholding the flames that already filled the hearth, he wrung his hands in terror, and looked around for something to extinguish them. He saw two vessels at the very extremity of the hall, one filled with water, and the other with oil. He rushed towards them, seized unwittingly on that containing the oil, and threw it on the fire. The flame then spread with such violence that the mask fled in alarm, raising his hands to heaven; on his back was read the name of Leo X. The mystery was finished; but instead of claiming their remuneration, the pretended actors had disappeared. No one asked the moral of this drama. The lesson, however, proved useless; and the majority of the diet, assuming at the same time the part assigned to the emperor and the pope, began to prepare the means necessary for extinguishing the fire kindled by Luther. They negotiated in Italy with the Duke of Mantua, who engaged to send a few regiments of light cavalry across the Alps; and in England with Henry VIII., who had not forgotten Luther’s reply, and who promised Charles, through his ambassador, an immense subsidy to destroy the heretics.2 At the same time frightful prodigies announced the gloomy future which threatened the Reform. At Spires fearful spectres in the shape of monks with angry eyes and hasty steps, had appeared during the night. “What do you want?” they had been asked.—“We

are going," they replied, "to the Diet of Augsburg!" The circumstance had been carefully investigated, and was found perfectly trustworthy. "The interpretation is not difficult," exclaimed Melancthon: "Evil spirits are coming to Augsburg to counteract our exertions, and to destroy peace. They forebode horrible troubles to us."4 No one doubted this. "Everything is advancing towards war," said Erasmus. "The diet will not terminate," wrote Brentz, "except by the destruction of all Germany."6 "There will be a slaughter of the saints," exclaimed Bucer, "which will be such that the massacres of Diocletian will scarcely come up to it." War and blood—this was the general cry.

Suddenly, on the night of Saturday, 6th August, a great disturbance broke out in the city of Augsburg. There was running to and fro in the streets; messengers from the emperor were galloping in every direction; the senate was called together and received an order to allow no one to pass the gates of the city.9 All were afoot in the imperial barracks; the soldiers got ready their arms; the regiments were drawn up, and at daybreak (about three o'clock on Sunday morning) the emperor's troops, in opposition to the custom always observed in the diet, relieved the soldiers of the city and took possession of the gates. At the same time it was reported that these gates would not be opened, and that Charles had given orders to keep a strict watch upon the elector and his allies. A terrible awakening for those who still flattered themselves with seeing the religious debates conclude peacefully! Might not these unheared-of measures be the commencement of wars and the signal of a frightful massacre?

CHAPTER X

Philip of Hesse—Temptation—Union resisted—The Landgrave's Dissimulation—The Emperor's Order to the Protestants—Brandenburg's threatening Speeches—Resolution of Philip of Hesse—Flight from Augsburg—Discovery—Charles's Emotion—Revolution in the Diet—Metamorphosis—Unusual Moderation—Peace, Peace!

Trouble and anger prevailed in the imperial palace, and it was the landgrave who had caused them. Firm as a rock in the midst of the tempest with which he was surrounded, Philip of Hesse had never bent his head to the blast. One day, in a public assembly, addressing the bishops, he had said to them, "My lords, give peace to the empire; we beg it of you. If you will not do so, and if I must fall, be sure that I will drag one or two of you along with me." They saw it was necessary to employ milder means with him, and the emperor endeavoured to gain him by showing a favourable disposition with respect to the county of Katzenellenbogen, about which he was at variance with Nassau, and to Wurtemberg, which he claimed for his cousin Ulric. On his side Duke George of Saxony, his father-in-law, had assured him that he would make him his heir if he would submit to the pope. "They carried him to an exceeding high mountain, whence they showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof," says a chronicler, but the landgrave resisted the temptation.

One day he heard that the emperor had manifested a desire to speak to him. He leapt instantly on his horse and appeared before Charles. The latter, who had with him his secretary Schweiss and the Bishop of Constance, represented that he had four complaints against him; namely, of having violated the edict of Worms, of despising the mass, of having, during his absence, excited all kinds of revolt, and, finally, of having transmitted to him a book in which his sovereign rights were attacked. The landgrave justified himself; and the emperor said that he accepted his replies,

except with regard to the faith, and begged him to show himself in that respect entirely submissive to his majesty. “What would you say,” added Charles, in a winning tone, “if I elevated you to the regal dignity? But, if you show yourself rebellious to my orders, then I shall behave as becomes a Roman emperor.”

These words exasperated the landgrave, but they did not move him. “I am in the flower of my age,” replied he, “and I do not pretend to despise the joys of life and the favour of the great; but to the deceitful goods of this world I shall always prefer the ineffable grace of my God.” Charles was stupified; he could not understand Philip. From this time the landgrave had redoubled his exertions to unite the adherents of the Reformation. The Zwinglian cities felt that, whatever was the issue of the diet, they would be the first victims, unless the Saxons should give them their hand. But this there was some difficulty in obtaining.

“It does not appear to me useful to the public weal, or safe for the conscience,” wrote Melancthon to Bucer, “to load our princes with all the hatred your doctrine inspires.” The Strasburgers replied, that the real cause of the Papists’ hatred was not so much the doctrine of the Eucharist as that of justification by faith. “All we, who desire to belong to Christ,” said they, “are one, and have nothing to expect but death.”3 This was true; but another motive besides checked Melancthon. If all the Protestants united, they would feel their strength, and war would be inevitable. Therefore, then, no union! The landgrave, threatened by the emperor, rejected by the theologians, began to ask himself what he did at Augsburg. The cup was full. Charles’s refusal to communicate the Romish Refutation, except on inadmissible conditions, made it run over. Philip of Hesse saw but one course to take—to quit the city.

Scarcely had the emperor made known the conditions which he placed on the communication of the reply, than on Friday evening, 5th August, the landgrave, going alone to the count-palatine, Charles’s minister, had begged for an immediate audience with his majesty. Charles, who did not care to see him, pretended to be busy, and put off Philip until the following Sunday. But the latter answered that he could not wait; that his wife, who was dangerously ill, entreated him to return to Hesse without delay; and that, being one of the youngest princes, the meanest in understanding, and useless to Charles, he humbly begged his majesty would permit him to leave on the morrow. The emperor refused.

We may well understand the storms this refusal excited in Philip’s mind: but he knew how to contain himself; never had he appeared more tranquil: during the whole of Saturday (6th August), he seemed occupied only with a magnificent tourney in honour of the emperor and of his brother Ferdinand. He prepared for it publicly; his servants went to and fro, but under that din of horses and of armour, Philip concealed very different designs. “The landgrave conducts himself with very great moderation,” wrote Melancthon to Luther the same day.3 “He told me openly that, to preserve peace, he would submit to conditions still harder than those which the emperor imposes on us, and accept all that he could without dishonouring the Gospel.”

Yet Charles was not at ease. The landgrave’s demand pursued him; all the Protestants might do the same, and even quit Augsburg unexpectedly. The clue, that he had hitherto so skilfully held in his hands, was perhaps about to be broken: it was better to be violent than ridiculous. The emperor therefore resolved on striking a decisive blow. The elector, the princes, the deputies, were still in Augsburg: and he must at every risk prevent their leaving it. Such were the heavy

thoughts that on the night of the 6th August, while the Protestants were calmly sleeping, banished repose from Charles's eyes; and which made him hastily arouse the councillors of Augsburg, and send his messengers and soldiers through the streets of the city. The protestant princes were still slumbering, when they received on the part of the emperor, the unexpected order to repair immediately to the Hall of the Chapter.

It was eight o'clock when they arrived. They found there the Electors of Brandenburg and Mentz, the Dukes of Saxony, Brunswick, and Mecklenburg, the bishops of Salzburg, Spires, and Strasburg, George Truchses, the Margrave of Baden's representative, Count Martin of Œlting, the Abbot of Weingarten, and the Provost of Bamberg. These were the Commissioners nominated by Charles to terminate this great affair.

It was the most decided among them, Joachim of Brandenburg, who began to speak. "You know," said he to the Protestants, "with what mildness the emperor has endeavoured to re-establish unity. If some abuses have crept into the Christian Church, he is ready to correct them in conjunction with the pope. But how contrary to the Gospel are the sentiments you have adopted! Abandon then your errors, do not any longer remain separate from the Church, and sign the Refutation without delay. If you refuse, then through your fault how many souls will be lost, how much blood shed, what countries laid waste, what trouble in all the empire! And you," said he, turning towards the elector, "your electorate, your life, all will be torn from you, and certain ruin will fall upon your subjects, and even upon their wives and children." The elector remained motionless. At any time this language would have been alarming: it was still more so now that the city was almost in a state of siege. "We now understand," said the Protestants to one another, "why the imperial guards occupy the gates of the city." It was evident, indeed, that the emperor intended violence.3 The Protestants were unanimous: surrounded with soldiers, at the very gates of the prison, and beneath the thousand swords of Charles, they remained firm. All these threats did not make them take one step backwards. It was important for them, however, to consider their reply. They begged for a few minutes' delay, and retired. To submit voluntarily, or to be reduced by force, such was the dilemma Charles proposed to the evangelical Christians. At the moment when each was anxious about the issue of this struggle, in which the destinies of Christianity were contending, an alarming rumour suddenly raised the agitation of all minds to its height. The landgrave, in the midst of his preparations for the tournament, meditated the most serious resolution. Excluded by Charles from every important deliberation, irritated at the treatment the Protestants had undergone during this diet, convinced that they had no more chance of peace,2 not doubting that their liberty was greatly endangered in Augsburg, and feeling unable to conceal under the appearance of moderation the indignation with which his soul was filled, being besides of a quick, prompt, and resolute character, Philip had decided on quitting the city and repairing to his states, in order to act freely, and to serve as a support to the Reformation. But what mystery was required! If the landgrave was taken in the act, no doubt he would be put under arrest. This daring step might therefore become the signal of those extreme measures from which he longed to escape.

It was Saturday, the 6th August, the day for which Philip had requested the emperor's leave of absence. He waits until the commencement of the night, and then, about eight o'clock, disguised in a foreign dress, without bidding farewell to any of his friends, and taking every imaginable precaution,4 he makes for the gates of the city, about the time when they are usually closed. Five or six cavaliers follow him singly, and at a little distance. In so critical a moment will not these

men-at-arms attract attention? Philip traverses the streets without danger, approaches the gate,6 passes with a careless air through the midst of the guard, between the scattered soldiers, no one moves, all remain idly seated, as if nothing extraordinary was going on. Philip has passed without being recognised. His five or six horsemen come through in like manner. Behold them all at last in the open country. The little troop immediately spur their horses, and flee with headlong speed far from the walls of the imperial city.

Yet Philip has taken his measures so well, that no one as yet suspects his departure. When during the night Charles occupies the gates with his own guards, he thinks the landgrave still in the city. When the Protestants were assembled at eight in the morning in the Chapter-hall, the princes of both parties were a little astonished at the absence of Philip of Hesse. They were accustomed, however, to see him keep aloof, and thought he might be out of humour. No one imagined he was between twelve and fifteen leagues from Augsburg.

After the termination of the conference, and as all were returning to their hotels, the elector of Brandenburg and his friends on the one hand, elated at the speech they had delivered, the Elector of Saxony and his allies on the other, resolved to sacrifice everything, inquiries were made at the landgrave's lodgings as to the reason of his absence; they closely questioned Saltz, Nuszbicker, Mayer, and Schnepf. At last the Hessian Councillors could no longer keep the secret. "The landgrave," said they, "has returned to Hesse." This news circulated immediately through all the city, and shook it like the explosion of a mine. Charles especially, who found himself mocked and frustrated in his expectations—Charles, who had not had the least suspicion, trembled, and was enraged.2 The Protestants, whom the landgrave had not admitted to his secret, were as much astonished as the Roman Catholics themselves, and feared that this inconsiderate departure might be the immediate signal for a terrible persecution. There was only Luther, who, the moment he heard of Philip's proceeding, highly approved of it, and exclaimed: "Of a truth all these delays and indignities are enough to fatigue more than one landgrave."4 The Chancellor of Hesse gave the Elector of Saxony a letter that his master had left for him. Philip spoke in this ostensible document of his wife's health; but he had charged his ministers to inform the elector in private of the real causes of his departure. He announced, moreover, that he had given orders to his ministers to assist the Protestants in all things, and exhorted his allies to permit themselves in no manner to be turned aside from the Word of God. "As for me," said he, "I shall fight for the Word of God, at the risk of my goods, my states, my subjects, and my life." The effect of the landgrave's departure was instantaneous: a real revolution was then effected in the diet. The Elector of Mentz and the Bishops of Franconia, Philip's near neighbours, imagined they already saw him on their frontiers at the head of a powerful army, and replied to the Archbishop of Salzburg, who expressed astonishment at their alarm: "Ah! if you were in our place you would do the same." Ferdinand, knowing the intimate relations of Philip with the Duke of Wurtemberg, trembled for the estates of this prince, at that time usurped by Austria; and Charles the Fifth, undeceived with regard to those princes whom he had believed so timid, and whom he had treated with so much arrogance, had no doubt that this sudden step of Philip's had been maturely deliberated in the common council of the Protestants. All saw a declaration of war in the landgrave's hasty departure. They called to mind that at the moment when they thought the least about it, they might see him appear at the head of his soldiers, on the frontiers of his enemies, and no one was ready; no one even wished to be ready! A thunderbolt had fallen in the midst of the diet. They repeated the news to one another,

with troubled eyes and affrighted looks. All was confusion in Augsburg; and couriers bore afar, in every direction, astonishment and consternation. This alarm immediately converted the enemies of the reform. The violence of Charles and the princes was broken in this memorable night as if by enchantment; and the furious wolves were suddenly transformed into meek and docile lambs.

It was still Sunday morning: Charles the Fifth immediately convoked the diet for the afternoon. “The landgrave has quitted Augsburg,” said Count Frederick from the emperor; “his majesty flatters himself that even the friends of that prince were ignorant of his departure. It is without the emperor’s knowledge, and even in defiance of his express prohibition, that Philip of Hesse has left, thus failing in all his duties. He has wished to put the diet out of joint.3 But the emperor conjures you not to permit yourselves to be led astray by him, and to contribute rather to the happy issue of this national assembly. His majesty’s gratitude will thus be secured to you.” The Protestants replied, that the departure of the landgrave had taken place without their knowledge; that they had heard of it with pain, and that they would have dissuaded him. Nevertheless they did not doubt that this prince had solid reasons for such a step; besides he had left his councillors with full powers, and that, as for them, they were ready to do everything to conclude the diet in a becoming manner. Then, confident in their rights, and decided to resist Charles’s arbitrary acts, they continued: “It is pretended that the gates were closed on our account. We beg your majesty to revoke this order, and to prevent any similar orders being given in future.”

Never was Charles the Fifth less at ease; he had just spoken as a father, and they remind him that a few hours back he had acted like a tyrant. Some subterfuge was requisite. “It is not on your account,” replied the count-palatine, “that the emperor’s soldiers occupy the gates.… Do not believe those who tell you so.… Yesterday there was a quarrel between two soldiers, and a mob was collected.… This is why the emperor took this step. Besides, such things will not be done again without the Elector of Saxony, in his quality of marshal of the empire, being first informed of them.” An order was given immediately to re-open the gates. No exertions were now spared by the Roman party to convince the Protestants of their good will: there was an unaccustomed mildness in the language of the count-palatine and in the looks of Charles. The princes of the papal party, once so terrible, were similarly transformed. They had been hastily forced to speak out; if they desired war, they must begin it instantly. But they shrunk back at this frightful prospect. How, with the enthusiasm that animated the Protestants, take up arms against them! Were not the abuses of the Church everywhere acknowledged, and could the Roman princes be sure of their own subjects? Besides, what would be the issue of a war but the increase of the emperor’s power? The Roman-catholic states, and the Duke of Bavaria in particular, would have been glad to see Charles at war with the Protestants, in the hope that he would thus consume his strength; but it was, on the contrary, with their own soldiers that the emperor designed attacking the heretics. Henceforth they rejected the instrumentality of arms as eagerly as they had at first desired it.

Everything had thus changed in Augsburg: the Romish party was paralyzed, disheartened, and even broken up. The sword already drawn was hastily thrust back in the sheath. Peace! peace! was the cry of all.

CHAPTER XI The Mixed Commission—The Three Points—Romish Dissimulation—Abuses—Concessions—The Main Question—Bishops and Pope conceded—Danger of Concession—Opposition to the pretended Concord—Luther’s opposing

Letters—The Word above the Church—Melancthon's Blindness—Papist Infatuation—A new Commission—Be Men and not Women—The Two Phantoms—Concessions—The Three Points—The great Antithesis—Failure of Conciliation—The Gordion Knot—A Council granted—Charles's Summons—Menaces—Altercations—Peace or War—Romanism concedes—Protestantism resists—Luther recalls his Friends. The diet now entered upon its third phasis, and as the time of tentatives had been followed by that of menaces; now that of arrangements was to succeed the period of threatenings. New and more formidable dangers were then to be encountered by the Reformation. Rome, beholding the sword torn from its grasp, had seized the net, and enlacing her adversaries with "cords of humanity and bands of love," was endeavouring to drag them gently into the abyss. At eight o'clock in the morning of the 16th August, a mixed commission was framed, which counted on each side two princes, two lawyers, and three theologians. In the Romish party, there were Duke Henry of Brunswick, the Bishop of Augsburg, the Chancellors of Baden and Cologne, with Eck, Cochlœus, and Wimpina; on the part of the Protestants, were the Margrave George of Brandenburg, the Prince Electoral of Saxony, the Chancellors Bruck and Heller, with Melancthon, Brentz, and Schnepf.

They agreed to take as basis the Confession of the evangelical states, and began to read it article by article. The Romish theologians displayed an unexpected condescension. Out of twenty-one dogmatical articles, there were only six or seven to which they made any objection. Original Sin stopped them some time; at length they came to an understanding; the Protestants admitted that Baptism removed the guilt of the sin, and the Papists agreed that it did not wash away concupiscence. As for the Church, they granted that it contained sanctified men and sinners; they coincided also on Confession. The Protestants rejected especially as impossible the enumeration of all the sins prescribed by Rome. Dr. Eck yielded this point.

There remained three doctrines only on which they differed, The first was that of Penance. The Romish doctors taught that it contained three parts: contrition, confession, and satisfaction. The Protestants rejected the latter, and the Romanists clearly perceiving that with satisfaction would fall indulgences, purgatory, and other of their doctrines and profits, vigorously maintained it. "We agree," said they, "that the penance imposed by the priest does not procure remission of the guilt of sin: but we maintain that it is necessary to obtain remission of the penalty." The second controverted point was the Invocation of Saints; and the third, and principal one, Justification by Faith. It was of the greatest importance for the Romanists to maintain the meritorious influence of works: all their system in reality was based on that. Eck therefore haughtily declared war on the assertion that faith alone justifies. "That word sole," said he, "we cannot tolerate. It generates scandals, and renders men brutal and impious. Let us send back the sole to the cobbler." But the Protestants would not listen to such reasoning; and even when they put the question to each other, Shall we maintain that faith alone justifies us gratuitously? "Undoubtedly, undoubtedly," exclaimed one of them with exaggeration, "gratuitously and uselessly." They even adduced strange authorities: "Plato," said they, "declares that it is not by external works, but by virtue that God is to be adored; and every one knows these verses of Cato's:

Si deus est animus, nobis ut carmina dicunt, Hic tibi præcipue pura sit mente colendus."

"Certainly," resumed the Romish theologians: "it is only of works performed with grace that we speak; but we say that in such works there is something meritorious." The Protestants declared

they could not grant it.

They had approximated however beyond all hope. The Roman theologians, clearly understanding their position, had purposed to appear agreed rather than be so in reality. Every one knew, for instance, that the Protestants rejected transubstantiation: but the article of the Confession on this point, being able to be taken in the Romish sense, the Papists bad admitted it. Their triumph was only deferred. The general expressions that were used on the controverted points, would permit somewhat later a Romish interpretation to be given to the Confession; ecclesiastical authority would declare this the only true one; and Rome, thanks to a few moments of dissimulation, would thus reascend the throne. Have we not seen in our days the Thirty-nine Articles of the Anglican Church interpreted in accordance with the Council of Trent? There are causes in which falsehood is never awanting. This plot was as skilfully executed as it was profoundly conceived. The commissioners were on the best terms with one another and concord seemed restored. One single uneasiness disturbed that happy moment: the idea of the landgrave: “Ignorant that we are almost agreed,” said they, “this young madbrain is doubtless already assembling his army; we must bring him back, and make him a witness of our cordial union.” On the morning of the 13th, one of the members of the Commission (Duke Henry of Brunswick), accompanied by a councillor of the emperor, set out to discharge this difficult mission. Duke George of Saxony supplied his place as arbitrator.

They now passed from the first part of the Confession to the second: from doctrines to abuses. Here the Romish theologians could not yield so easily, for if they appeared to agree with the Protestants, it was all over with the honour and power of the hierarchy. It was accordingly for this period of the combat that they had reserved their cunning and their strength.

They began by approaching the Protestants as near as they could, for the more they granted, the more they might draw the Reform to them and stifle it. “We think,” said they, “that with the permission of his holiness, and the approbation of his majesty, we shall be able to permit, until the next council, the communion in both kinds, wherever it is practised already; only, your ministers should preach at Easter, that it is not of divine institution, and that Christ is wholly in each kind.

Moreover, as for the married priests,” continued they, “desirous of sparing the poor women whom they have seduced, of providing for the maintenance of their innocent children, and of preventing every kind of scandal, we will tolerate them until the next council, and we shall then see if it will not be right to decree that married men may be admitted to holy orders, as was the case in the primitive Church for many centuries.

“Finally, we acknowledge that the sacrifice of the mass is a mystery, a representation, a sacrifice of commemoration, a memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ, accomplished on the cross.” This was yielding much: but the turn of the Protestants was come; for if Rome appeared to give, it was only to take in return. The grand question was the Church, its maintenance and government: who should provide for it? They could see only two means: princes or bishops. If they feared the bishops, they must decide for the princes: if they feared the princes, they must decide for the bishops. They were at that time too distant from the normal state to discover a third solution, and to perceive that the Church ought to be maintained by the Church itself—by the christian people. “Secular princes in the long run will be defaulters to the government of the Church,” said the Saxon divines in the opinion they presented on the 18th August; “they are not fit to execute it, and

besides it would cost them too dear: the bishops, on the contrary, have property destined to provide for this charge."

Thus the presumed incapacity of the state, and the fear they entertained of its indifference, threw the Protestants into the arms of the hierarchy.

They proposed, therefore, to restore to the bishops their jurisdiction, the maintenance of discipline, and the superintendence of the priests, provided they did not persecute the evangelical doctrine, or oppress the pastors with impious vows and burdens. "We may not," added they, "without strong reasons, rend that order by which bishops are over priests, and which existed in the Church from the beginning. It is dangerous before the Lord to change the order of governments." Their argument is not founded upon the Bible, as may be seen, but upon ecclesiastical history. The Protestant divines went even farther, and, taking a last step that seemed decisive, they consented to acknowledge the pope as being (but of human right) supreme bishop of Christendom. "Although the pope is Antichrist, we may be under his government, as the Jews were under Pharaoh, and in later days under Caiaphas." We must confess these two comparisons were not flattering to the pope. "Only," added the doctors, "let sound doctrine be fully accorded to us." The Chancellor Bruck alone appears to have been conscious of the truth: he wrote on the margin with a firm hand: "We cannot acknowledge the pope, because we say he is Antichrist, and because he claims the primacy by divine right."

Finally, the Protestant theologians consented to agree with Rome as regards indifferent ceremonies, fasts, and forms of worship; and the elector engaged to put under sequestration the ecclesiastical property already secularized, until the decision of the next council.

Never was the conservative spirit of Lutheranism more clearly manifested. "We have promised our adversaries to concede to them certain points of church government, that may be granted without wounding the conscience," wrote Melancthon. But it began to be very doubtful whether ecclesiastical concessions would not drag with them doctrinal concessions also. The Reform was drifting away … still a few more fathoms, and it would be lost. Already disunion, trouble, and affright were spreading among its ranks. "Melancthon has become more childish than a child," said one of his friends;3 and yet he was so excited, that the Chancellor of Luneburg having made some objections to these unprecedented concessions, the little master of arts proudly raised his head, and said with a sharp, harsh tone of voice: "He who dares assert that the means indicated are not christian is a liar and a scoundrel." On which the chancellor immediately repaid him in his own coin. These expressions cannot, however, detract from Melancthon's reputation for mildness. After so many useless efforts, he was exhausted, irritated, and his words cut the deeper, as they were the less expected from him. He was not the only one demoralized. Brentz appeared clumsy, rude, and uncivil; Chancellor Keller had misled the pious Margrave of Brandenburg, and transformed the courage of this prince into pusillanimity: no other human support remained to the elector than his chancellor Bruck. And even this firm man began to grow alarmed at his isolation. But he was not alone: the most earnest protests were received from without. "If it is true that you are making such concessions," said their affrighted friends to the Saxon divines, "christian liberty is at an end. What is your pretended concord? a thick cloud that you raise in the air to eclipse the sun that was beginning to illuminate the Church. Never will the christian people accept conditions so opposed to the Word of God; and your only gain will be the furnishing the enemies of the Gospel with a

specious pretext to butcher those who remain faithful to it." Among the laymen these convictions were general. "Better die with Jesus Christ," said all Augsburg,2 "than gain the favour of the whole world without him!" No one felt so much alarm as Luther when he saw the glorious edifice that God had raised by his hands on the point of falling to ruin in those of Melancthon. The day on which this news arrived, he wrote five letters,—to the elector, to Melancthon, to Spalatin, to Jonas, and to Brentz, all equally filled with courage and with faith.

"I learn," said he, "that you have begun a marvellous work, namely, to reconcile Luther and the pope; but the pope will not be reconciled, and Luther begs to be excused. And if, in despite of them, you succeed in this affair, then after your example I will bring together Christ and Belial.

"The world I know is full of wranglers who obscure the doctrine of justification by faith, and of fanatics who persecute it. Do not be astonished at it, but continue to defend it with courage, for it is the heel of the seed of the woman that shall bruise the head of the serpent.

"Beware also of the jurisdiction of the bishops, for fear we should soon have to recommence a more terrible struggle than the first. They will take our concessions widely, very widely, always more widely, and will give us theirs narrowly, very narrowly, and always more narrowly. All these negotiations are impossible, unless the pope should renounce his papacy.

"A pretty motive indeed our adversaries assign! They cannot say they restrain their subjects, if we do not publish everywhere that they have the truth on their side: as if God only taught his Word, that our enemies might at pleasure tyrannize over their people.

"They cry out that we condemn all the Church. No, we do not condemn it; but as for them, they condemn all the Word of God, and the Word of God is more than the Church." This important declaration of the reformers decides the controversy between the evangelical Christians and the Papacy: unfortunately we have often seen Protestants return, on this fundamental point to the error of Rome, and set the visible Church above the Word of God.

"I write to you now," continues Luther, "to believe with all of us (and that through obedience to Jesus Christ), that Campeggio is a famous demon. I cannot tell how violently I am agitated by the conditions which you propose. The plan of Campeggio and the pope has been to try us first by threats, and then, if these do not succeed, by stratagems; you have triumphed over the first attack, and sustained the terrible coming of Cæsar: now, then, for the second. Act with courage, and yield nothing to the adversaries, except what can be proved with evidence from the very Word of God.

"But if, which Christ forbid! you do not put forth all the Gospel; if, on the contrary, you shut up that glorious eagle in a sack; Luther—doubt it not!—Luther will come and gloriously deliver the eagle. As certainly as Christ lives, that shall be done!"

Thus spoke Luther, but in vain; everything in Augsburg was tending towards approaching ruin; Melancthon had a bandage over his eyes that nothing could tear of. He no longer listened to Luther, and cared not for popularity. "It does not become us," said he, "to be moved by the clamours of the vulgar: we must think of peace and of posterity. If we repeal the episcopal jurisdiction, what will be the consequence to our descendants? The secular powers care nothing about the interests of religion.4 Besides, too much dissimilarity in the churches is injurious to peace: we must unite with the bishops, lest the infamy of schism should overwhelm us for ever."

The evangelicals too readily listened to Melancthon, and vigorously laboured to bind to the papacy by the bonds of the hierarchy that Church which God had so wonderfully emancipated. Protestantism rushed blindfold into the nets of its enemies. Already serious voices announced the return of the Lutherans into the bosom of the Romish Church. “They are preparing their defection, and are passing over to the Papists,” said Zwingle. The politic Charles the Fifth acted in such a manner, that no haughty word should compromise the victory; but the Roman clergy could not master themselves: their pride and insolence increased every day. “One would never believe,” said Melancthon, “the airs of triumph which the Papists give themselves.” There was good reason! the agreement was on the verge of conclusion: yet one or two steps … and then, woe to the Reformation! Who could prevent this desolating ruin? It was Luther who pronounced the name towards which all eyes should be turned: “Christ lives,” said he, “and He by whom the violence of our enemies has been conquered will give us strength to surmount their wiles.” This, which was in truth the only resource, did not disappoint the Reformation.

If the Roman hierarchy had been willing, under certain admissible conditions, to receive the Protestants who were ready to capitulate, all would have been over with them. When once it held them in its arms, it would have stifled them; but God blinded the Papacy, and thus saved his Church. “No concessions,” had declared the Romish senate; and Campeggio, elated with his victory, repeated, “No concessions!” He moved heaven and earth to inflame the Catholic zeal of Charles in this decisive moment. From the emperor he passed to the princes, “Celibacy, confession, the withdrawal of the cup, private masses!” exclaimed he: “all these are obligatory: we must have all.” This was saying to the evangelical Christians, as the Samnites to the ancient Romans: “Here are the Candine Forks; pass through them!” The Protestants saw the yoke, and shuddered. God revived the courage of confessors in their weakened hearts. They raised their heads, and rejected this humiliating capitulation. The commission was immediately dissolved. This was a great deliverance but soon appeared a fresh danger. The evangelical Christians ought immediately to have quitted Augsburg; but, said one of them, “Satan, disguised as an angel of light, blinded the eyes of their understanding.” They remained.

All was not yet lost for Rome, and the spirit of falsehood and of cunning might again renew its attacks.

It was believed at court that this disagreeable termination of the commission was to be ascribed to some wrong-headed individuals, and particularly to Duke George. They therefore resolved to name another, composed of six members only: on the one side Eck, with the Chancellors of Cologne and Baden; on the other, Melancthon, with the Chancellors Bruck and Heller. The Protestants consented, and all was begun anew. The alarm then increased among the most decided followers of the Reformation. “If we expose ourselves unceasingly to new dangers, must we not succumb at last?” The deputies of Nuremberg in particular declared that their city would never place itself again under the detested yoke of the bishops. “It is the advice of the undecided Erasmus that Melancthon follows,” said they. “Say rather of Ahithophel” (2 Samuel 15:1-37), replied others. “However it may be,” added they; “if the pope had bought Melancthon, the latter could had done nothing better to secure the victory for him.” The landgrave was especially indignant at this cowardice, “Melancthon,” wrote he to Zwingle, “walks backwards like a crab.” From Friedwald, whither he had repaired after his flight from Augsburg, Philip of Hesse endeavoured to check the fall of Protestantism. “When we begin to yield, we always yield more,”

wrote he to his ministers at Augsburg. “Declare therefore to my allies that I reject these perfidious conciliations. If we are Christians, what we should pursue is, not our own advantage, but the consolation of so many weary and afflicted consciences, for whom there is no salvation if we take away the Word of God. The bishops are not real bishops for they speak not according to the Holy Scriptures. If we acknowledge them, what would follow? They would remove our ministers, silence the Gospel, re-establish ancient abuses, and the last state would be worse than the first. If the Papists will permit the free preaching of the pure Gospel, let us come to an understanding with them; for the truth will be the strongest, and will root out all the rest. But if not!—No. This is not the moment to yield, but to remain firm even unto death. Baffle these fearful combinations of Melancthon, and tell the deputies of the cities, from me, to be men, and not women.4 Let us fear nothing: God is with us.”

Melancthon and his friends, thus attacked, sought to justify themselves: on the one hand, they maintained, that if they preserved the doctrine it would finally overthrow the hierarchy. But then why restore it? Was it not more than doubtful whether a doctrine so enfeebled would still retain strength sufficient to shake the Papacy? On the other hand, Melancthon and his friends pointed out two phantoms before which they shrunk in affright. The first was war, which, in their opinion, was imminent. “It will not only,” said they, “bring numberless temporal evils with it,—the devastation of Germany, murder, violation, sacrilege, rapine; but it will produce spiritual evils more frightful still, and inevitably bring on the perturbation of all religion.” The second phantom was the supremacy of the state. Melancthon and his friends foresaw the dependence to which the princes would reduce the Church, the increasing secularization of its institutions and of its instruments, the spiritual death that would result, and shrank back with terror from the frightful prospect. “Good men do not think that the court should regulate the ministry of the Church,”2 said Brentz. “Have you not yourselves experienced,” added he ironically, “with what wisdom and mildness these boors (’tis thus I denominate the officials and prefects of the princes) treat the ministers of the Church, and the Church itself. Rather die seven times!”—“I see,” exclaimed Melancthon, “what a Church we shall have if the ecclesiastical government is abolished. I discover in the future a tyranny far more intolerable than that which has existed to this day.” Then, bowed down by the accusations that poured upon him from every side, the unhappy Philip exclaimed: “if it is I who have aroused this tempest, I pray his majesty to throw me, like Jonas, into the sea, and to drag me out only to give me up to torture and to the stake.”4

If the Romish episcopacy were once recognised, all seemed easy. In the Commission of Six, they conceded the cup to the laity, marriage to the pastors, and the article of prayer to saints appeared of little importance. But they stopped at three doctrines which the evangelicals could not yield. The first was the necssity of human satisfaction for the remission of the penalties of sin; the second, the idea of something meritorious in every good work; the third, the utility of private masses. “Ah!” quickly replied Campeggio to Charles the Fifth, “I would rather be cut in pieces than concede anything about masses.”

What!” replied the politicians, “when you agree on all the great doctrines of salvation, will you for ever rend the unity of the Church for three such trivial articles? Let the theologians make a last effort, and we shall see the two parties unite, and Rome embrace Wittemberg.”

It was not so: under these three points was concealed a whole system. On the Roman side, they entertained the idea that certain works gain the Divine favour, independently of the disposition of him who performs them, and by virtue of the will of the Church. On the evangelical side, on the contrary, they felt a conviction that these external ordinances were mere human traditions, and that the only thing which procured man the Divine favour was the work that God accomplished by Christ on the cross; while the only thing that put him in possession of this favour was the work of regeneration that Christ accomplishes by his Spirit in the heart of the sinner. The Romanists, by maintaining their three articles, said: The Church saves," which is the essential doctrine of Rome; the evangelicals, by rejecting them, said: "Jesus Christ alone saves," which is Christianity itself. This is the great antithesis which then existed, and which still separates the two Churches. With these three points, which placed souls under her dependence, Rome justly expected to recover everything; and she showed by her perseverance that she understood her position. But the evangelicals were not disposed to abandon theirs. The Christian principle was maintained against the ecclesiastical principle which aspired to swallow it up: Jesus Christ stood firm in presence of the Church, and it was seen that henceforward all conferences were superfluous.

Time pressed: for two months and a half Charles the Fifth had been labouring in Augsburg, and his pride suffered because four or five theologians checked the triumphal progress of the conqueror of Pavia. "What!" said they to him, "a few days sufficed to overthrow the king of France and the pope, and you cannot succeed with these gospellers!" They determined on breaking off the conferences. Eck, irritated because neither stratagem nor terror had been effectual, could not master himself in the presence of the Protestants. "Ah!" exclaimed he, at the moment of separation, "why did not the emperor, when he entered Germany, make a general inquest about the Lutherans? He would then have heard arrogant answers, witnessed monsters of heresy, and his zeal suddenly taking fire, would have led him to destroy all this faction. But now Bruck's mild language and Melancthon's concessions prevent him from getting so angry as the cause requires." Eck said these words with a smile; but they expressed all his thoughts. The colloquy terminated on the 30th August. The Romish states made their report to the emperor. They were face to face, three steps only from each other, without either side being able to approach nearer, even by a hair's breadth.

Thus, then, Melancthon had failed; and his enormous concessions were found useless. From a false love of peace, he had set his heart on an impossibility. Melancthon was at the bottom of a really christian soul. God preserved him from his great weakness, and broke the clue that was about to lead him to destruction. Nothing could have been more fortunate for the Reformation than Melancthon's failure; but nothing could, at the same time, have been more fortunate for himself. His friends saw that though he was willing to yield much, he could not go so far as to yield to Christ himself, and his defeat justified him in the eyes of the Protestants. The Elector of Saxony and the Margrave of Brandenburg sent to beg Charles's leave to depart. The latter refused at first rather rudely, but at last he began to conjure the princes not to create by their departure new obstacles to the arrangements they soon hoped to be able to conclude. We shall see what was the nature of these arrangements. The Romanists appeared to redouble their exertions. If they now let the clue slip, it is lost for ever: they laboured accordingly to reunite the two ends. These were conferences in the gardens, conferences in the churches, at St. George's, at St. Maurice's, between the Duke of Brunswick and John Frederick the elector's son, the Chancellors of Baden and of Saxony, the

Chancellor of Liege and Melancthon; but all these attempts were unavailing. It was to other means they were going to have recourse.

Charles the Fifth had resolved to take the affair in hand, and to cut the Gordian knot, which neither doctors nor princes could untie. Irritated at seeing his advances spurned and his authority compromised, he thought that the moment was come for drawing the sword. On the 4th September, the members of the Roman party, who were still endeavouring to gain over the Protestants, whispered these frightful intentions in Melancthon's cars. "We scarcely dare mention it," said they: "the sword is already in the emperor's hands, and certain people exasperate him more and more. He is not easily enraged, but once angry, it is impossible to quiet him."

Charles had reason to appear exacting and terrible. He had at length obtained from Rome an unexpected concession—a council. Clement VII. had laid the emperor's request before a congregation: "How will men who reject the ancient councils submit to a new one?" they had replied. Clement himself had no wish for an assembly, which he dreaded alike on account of his birth and conduct. However, his promises at the Castle of St. Angelo and at Bologna rendered it impossible for him to give a decided refusal. He answered, therefore, that "the remedy would be worse than the disease;3 but that if the emperor, who was so good a Catholic, judged a council absolutely necessary, he would consent to it, under the express condition, however, that the Protestants should submit in the meanwhile to the doctrines and rites of the Church." Then as the place of meeting he appointed Rome!

Scarcely had news of this concession spread abroad, than the fear of a Reformation froze the papal court. The public charges of the Papacy, which were altogether venal, immediately fell, says a cardinal, and were offered at the lowest price, without even being able to find purchasers.5 The Papacy was compromised; its merchandise was endangered; and the price current immediately declined on the Roman exchange. On Wednesday, 7th September, at two in the afternoon, the protestant princes and deputies having been introduced into the chamber of Charles the Fifth, the count-palatine said to them, "that the emperor, considering their small number, had not expected they would uphold new sects against the ancient usages of the Universal Church; that, nevertheless, being desirous of appearing to the last full of kindness, he would require of his holiness the convocation of a council; but that in the meanwhile they should return immediately into the bosom of the Catholic Church, and restore everything to its ancient footing." The Protestants replied on the morrow, the 8th September, that they had not stirred up new sects contrary to the Holy Scriptures; that, quite the reverse, if they had not agreed with their adversaries, it was because they had desired to remain faithful to the Word of God; that, by convoking in Germany a general, free, and christian council, it would only be doing what preceding diets had promised; but that nothing should compel them to re-establish in their churches an order of things opposed to the commandments of God."

It was eight in the evening when, after a long deliberation, the Protestants were again called in. "His majesty," said George Truchses to them, "is equally astonished, both that the catholic members of the commissions have accorded so much, and that the protestant members have refused everything. What is your party in the presence of his imperial majesty, of his papal holiness, of the electors, princes, estates of the empire, and other kings, rulers, and potentates of Christendom? It is but just that the minority should yield to the majority. Do you desire the means

of conciliation to be protracted, or do you persist in your answer? Speak frankly; for if you persist, the emperor will immediately see to the defence of the Church. To-morrow at one o'clock you will bring your final decision."

Never had such threatening words issued from Charles's mouth. It was evident he wished to subdue the Protestants by terror; but this end was not attained. They replied the next day but one—a day more having been accorded them—that new attempts at conciliation would only fatigue the emperor and the diet; that they only required regulations to maintain political peace until the assembling of the council. "Enough," replied the redoubtable emperor; "I will reflect upon it; but in the mean time let no one quit Augsburg."

Charles the Fifth was embarrassed in a labyrinth from which he knew not how to escape. The State had resolved to interfere with the Church, and saw itself compelled to have immediate recourse to its ultima ratio—the sword. Charles did not desire war, and yet how could he now avoid it? If he did not execute his threats, his dignity was compromised, and his authority rendered contemptible. He sought an outlet on one side or the other, but could find none. It therefore only remained for him to close his eyes, and rush forward heedless of the consequences. These thoughts disturbed him: these cares preyed upon him; he was utterly confounded.

It was now that the elector scut to beg Charles would not be offended if he left Augsburg. "Let him await my answer," abruptly replied the emperor: and the elector having rejoined that he would send his ministers to explain his motives to his majesty: "Not so many speeches," resumed Charles, with irritation; "let the elector say whether he will stay or not!" A rumour of the altercation between these two powerful princes having spread abroad, the alarm became universal; it was thought war would break out immediately, and there was a great disturbance in Augsburg. It was evening: men were running to and fro; they rushed into the hotels of the princes and of the protestant deputies, and addressed them with the severest reproaches. "His imperial majesty," said they, "is about to have recourse to the most energetic measures!" They even declared that hostilities had begun: it was whispered that the commander of Horneck (Walter of Kronberg), elected by the emperor grand-master of the Teutonic order, was about to enter Prussia with an army, and dispossess Duke Albert, converted by Luther.3 Two nights successively the same tumult was repeated. They shouted, they quarrelled, they fought, particularly in and before the mansions of the princes: the war was nearly commencing in Augsburg. At that crisis (12th September), John Frederick, prince-electoral of Saxony, quitted the city. On the same day, or on the morrow, Jerome Wehe, chancellor of Baden, and Count Truchses on the one side; Chancellor Bruck and Melancthon on the other, met at six in the morning in the church of St. Maurice.

Charles, notwithstanding his threats, could not decide on employing force. He might no doubt by a single word to his Spanish bands or to his German lansquenets have seized on these inflexible men, and treated them like Moors. But how could Charles, a Netherlander, a Spaniard, who had been ten years absent from the empire, dare, without raising all Germany, offer violence to the favourites of the nation? Would not the Roman-catholic princes themselves see in this act an infringement of their privileges? War was unseasonable. "Lutheranism is extending already from the Baltic to the Alps," wrote Erasmus to the legate: "You have but one thing to do: tolerate it." The negotiation begun in the church of St. Maurice was continued between the Margrave of Brandenburg and Count Truchses. The Roman party only sought to save appearances, and did

not hesitate, besides, to sacrifice everything. If asked merely for a few theatrical decorations—that the mass should be celebrated in the sacerdotal garment, with chanting, reading, ceremonies, and its two canons. All the rest was referred to the next council; and the Protestants, till then, should conduct themselves so as to render account to God, to the council, and to his Majesty. But on the side of the Protestants the wind had also changed. Now they no longer desired peace with Rome: the scales had at last fallen from their eyes, and they discovered with affright the abyss into which they had so nearly plunged. Jonas, Spalatin, and even Melancthon were agreed. “We have hitherto obeyed the commandment of St. Paul, Be at peace with all men,” said they; “now we must obey this commandment of Christ, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. On the side of our adversaries is nothing but cunning and perfidy, and their only aim is to stifle our doctrine, which is truth itself. They hope to save the abominable articles of purgatory, indulgences, and the Papacy, because we have passed them by in silence.3 Let us beware of betraying Christ and his Word in order to please Antichrist and the devil.”

Luther at the same time redoubled his entreaties to withdraw his friends from Augsburg. “Return, return,” cried he to them; “return, even if it must be so, cursed by the pope and the emperor. You have confessed Jesus Christ, offered peace, obeyed Charles, supported insults, and endured blasphemies. I will canonize you, I, as faithful members of Jesus Christ. You have done enough, and more than enough: now it is for the Lord to act, and he will act! They have our Confession, they have the Gospel; let them receive it, if they will; and if they will not, let them go—. If a war should come, let it come! We have prayed enough; we have discussed enough. The Lord is preparing our adversaries as the victim for the sacrifice; he will destroy their magnificence, and deliver his people. Yes! he will preserve us even from Babylon, and from her burning walls.”

CHAPTER XII The Elector’s Preparatives and Indignation—Recess of Augsburg—Irritating language—Apology of the Confession—Intimidation—Final Interview—Messages of Peace—Exasperation of the Papists—Restoration of Popery—Tumult in the Church—Union of the Churches—The Pope and the Emperor—Close of the Diet—Armaments—Attack on Geneva—Joy of the Evangelicals—Establishment of Protestantism.

Thus Luther gave the signal of departure. They replied to the reformer’s appeal, and all prepared to quit Augsburg on Saturday, 17th September. At ten at night, Duke Ernest of Luneburg assembled the deputies of Nuremberg and the ministers of the landgrave in his hotel, and announced to them that the elector was determined to leave the next morning, without informing any one, and that he would accompany him. “Keep the secret,” said he to them, “and know that if peace cannot be preserved, it will be a trifling matter for me to lose, combating with you, all that God has given me.” The elector’s preparations betrayed his intentions. In the middle of the night Duke Henry of Brunswick arrived hastily at his hotel, beseeching him to wait; and towards morning Counts Truchses and Mansfeldt announced that, on the morrow between seven and eight, the emperor would give him his congé. On Monday, 19th September, the elector purposing to leave Augsburg immediately after his audience with Charles, breakfasted at seven o’clock, then sent off his baggage and his cooks, and ordered his officers to be ready at ten o’clock. At the moment when John quitted the hotel to wait upon the emperor, all the members of his household were drawn up on each side booted and spurred; but, having been introduced to Charles, he was requested to wait two, four, or six days longer. As soon as the elector was alone with his allies, his indignation burst forth, and he even became violent. “This new delay will end in nothing,” he said;

“I am resolved to set out, happen what may. It seems to me, from the manner in which things are arranged, that I have now completely the air of a prisoner.” The Margrave of Brandenburg begged him to be calm. “I shall go,” the elector still replied. At last he yielded, and having appeared again before Charles the Fifth, he said, “I will wait until Friday next; and, if nothing is done by that time, I shall leave forthwith.”

Great was the anxiety of the Protestants during these four days of expectation. Most of them doubted not that, by acceding to Charles’s prayers, they had delivered themselves into the hands of their enemies. “The emperor is deliberating whether he ought to hang us or let us live,” wrote Brentz. Fresh negotiations of Truchses were without success.2

All that now remained for the emperor was to draw up, in common with the Romish states, the recess of the diet. This was done; and that the Protestants might not complain of its having been prepared without their knowledge, he assembled them in his palace on Thursday, 22d September, the day previous to that fixed for the elector’s departure, and had his project read to them by the count-palatine. This project was insult and war. The emperor granted to the elector, the five princes, and the six cities, a delay of six months, until the 15th April next year, to come to an arrangement with the Church, the Pope, the Emperor, and all the princes and monarchs of Christendom. This was clearly announcing to them that the Romanists were very willing to delay until the usual period for bringing armies into the field. Nor was this all: the delay was granted only on the express condition that the Protestants should immediately join the emperor in reducing the Anabaptists, and all those who opposed the holy sacrament, by which were meant the Zwinglian cities. He wished by this means to tie the hands of the Protestants, and prevent the two families of the Reformation from uniting during the winter.

Finally, the Protestants were forbidden to make any innovations, to print or sell anything on the objects of faith, or to draw any one whatever to their sect, “since the Confession had been soundly refuted by the Holy Scriptures.” Thus the Reformation was officially proclaimed a sect, and a sect contrary to the Word of God.

Nothing was more calculated to displease the friends of the Gospel, who remained in Charles’s presence astonished, alarmed, and indignant. This had been foreseen; and, at the moment when the Protestants were about to enter the emperor’s chamber, Truchses and Wehe, making signs to them, mysteriously slipped a paper into their hands, containing a promise that if, on the 15th April, the Protestants required a prolongation of the delay, their request would certainly be granted. But Bruck, to whom the paper was given, was not deceived, “A subtle ambuscade,” said he; “a masterpiece of knavery! God will save his own, and will not permit them to fall into the snare.”2 This trick, in fact, served only still more to increase the courage of the Protestants.

Bruck, without discussing the recess in a political point of view, confined himself to what was principally at stake, the Word of God. “We maintain,” said he, “that our Confession is so based on the holy Word of God, that it is impossible to refute it. We consider it as the very truth of God, and we hope by it to stand one day before the judgment seat of the Lord.” He then announced that the Protestants had refuted the Refutation of the Romish theologians, and holding in his hand the famous Apology of the Confession of Augsburg written by Melancthon, he stepped forward, and offered it to Charles the Fifth. The count-palatine took it, and the emperor was already stretching out his hand, when Ferdinand having whispered a few words, he beckoned to the count, who

immediately returned the Apology to Dr. Bruck. This paper, and the “Commonplaces,” are the reformer’s masterpieces. The embarrassed emperor told the Protestants to come again at eight the next morning.

Charles the Fifth, resolving to employ every means to get his decree accepted, began by entreaties; and scarcely was the Margrave of Brandenburg seated to take his evening repast, when Truchses and Wehe appeared before him, using every kind of discourse and argument, but without success. The next day (Friday, 23d September), the evangelical princes and the deputies of the cities assembled at five in the morning at the margrave’s hotel, where the recess was again read in the presence of Truchses and Wehe, Chancellor Bruck assigning seven reasons for its rejection. “I undertake,” said Wehe, “to translate the recess into German in such a manner that you can accept it. As for the word sect, in particular, it is the clerk who placed it there by mistake.” The mediators retired in haste to communicate to Charles the complaints of the Protestants.

Charles and his ministers gave up every idea of reconciliation, and hoped for nothing except through fear. The Protestants having reached the imperial palace at eight o’clock, they were made wait an hour; the Elector of Brandenburg then said to them in Charles’s name: “His Majesty is astonished beyond measure that you still maintain your doctrine to be based on the Holy Scriptures. If you say the truth, his majesty’s ancestors, so many kings and emperors, and even the ancestors of the Elector of Saxony, were heretics! There is no Gospel, there is no Scripture, that imposes on us the obligation of seizing by violence the goods of another, and of then saying that we cannot conscientiously restore them. It is for this reason, added Joachim, after these words, which he accompanied with a sardonic smile, “I am commissioned to inform you, that if you refuse the recess, all the Germanic states will place their lives and their property at the emperor’s disposal, and his majesty himself will employ the resources of all his kingdoms to complete this affair before leaving the empire.”

“We do not accept it,” replied the Protestants firmly.—“His majesty also has a conscience,” then resumed the Elector of Brandenburg, in a harsh tone; “and if you do not submit, he will concert with the pope and the other potentates on the best means of extirpating this seet and its new errors.” But in vain did they add threat to threat: the Protestants remained calm, respectful, and unshaken. “Our enemies, destitute of all confidence in God,” said they, “would shake like a reed in presence of the emperor’s anger, and they imagine that we should tremble in like manner; but we have called unto God, and he will keep us faithful to his truth.” The Protestants then prepared to take their final leave of the emperor. This prince, whose patience had been put to a severe trial, approached to shake hands according to custom; and beginning with the Elector of Saxony, he said to him in a low voice: “Uncle, uncle! I should never have expected this of you.” The elector was deeply affected: his eyes filled with tears: but, firm and resolute, he bent his head and quitted Charles without reply. It was now two in the afternoon.

While the Protestants were returning to their hotels, calm and happy, the Romish princes retired to theirs, confused and dispirited, uneasy and divided. They doubted not that the congé which had just been granted to the Protestants would be regarded by them as a declaration of war, and that on quitting Augsburg, they would rush to arms. This thought terrified them. Accordingly, the Elector of Saxony had hardly reached his palace, when he saw Dr. Ruhel, councillor of the Elector of Mentz, hastening towards him, commissioned by his master to deliver this message: “Although my

brother the elector (Joachim of Brandenburg) has declared that the states of the empire are ready to support the emperor against you, know that both myself and the ministers of the elector-palatine and of the Elector of Treves immediately declared to his majesty that we did not adhere to this declaration, seeing that we thought very favourably of you. I intended saying this to the emperor in your presence, but you left so precipitately that I was unable."

Thus spoke the primate of the German Church, and even the choice of his messenger was significant: Dr. Ruhel was Luther's brother-in-law. John begged him to thank his master. As this envoy retired, there arrived one of the gentlemen of Duke Henry of Brunswick, a zealous Romanist. He was at first refused admittance on account of the departure, but returned hastily, just as Bruck's carriage was leaving the courtyard of the hotel. Approaching the carriage-door, he said: "The duke informs the elector that he will endeavour to put things in a better train, and will come this winter to kill a wild boar with him." Shortly after, the terrible Ferdinand himself declared that he would seek every means of preventing an outbreak.3 All these manifestations of the affrighted Roman-catholics showed on which side was the real strength. At three o'clock in the afternoon the Elector of Saxony, accompanied by the Dukes of Luneburg and the Princes of Anhalt, quitted the walls of Augsburg. "God be praised," said Luther, "that our dear prince is at last out of hell!" As he saw these intrepid princes thus escaping from his hands, Charles the Fifth gave way to a violence that was not usual with him. "They want to teach me a new faith," cried he; "but it is not with the doctrine that we shall finish this matter: we must draw the sword, and then shall we see who is the strongest."6 All around him gave way to their indignation. They were astonished at the audacity of Bruck, who had dared call the Romanists—heretics! But nothing irritated them so much as the spirit of proselytism which in those glorious days characterized evangelical Germany; and the anger of the Papists was particularly directed against the Chancellor of Luneburg, "who," said they, "had sent more than a hundred ministers into different places to preach the new doctrine, and who had even publicly boasted of it."—"Our adversaries thirst for our blood," wrote, as they heard these complaints, the deputies of Nuremberg, who remained almost alone at Augsburg. On the 4th October, Charles the Fifth wrote to the pope; for it was from Rome that the new crusade was to set out: "The negotiations are broken off; our adversaries are more obstinate than ever; and I am resolved to employ my strength and my person in combating them. For this reason I beg your holiness will demand the support of all christian princes." The enterprise began in Augsburg itself. The day on which he wrote to the pope, Charles, in honour of St. Francis of Assisi, whose feast it was, re-established the Cordeliers in that city, and a monk ascending the pulpit said: "All those who preach that Jesus Christ alone has made satisfaction for our sins, and that God saves us without regard to our works, are thorough scoundrels. There are, on the contrary, two roads to salvation: the common road, namely, the observance of the commandments; and the perfect road, namely, the ecclesiastical state." Scarcely was the sermon finished ere the congregation began to remove the benches placed in the church for the evangelical preaching, breaking them violently (for they were fixed with chains), and throwing them one upon another. Within these consecrated walls two monks, in particular, armed with hammers and pincers, tossed their arms, and shouted like men possessed. "From their frightful uproar," exclaimed some, "one would imagine they were pulling down a house." It was in truth the house of God they wished to begin destroying.

After the tumult was appeased, they sang mass. As soon as this was concluded, a Spaniard desired to recommence breaking the benches, and on being prevented by one of the citizens, they

began to hurl chairs at each other; one of the monks, leaving the choir, ran up to them and was soon dragged into the fray; at length the captain of police arrived with his men, who distributed their well directed blows on every side. Thus began in Germany the restoration of Roman-catholicism: popular violence has often been one of its most powerful allies. On the 13th October the recess was read to all the Romish states, and on the same day they concluded a Roman league.

Two cities had signed the Confession, and two others had assented to it; the imperialists hoped, however, that these powerless municipalities, affrighted at the imperial authority, would withdraw from the protestant union. But on the 17th October, instead of two or four cities, sixteen imperial towns, among which were the most important in Germany, declared it was impossible to grant any support against the Turks so long as public peace was not secured in Germany itself. An event more formidable to Charles had just taken place. The unity of the Reformation had prevailed. “We are one in the fundamental articles of faith,” had said the Zwinglian cities, “and in particular (notwithstanding some disputes about words among our theologians), we are one in the doctrine of the communion in the body and blood of our Lord. Receive us.” The Saxon deputies immediately gave their hands. Nothing unites the children of God so much as the violence of the adversaries. “Let us unite,” said all, “for the consolation of our brethren and the terror of our enemies.” In vain did Charles, who was intent on keeping up division among the Protestants, convoke the deputies of the Zwinglian cities; in vain, desiring to render them odious, had he accused them of fastening a consecrated wafer to a wall and firing bullets at it; in vain did he overwhelm them with fierce threats;—all his efforts were useless. At length the evangelical party was one. The alarm increased among the Roman party, who resolved on fresh concessions. “The Protestants call for public peace,” said they; “well then, let us draw up articles of peace.” But, on the 29th October, the Protestants refused these offers, because the emperor enjoined peace to all the world, without binding himself. “An emperor has the right to command peace to his subjects,” haughtily answered Charles; “but it has never been heard that he commanded it to himself.”

Nothing remained but to draw the sword; and for that Charles made every preparation. On October 25th, he wrote to the cardinals at Rome: “We inform you that we shall spare neither kingdoms nor lordships; and that we shall venture even our soul and our body to complete such necessary matters.”

Scarcely had Charles’s letter been received, before his majordomo, Pedro de la Cueva, arrived in Rome by express. “The season is now too far advanced to attack the Lutherans immediately,” said he to the pope; “but prepare everything for this enterprise. His majesty thinks it his duty to prefer before all things the accomplishment of your designs.” Thus Clement and the emperor were also united, and both sides began to concentrate their forces. On the evening of the 11th November, the recess was read to the protestant deputies, and on the 12th they rejected it, declaring that they did not acknowledge the emperor’s power to command in matters of faith. The deputies of Hesse and of Saxony departed immediately after, and on the 19th November the recess was solemnly read in the presence of Charles the Fifth, and of the princes and deputies who were still in Augsburg. This report was more hostile than the project communicated to the Protestants. It bore, among other things (and this is only a sample of the urbanity of this official doctrine), that “to deny free will was the error not of man, but of a brute.”—“We beg his majesty,” said the Elector Joachim, after it was read, “not to leave Germany, until by his cares one sole and same faith be

re-established in all the empire." The emperor replied, that he would not go farther than his states of the Low Countries. They desired that deeds should follow close upon words. It was then nearly seven in the evening; a few torches, lighted up here and there by the ushers, and casting a pale light, alone illuminated this assembly: they separated without seeing each other: and thus ended, as by stealth, that diet so pompously announced to the christian world. On the 22d November, the recess was made public, and two days after Charles the Fifth set out for Cologne. The ruler of two worlds had seen all his influence baffled by a few Christians; and he who had entered the imperial city in triumph, now quitted it gloomy, silent, and dispirited. The mightiest power of the earth was broken against the power of God. But the emperor's ministers and officers, excited by the pope, displayed so much the more energy. The states of the empire were bound to furnish Charles, for three years, 40,000 foot, 8000 horse, and a considerable sum of money; the Margrave Henry of Zenete, the Count of Nassau, and other nobles, made considerable levies on the side of the Rhine; a captain going, through the Black Forest called its rude inhabitants to his standard, and there enrolled six companies of lansquenets; King Ferdinand had written to all the knights of the Tyrol and of Wurtemberg to gird on their cuirasses and take down their swords; Joachim of Talheim collected the Spanish bands in the Low Countries, and ordered them towards the Rhine; Peter Scher solicited from the duke of Lorraine the aid of his arms; and another chief hastily moved the Spanish army of Florence in the direction of the Alps. There was every reason to fear that the Germans, even the Roman-catholics, would take Luther's part; and hence principally foreign troops were levied. Nothing but war was talked of in Augsburg. On a sudden a strange rumour was heard. The signal is given, said every one. A free city, lying on the confines of the Germanic and Roman world,—a city at war with its bishop, in alliance with the Protestants, and which passed for reformed even before really being so, had been suddenly attacked. A courier from Strasburg brought this news to Augsburg, and it circulated through the town with the rapidity of lightning. Three days after Michaelmas, some armed men, sent by the Duke of Savoy, pillaged the suburbs of Geneva, and threatened to take possession of the city, and put all to the edge of the sword. Every one in Augsburg was amazed. "Ho!" exclaimed Charles the Fifth, in French, "the Duke of Savoy has begun too soon."3 It was reported that Margaret, governor of the Low Countries, the pope, the Dukes of Lorraine and Gueldres, and even the King of France, were directing their troops against Geneva. It was there that the army of Rome intended fixing its point d'appui. The avalanche was gathering on the first slopes of the Alps, whence it would rush overall Switzerland, and then roll into Germany, burying the Gospel and the Reformation under its huge mass. This sacred cause appeared to be in great danger, and never in reality had it gained so noble a triumph. The coup de main attempted on those hills, where six years later Calvin was to take his station, and plant the standard of Augsburg and of Nazareth, having failed, all fears were dispelled, and the victory of the confessors of Christ, for an instant obscured, shone forth anew in all its splendour.

While the emperor Charles, surrounded by a numerous train of princes, was approaching the banks of the Rhine sad and dispirited, the evangelical Christians were returning in triumph to their homes. Luther was the herald of the victory gained at Augsburg by Faith. "Though our enemies should have around them, beside them, with them, not only that puissant Roman emperor, Charles, but the emperor of the Turks and his Mahomet," said he, "they could not intimidate, they could not frighten me. It is I who in the strength of God am resolved to frighten and overthrow them. They shall yield to me—they shall fall—and I shall remain upright and firm. My life shall be

their headsman, and my death their hell!.... God blinds them and hardens their hearts; he is driving them towards the Red sea: all the horses of Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen, cannot escape their inevitable destiny. Let them go then, let them perish, since they will it so!2 As for us, the Lord is with us."

Thus the Diet of Augsburg, destined to crush the Reformation, was what strengthened it for ever. It has been usual to consider the peace of Augsburg (1555) as the period when the Reform was definitively established. That is the date of legal Protestantism; evangelical Christianity has another—the autumn of 1530. In 1555 was the victory of the sword and of diplomacy; in 1530 was that of the Word of God and of Faith; and this latter victory is in our eyes the truest and the surest. The evangelical history of the Reformation in Germany is nearly finished at the epoch we have reached, and the diplomatic history of legal Protestantism begins. Whatever may now be done, whatever may be said, the Church of the first ages has reappeared; and it has reappeared strong enough to show that it will live. There will still be conferences and discussions; there will still be leagues and combats; there will even be deplorable defeats; but all these are a secondary movement. The great movement is accomplished: the cause of faith is won by faith. The effort has been made: the evangelical doctrine has taken root in the world, and neither the storms of men, nor the powers of hell, will ever be able to tear it up.

BOOK XV Switzerland—Conquests. 1526–1530

CHAPTER I

Originality of the Swiss Reform—Change—Three Periods of Reform—Switzerland Romande—The two Movements in the Church—Aggressive Spirit—The Schoolmaster—Farel's new Baptism—Mysticism and Scholasticism—A Door is opened—Opposition—Lausanne—Manners of the Clergy—Farel to Galeotto—Farel and the Monk—The Tribunal—The Monk cries for Pardon—Opposition of the Ormonds—A false Convert—Christian Unity. The divisions which the Reformation disclosed within its bosom, on its appearance before the Diet of Augsburg, humbled it and compromised its existence; but we must not forget that the cause of these divisions was one of the conditions of the existence of the regenerated church. No doubt it would have been desirable for Germany and Switzerland to have agreed; but it was of still greater importance that Germany and Switzerland should have each its original Reform. If the Swiss Reformation had been only a feeble copy of the German, there would have been uniformity, but no duration. The tree, transplanted into Switzerland, without having taken deep root, would soon have been torn up by the vigorous hand that was erelong about to seize upon it. The regeneration of Christianity in these mountains proceeded from forces peculiar to the Helvetic Church, and received an organization in conformity with the ecclesiastical and political condition of that country. By this very originality it communicated a particular energy to the principles of the Reformation, of much greater consequence to the common cause than a servile uniformity. The strength of an army arises in great measure from its being composed of soldiers of different arms. The military and political influence of Switzerland was declining. The new developments of the European nations, subsequent to the sixteenth century, were about to banish to their native mountains those proud Helvetians, who for so long a period had placed their two-handed swords in the balance in which the destinies of nations were weighed. The Reformation communicated a new influence in exchange for that which was departing.

Switzerland, where the Gospel appeared in its simplest and purest form, was destined to give in these new times to many nations of the two worlds a more salutary and glorious impulse than that which had hitherto proceeded from its halberds and its arquebuses. The history of the Swiss Reformation is divided into three periods, in which the light of the Gospel is seen spreading successively over three different zones. From 1519 to 1526 Zurich was the centre of the Reformation, which was then entirely German, and was propagated in the eastern and northern parts of the confederation. Between 1526 and 1532 the movement was communicated from Berne: it was at once German and French, and extended to the centre of Switzerland from the gorges of the Jura to the deepest valleys of the Alps. In 1532 Geneva became the focus of the light; and the Reformation, which was here essentially French, was established on the shores of the Leman lake, and gained strength in every quarter. It is of the second of these periods—that of Berne—of which we are now to treat.

Although the Swiss Reformation is not yet essentially French, still the most active part in it is taken by Frenchmen. Switzerland Romande is yoked to the chariot of Reform, and communicates to it an accelerated motion. In the period we are about to treat of, there is a mixture of races, of forces, and of characters from which proceeds a greater commotion. In no part of the christian world will the resistance be so stubborn; but nowhere will the assailants display so much courage. This petty country of Switzerland Romande, enclosed within the collosal arms of the Jura and the Alps, was for centuries one of the strongest fortresses of the Papacy. It it is about to be carried by storm; it is going to turn its arms against its ancient masters; and from these few hillocks, scattered at the foot of the highest mountains in Europe, will proceed the reiterated shocks that will overthrow, even in the most distant countries, the sanctuaries of Rome, their images, and their altars.

There are two movements in the Church: one is effected inwardly, and its object is its preservation; the other is effected outwardly, and the object aimed at is its propagation. There is thus a doctrinal Church and a missionary Church. These two movements ought never to be separated, and whenever they are disunited, it is because the spirit of man, and not the Spirit of God prevails. In the apostolic ages these two tendencies were evolved at the same time and with equal power. In the second and third centuries the external tendency prevailed; after the Council of Nice (325) the doctrinal movement resumed the superiority; at the epoch of the irruption of the northern tribes the missionary spirit revived; but erelong came the times of the hierarchy and of the schoolmen, in which all doctrinal powers warred within the Church to found therein a despotic government and an impure doctrine—the Papacy. The revival of Christianity in the sixteenth century, which emanated from God, was destined to renovate these two movements, but by purifying them. Then indeed the Spirit of God acted at once externally and internally. In the days of the Reformation there were tranquil and internal developments; but there was also a more powerful and aggressive action. Men of God had for ages studied the Word, and had peacefully explained its salutary lessons. Such had been the work of Vesalia, Goch, Groot, Radewin, Ruybrook, Tauler, Thomas à Kempis, and John Wessel; now, something more was required. The power of action was to be combined with the power of thought. The Papacy had been allowed all necessary time for laying aside its errors; for ages men had been in expectation; it had been warned, it had been entreated; all had been unavailing. Popery being unwilling to reform itself, it became necessary for men of God to take its accomplishment upon themselves. The calm and moderate influence of the precursors of the Reform was succeeded by the heroic and holy revolutionary work of the

Reformers; and the revolution they effected consisted in overthrowing the usurping power to re-establish the legitimate authority. “To everything there is a season,” says the preacher, “and a time to every purpose under heaven: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to break down, and a time to build up.” Of all Reformers, those who carried the aggressive spirit to its highest degree were the men who came from France, and more especially Farel, whose labours we have now to consider.

Never were such mighty effects accomplished by so puny a force. In the government of God we pass in an instant from the greatest to the least of things. We now quit the haughty Charles V. and all that court of princes over which he presides, to follow the steps of a schoolmaster; and leave the palaces of Augsburg to take our seats in the lowly cottages of Switzerland. The Rhone, after issuing, near St. Gothard, from the mountains of the Furka, from beneath an immense sea of eternal ice, rolls its noisy waters through a rugged valley separating the two great chains of the Alps; then issuing from the gorge of St. Maurice, it wanders through a more smiling and fertile country. The sublime Dent du Midi on the south, the proud Dent de Morcles on the north, picturesquely situated opposite each other, point out from afar to the traveller’s eye the beginning of this latter basin. On the tops of these mountains are vast glaciers and threatening peaks, near which the shepherds in the midst of summer lead their numerous flocks to pasture: while, in the plain, the flowers and fruits of southern climes grow luxuriantly, and the laurel blooms beside the most exquisite grapes. At the opening of one of the lateral valleys that lead into the Northern Alps, on the banks of the Grande Eau that falls in thunder from the glaciers of the Diablerets, is situated the small town of Aigle, one of the most southern in Switzerland. For about fifty years it had belonged to Berne, with the four parishes (mandemens) which are under its jurisdiction, namely, Aigle, Bex, Ollon, and the chalets scattered in the lofty valleys of the Ormonds. It is in this country that the second epoch of the Swiss Reformation was destined to begin. In the winter of 1526, 1527, a foreign schoolmaster, named Ursinus, arrived in this humble district. He was a man of middle stature, with red beard and quick eyes, and who, with a voice of thunder (says Beza) combined the feelings of a hero: his modest lessons were intermingled with new and strange doctrines. The benefices being abandoned by their titularies to ignorant curates, the people, who were naturally of rude and turbulent habits, had remained without any cultivation. Thus did this stranger, who was no other than Farel, meet with new obstacles at every step.

Whilst Lefevre and most of his friends had quitted Strasburg to re-enter France, after the deliverance of Francis I., Farel had turned his steps towards Switzerland; and on the very first day of his journey, he received a lesson that he frequently recalled to mind.

He was on foot accompanied by a single friend. Night had closed around them, the rain fell in torrents, and the travellers, in despair of finding their road, had sat down midway, drenched with rain. “Ah!” said Farel, “God, by showing me my helplessness in these little things, has willed to teach me how weak I am in the greatest, without Jesus Christ!”2 At last Farel, springing up, plunged into the marshes, waded through the waters, crossed vineyards, fields, hills, forests, and valleys, and at length reached his destination, covered with mud and soaked to the skin. In this night of desolation, Farel had received a new baptism. His natural energy had been quelled: he became for some time at least, wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove; and, as not unfrequently happens to men of such disposition, he at first overstepped his aim. Believing that he was following the example of the apostles, he sought, in the words of Œcolampadius, “by pious

frauds to circumvent the old serpent that was hissing around him." He represented himself to be a schoolmaster, and waited until a door should be opened to him to appear as a reformer.4

Scarcely had Magister Ursinus quitted the schoolroom and his primers, than, taking refuge in his modest chamber, he became absorbed in the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, and the most learned treatises of the theologians. The struggle between Luther and Zwingle was commencing. To which of these two chiefs should the French Reform attach itself? Luther had been known in France for a much longer time than Zwingle; yet Farel decided in favour of the latter. Mysticism had characterized the Germanic nations during the Middle Ages, and scholasticism those of Roman descent. The French were in closer relation with the dialectician Zwingle than with the mystic Luther; or rather they were the mediators between the two great tendencies of the Middle Ages; and, while giving to the Christian thought that correct form which seems to be the province of southern nations, they became the instruments of God to spread through the Church the fulness of life and of the Spirit of Christ.

It was in his little chamber at Aigle that Farel read the first publication addressed to the Germans by the Swiss reformer. "With what learning," cries he, "does Zwingle scatter the darkness! with what holy ingenuity he gains over the wise, and what captivating meekness he unites with deep erudition! Oh! that by the grace of God this work may win over Luther, so that the Church of Christ, trembling from such violent shocks, may at length find peace!" The schoolmaster Ursinus, excited by so noble an example, gradually set about instructing the parents as well as the children. He at first attacked the doctrine of Purgatory, and next the Invocation of Saints. "As for the pope, he is nothing," said he, "or almost nothing, in these parts; and as for the priests, provided they annoy the people with all that nonsense, which Erasmus knows so well how to turn into ridicule, that is enough for them."

Ursinus had been some months at Aigle: a door was opened to him; a flock had been collected there, and he believed the looked-for moment had arrived.

Accordingly, one day the prudent schoolmaster disappears. "I am William Farel," said he, "minister of the Word of God." The terror of the priests and magistrates was great, when they saw in the midst of them that very man whose name had already become so formidable. The schoolmaster quitted his humble study; he ascended the pulpit, and openly preached Jesus Christ to the astonished multitude. The work of Ursinus was over: Farel was himself again. It was then about the month of March or April 1527, and in that beautiful valley, whose slopes were brightening in the warm rays of the sun, all was fermenting at the same time, the flowers, the vineyards, and the hearts of this sensible but rude people.

Yet the rocks that the torrent meets as it issues from the Diablerets, and against which it dashes at every step as it falls from eternal snows, are more trifling obstacles than the prejudice and hatred that were shown erelong in this populous valley to the Word of God. The Council of Berne, by a licence of the 9th of March, had commissioned Farel to explain the Holy Scriptures to the people of Aigle and its neighbourhood. But the arm of the civil magistrate, by thus mingling in religious affairs, served only to increase the irritation of men's minds. The rich and lazy incumbents, the poor and ignorant curates, were the first to cry out. "If this man," said they one to another, "continues preaching, it is all over with our benefices and our Church." In the midst of this agitation, the bailiff of Aigle and the governor of the four mandemens, Jacques de Roverea,

instead of supporting the minister of their excellencies of Berne, eagerly embraced the cause of the priests. “The emperor,” said they, “is about to declare war against all innovators. A great army will shortly arrive from Spain to assist the Archduke Ferdinand.” Farel stood firm. Upon this the bailiff and Roverea exasperated by such boldness, interdicted the heretic from every kind of instruction, whether as minister or schoolmaster. But Berne caused to be posted on the doors of all the churches in the four mandemens a new decree, dated the 3d of July, in which their excellencies, manifesting great displeasure at this interdiction “of the very learned Farel from the propagation of the Divine Word, ordered all the officers of the state to allow him to preach publicly the doctrines of the Lord.” This new proclamation was the signal of revolt. On the 25th July, great crowds assembled at Aigle, at Bex, at Ollon, and in the Ormonds, crying out, “No more submission to Berne! down with Farel!” From words they soon proceeded to actions. At Aigle the insurgents, headed by the fiery syndic, tore down the edict, and prepared to fall upon the reformed. These, promptly united and surrounding Farel, resolved to defend him. The two parties met face to face, and blood was near flowing. The firm countenance of the friends of the Gospel checked the partisans of the priests, who dispersed, and Farel, quitting Aigle for a few days, carried his views farther. In the middle of the beautiful valley of the Leman, on hills which overlook the lake, stands Lausanne, the city of the bishop and of the Virgin, placed under the patronage of the Dukes of Savoy. A host of pilgrims, assembling from all the surrounding places, knelt devoutly before the image of Our Lady, and made costly purchases at the great fair of indulgences that was held in its precincts. Lausanne, extending its episcopal crosier from its lofty towers, pretended to keep the whole country at the feet of the pope. But owing to the dissolute life of the canons and priests, the eyes of many began to be opened. The ministers of the Virgin were seen in public playing at games of chance, which they seasoned with mockery and blasphemy. They fought in the churches; disguised as soldiers, they descended by night from the cathedral hill, and roaming through the streets, sword in hand and in liquor, surprised, wounded, and sometimes even killed the worthy citizens; they debauched married women, seduced young girls, changed their residences into hous of ill-fame, and heartlessly turned out their young children to beg their bread. Nowhere, perhaps, was better exemplified the description of the clergy given us by one of the most venerable prelates at the beginning of the sixteenth century: “Instead of training up youth by their learning and holiness of life, the priests train birds and dogs; instead of books, they have children; they sit with topers in the taverns, and give way to drunkenness.”

Among the theologians in the court of the Bishop Sebastian of Montfaucon, was Natalis Galeotto, a man of elevated rank and great urbanity, fond of the society of scholars, and himself a man of learning, but nevertheless very zealous about fasts and all the ordinances of the Church. Farel thought that, if this man could be gained over to the Gospel, Lausanne, “slumbering at the foot of its steeples,” would perhaps awaken, and all the country with it. He therefore addressed himself to him. “Alas! alas!” said Farel, “religion is now little better than an empty mockery, since people who think only of their appetites are the kings of the Church. Christian people, instead of celebrating in the sacrament the death of the Lord, live as if they commemorated Mercury, the god of fraud. Instead of imitating the love of Christ, they emulate the lewdness of Venus; and, when they do evil, they fear more the presence of a wretched swineherd than of God Almighty.”4 But Galeotto made no reply, and Farel persevered. “Knock; cry out with all your might,” wrote he in a second letter; “redouble your attacks upon our lord.” Still there was no answer. Farel returned to the charge a third time, and Natalis, fearing perhaps to reply in person, commissioned his secretary, who

forwarded a letter to Farel full of abusive language.6 For a season Lausanne was inaccessible.

After having thus contended with a priest, Farel was destined to struggle with a monk. The two arms of the hierarchy by which the Middle Ages had been governed were chivalry and monachism. The latter still remained for the service of the Papacy, although falling into decay. “Alas!” exclaimed a celebrated Carthusian, “what an obstinate devil would fear to do, a reprobate and arrogant monk will commit without hesitation.” A mendicant friar, who dared not oppose the reformer in a direct manner at Aigle, ventured into the village of Noville, situated on the low grounds deposited by the Rhone as it falls into the Lake of Geneva. The friar, ascending the pulpit, exclaimed, “It is the devil himself who preaches by the mouth of the minister, and all those who listen to him will be damned.” Then, taking courage, he slunk along the bauk of the Rhone, and arrived at Aigle with a meek and humble look, not to appear there against Farel, whose powerful eloquence terribly alarmed him, but to beg in behalf of his convent a few barrels of the most exquisite wine in all Switzerland. He had not advanced many steps into the town before he met the minister. At this sight he trembled in every limb. “Why did you preach in such a manner at Noville?” demanded Farel. The monk, fearful that the dispute would attract public attention, and yet desirous of replying to the point, whispered in his ear, “I have heard say that you are a heretic and misleader of the people.” “Prove it,” said Farel. Then the monk “began to storm,” says Farel, and, hastening down the street, endeavoured to shake off his disagreeable companion, “turning now this way, now that, like a troubled conscience.”3 A few citizens beginning to collect around them, Farel said to them, pointing to the monk, “You see this fine father; he has said from the pulpit that I preach nothing but lies.” Then the monk, blushing and stammering, began to speak of the offerings of the faithful (the precious wine of Yvorne, for which he had come begging), and accused Farel of opposing them. The crowd had now increased in number, and Farel, who only sought an opportunity of proclaiming the true worship of God, exclaimed with a loud voice, “It is no man’s business to ordain any other way of serving God than with which he has commanded. We must keep his commandments without turning either to the right hand or to the left. Let us worship God alone in spirit and in truth, offering to him a broken and a contrite heart.” The eyes of all the spectators were fixed on the two actors in this scene, the monk with his wallet, and the reformer with his glistening eye. Confounded by Farel’s daring to speak of any other worship than that which the holy Roman Church prescribed, the friar “was out of his senses; he trembled, and was agitated, becoming pale and red by turns. At last, taking his cap off his head, from under his hood, he flung it on the ground, trampling it under foot and crying: “I am surprised that the earth does not gape and swallow us up!”…. Farel wished to reply, but in vain. The friar with downcast eyes kept stamping on his cap, “bawling like one out of his wits;” and his cries resounding through the streets of Aigle, drowned the voice of the reformer. At length one of the spectators, who stood beside him, plucked him by the sleeve, and said, “listen to the minister, as he is listening to you.” The affrighted monk, believing himself already half-dead, started violently and cried out: “Oh, thou excommunicate! layest thou thy hand upon me?” The little town was in an uproar; the friar at once furious and trembling, Farel following up his attack with vigour, and the people confused and amazed. At length the magistrate appeared, ordered the monk and Farel to follow him, and shut them up, “one in one tower and one in another.” On the Saturday morning Farel was liberated from his prison, and conducted to the castle before the officers of justice, where the monk had arrived before him. The minister began to address them: “My lords, to whom our Saviour enjoins obedience without any exception, this friar has said that the doctrine which I preach is against

God. Let him make good his words, or, if he cannot, permit your people to be edified." The violence of the monk was over. The tribunal before which he was standing, the courage of his adversary, the power of the movement which he could not resist, the weakness of his cause,—all alarmed him, and he was now ready to make matters up. "Then the friar fell upon his knees, saying: My lords, I entreat forgiveness of you and of God. Next turning to Farel: And also, Magister, what I preached against you was grounded on false reports. I have found you to be a good man, and your doctrine good, and I am prepared to recall my words."

Farel was touched by this appeal, and said: "My friend, do not ask forgiveness of me, for I am a poor sinner like other men, putting my trust not in my own righteousness, but in the death of Jesus."

One of the lords of Berne coming up at this time, the friar, who already imagined himself on the brink of martyrdom, began to wring his hands, and to turn now towards the Bernese councillors, now towards the tribunal, and then to Farel, crying, "Pardon, pardon!"—"Ask pardon of our Saviour," replied Farel. The lord of Berne added; "Come to-morrow and hear the minister's sermon; if he appears to you to preach the truth, you shall confess it openly before all; if not, you will declare your opinions: this promise in my hand." The monk held out his hand, and the judges retired. "Then the friar went away, and I have not seen him since, and no promises or oaths were able to make him stay." Thus the Reformation advanced in Switzerland Romande. But violent storms threatened to destroy the work that was hardly begun. Romish agents from the Valais and from Savoy had crossed the Rhone at St. Maurice, and were exciting the people to energetic resistance. Tumultuous assemblages took place, in which dangerous projects were discussed; the proclamations of the government were torn down from the church-doors; troops of citizens paraded the city; the drum beat in the streets to excite the populace against the reformer: everywhere prevailed riot and sedition. And hence, when Farel ascended the pulpit on the 16th February, for the first time after a short absence, some papist bands collected round the gate of the church, raised their hands in tumult, uttered savage cries, and compelled the minister to break off in his sermon. The council of Berne thereupon decreed that the parishioners of the four mandemens should assemble. Those of Bex declared for the Reform; Aigle followed their example, but with indecision; and in the mountains above Ollon, the peasants, not daring to maltreat Farel, excited their wives who rushed upon him with their fulling-clubs. But it was especially the parish of the Ormonds which, calm and proud at the foot of its glaciers, signalized itself by its resistance. A companion of Farel's labours, named Claude (probably Claude de Gloutinis,) when preaching there one day with great animation, was suddenly interrupted by the ringing of the bells, whose noise was such that one might have said all hell was busy pulling them. "In fact," says another herald of the gospel, Jacques Camralis, who chanced to be present, "it was Satan himself, who, breathing his anger into some of his agents, filled the ears of the auditors with all this uproar." At another time, some zealous reformers having thrown down the altars of Baal, according to the language of the times, the evil spirit began to blow with violence in all the chalets scattered over the sides of the mountains; the shepherds issued precipitously like avalanches, and fell upon the church and the evangelicals. "Let us only find these sacrilegious wretches," cried the furious Ormondines; "we will hang them,—we will cut off their heads,—we will burn them,—we will throw their ashes into the Great Water."2 Thus were these mountaineers agitated, like the wind that roars in their lofty valleys with a fury unknown to the inhabitants of the plains.

Other difficulties overwhelmed Farel. His fellow-labourers were not all of them blameless. One Christopher Ballista, formerly a monk of Paris, had written to Zwingle: “I am but a Gaul, a barbarian, but you will find me pure as snow, without any guile, of open heart, through whose windows all the world may see.”4 Zwingle sent Ballista to Farel, who was loudly calling for labourers in Christ’s vineyard. The fine language of the Parisian at first charmed the multitude; but it was soon necessary to beware of these priests and monks disgusted with popery. “Brought up in the slothfulness of the cloister, gluttonous and lazy,” says Farel, “Ballista could not conform to the abstemiousness and rude labours of the evangelists, and soon began to regret his monk’s hood. When he perceived the people beginning to distrust him, he became like a furious monster, vomiting waggon-loads of threats.” Thus ended his labours.

Notwithstanding all these trials, Farel was not discouraged. The greater the difficulties, the more his energy increased. Let us scatter the seed everywhere,” said he, “and let civilized France, provoked to jealousy by this barbarous nation, embrace piety at last. Let there not be in Christ’s body either fingers, or hands, or feet, or eyes, or ears, or arms, existing separately and working each for itself, but let there be only one heart that nothing can divide. Let not variety in secondary things divide into many separate members that vital principle which is one and simple. Alas! the pastures of the Church are trodden under foot, and its waters are troubled! Let us set our minds to concord and peace. When the Lord shall have opened heaven, there will not be so many disputes about bread and water.2 A fervent charity—that is the powerful battering-ram with which we shall beat down those proud walls, those material elements, with which men would confine us.”

Thus wrote the most impetuous of the reformers. These words of Farel, preserved for three centuries in the city where he died, disclose to us more clearly the intimate nature of the great Revolution of the sixteenth century, than all the venturesome assertions of its popish interpreters. Christian unity thus from these earliest moments found a zealous apostle. The nineteenth century is called to resume the work which the sixteenth century was unable to accomplish.

CHAPTER II

State Religion in Berne—Irresolution of Berne—Almanack of Heretics—Evangelical Majority—Haller—Zwingle’s Signal—Anabaptists in Berne—Victory of the Gospel—Papist Provocations—The City Companies—Proposed Disputation—Objections of the Forest Cantons—The Church, the Judge of Controversaries—Unequal Contest—Zwingle—A Christian Band—The Cordelier’s Church—Opening of the Conference—The sole Head—Unity of Error—A Priest converted at the Altar—St. Vincent’s Day—The Butchers—A strange Argument—Papist Bitterness—Necessity of Reform—Zwingle’s Sermon—Visit of the King of kings—Edict of Reform—Was the Reformation political? Of all the Swiss cantons, Berne appeared the least disposed to the Reformation. A military state may be zealous for religion, but it will be for an external and a disciplined religion: it requires an ecclesiastical organization that it can see, and touch, and manage at its will. It fears the innovations and the free movements of the Word of God: it loves the form and not the life. Napoleon, by restoring religion in France in the Concordat, has given us a memorable example of this truth. Such, also was the case with Berne. Its government, besides, was absorbed in political interests, and although it had little regard for the pope, it cared still less to see a reformer put himself, as Zwingle did, at the head of public affairs. As for the people, feasting on “the butter of their kine and milk of their sheep, with fat of lambs,” they

remained closely shut up within the narrow circle of their material wants. Religious questions were not to the taste either of the rulers or of their fellow-citizens. The Bernese government, being without experience in religious matters, had proposed to check the movement of the Reform by its edict of 1523. As soon as it discovered its mistake, it moved towards the cantons that adhered to the ancient faith; and while that portion of the people whence the Great Council was recruited, listened to the voice of the Reformers, most of the patrician families, who composed the Smaller Council, believing their power, their interests, and their honour menaced, attached themselves to the old order of things. From this opposition of the two councils there arose a general uneasiness, but no violent shocks. Sudden movements, repeated starts, announced from time to time that incongruous matters were fermenting in the nation; it was like an indistinct earthquake, which raises the whole surface without causing any rents: then anon all returns to apparent tranquillity. Berne, which was always decided in its politics, turned in religious matters at one time to the right, and at another to the left; and declared that it would be neither popish nor reformed. To gain time was, for the new faith, to gain everything.

What was to turn aside Berne from the Reformation, was the very cause of precipitating it into the new way. The haughtiness with which the five primitive cantons arrogated the guardianship of their confederates, the secret conferences to which Berne was not even invited, and the threat of addressing the people in a direct manner, deeply offended the Bernese oligarchs. Thomas Murner, a Carmelite of Lucerne, one of those rude men who act upon the populace, but who inspire disgust in elevated minds, made the cup run over. Furious against the Zurich calendar, in which the names of the saints had been purposely omitted, he published in opposition to it the “Almanack of Heretics and Church-robbers,” a tract filled with lampoons and invectives, in which the portraits of the reformers and of their adherents, among whom were many of the most considerable men of Berne, were coupled with the most brutal inscriptions. Zurich and Berne in conjunction demanded satisfaction, and from this time the union of these two states daily became closer. This change was soon perceived at Berne. The elections of 1527 placed a considerable number of friends of the Reform in the Great Council; and this body, forthwith resuming its right to nominate the members of the Smaller Council, which had been usurped for twenty years by the Bannerets and the Sixteen, removed from the government the most decided partisans of the Roman hierarchy, and among others Gaspard de Mulinen and Sebastian de Stein, and filled the vacancies with members of the evangelical majority. The union of Church and State, which had hitherto checked the progress of the Reform in Switzerland, was now about to accelerate its movements. The reformer Haller was not alone in Berne. Kolb had quitted the Carthusian monastery at Nuremberg, in which he had been compelled to take refuge, and had appeared, before his compatriots, demanding no other stipend than the liberty of preaching Jesus Christ. Already bending under the weight of years, his head crowned with hoary locks, Kolb, young in heart, full of fire, and of indomitable courage, presented boldly before the chiefs of the nation that Gospel which had saved him. Haller, on the contrary, although only thirty-five years old, moved with a measured step, spoke with gravity, and proclaimed the new doctrines with unusual circumspection. The old man had taken the young man’s part, and the youth that of the gray-beard.

Zwingle, whose eye nothing escaped, saw that a favourable hour for Berne was coming, and immediately gave the signal. “The dove commissioned to examine the state of the waters is

returning with an olive-branch into the ark," wrote he to Haller; "come forth now, thou second Noah, and take possession of the land. Enforce, be earnest, and fix deeply in the hearts of men the hooks and grapnels of the Word of God, so that they can never again be rid of them."—"Your bears," wrote he to Thomas ab Hofen, "have again put forth their claws. Please God that they do not draw them back until they have torn everything in pieces that opposes Jesus Christ."

Haller and his friends were on the point of replying to this appeal, when their situation became complicated. Some anabaptists, who formed every where the extreme party, arriving at Berne in 1527, led away the people from the evangelical preachers "on account of the presence of idols." Haller had a useless conference with them. "To what dangers is not Christianity exposed," cried he, "wherever these furies have crept in!"2 There has never been any revival in the Church, without the hierarchical or radical sects endeavouring to disturb it. Haller, although alarmed, still maintained his unalterable meekness. "The magistrates are desirous of banishing them," said he; "but it is our duty to drive out their errors, and not their persons. Let us employ no other weapons than the sword of the Spirit." It was not from popery that the Reformers had learnt these principles. A public disputation took place. Six anabaptists declared themselves convinced, and two others were sent out of the country. The decisive moment was drawing near. The two great powers of the age, the Gospel and the Papacy, were stirring with equal energy; the Bernese councils were to speak out. They saw on the one hand the five primitive cantons taking daily a more threatening attitude, and announcing that the Austrian would soon reappear in Helvetia, to reduce it once more into subjection to Rome; and on the other they beheld the Gospel every day gaining ground in the confederation. Which was destined to prevail in Switzerland—the lances of Austria or the Word of God? In the uncertainty in which the councils were placed, they resolved to side with the majority. Where could they discover a firm footing, if not there? Vox populi, vox Dei. "No one," said they, "can make any change of his own private authority: the consent of all is necessary." The government of Berne had to decide between two mandates, both emanating from its authority: that of 1523, in favour of the free preaching of the Gospel, and that of 1526, in favour "of the sacraments, the saints, the mother of God, and the ornaments of the churches." State messengers set out and traversed every parish: the people gave their votes against every law contrary to liberty, and the councils, supported by the nation, decreed that "the Word of God should be preached publicly and freely, even if it should be in opposition to the statutes and doctrines of men." Such was the victory of the Gospel and of the people over the oligarchy and the priests.

Contentions immediately arose throughout the canton, and every parish became a battle-field. The peasants began to dispute with the priests and monks, in reliance on the Holy Scriptures. "If the mandate of our lords," said many, "accords to our pastors the liberty of preaching, why should it not grant the flock the liberty of acting?"—"Peace, peace!" cried the councils, alarmed at their own boldness. But the flocks resolutely declared that they would send away the mass, and keep their pastors and the Bible. Upon this the papal partisans grew violent. The banneret Kuttler called the good people of Emmenthal, "heretics, rascals, wantons;" but these peasants obliged him to make an apology.2 The bailiff of Trachselwald was more cunning. Seeing the inhabitants of Rudersweil listening with eagerness to the Word of God, which a pious minister was preaching to them, he came with fifers and trumpeters, and interrupted the sermon, inviting the village girls by words and by lively tunes to quit the church for the dance.

These singular provocations did not check the Reform. Six of the city companies (the shoemakers, weavers, merchants, bakers, stone-masons, and carpenters) abolished in the churches and convents of their district all masses, anniversaries, advowsons, and prebends. Three others (the tanners, smiths, and tailors) prepared to imitate them; the seven remaining companies were undecided, except the butchers, who were enthusiastic for the pope. Thus the majority of the citizens had embraced the Gospel. Many parishes throughout the canton had done the same; and the avoyer d'Erlach, that great adversary of the Reformation, could no longer keep the torrent within bounds.

Yet the attempt was made: the bailiffs were ordered to note the irregularities and dissolute lives of the monks and nuns; all women of loose morals were even turned out of the cloisters. But it was not against these abuses alone that the Reformation was levelled; it was against the institutions themselves, and against popery on which they were founded. The people ought therefore to decide.—"The Bernese clergy," said they, "must be convoked, as at Zurich, and let the two doctrines be discussed in a solemn conference. We will proceed afterwards in conformity with the result." On the Sunday following the festival of Saint Martin (11th November), the council and citizens unanimously resolved that a public disputation should take place at the beginning of the succeeding year. "The glory of God and his Word," said they, "will at length appear!" Bernese and strangers, priests and laymen, all were invited by letter or by printed notice to come and discuss the controverted points, and by Scripture alone, without the glosses of the ancients, and renouncing all subtleties and abusive language. Who knows, said they, whether all the members of the ancient Swiss confederation may not be thus brought to unity of faith?

Thus, within the walls of Berne, the struggle was about to take place that would decide the fate of Switzerland; for the example of the Bernese must necessarily lead with it a great part of the confederation. The Five Cantons, alarmed at this intelligence, met at Lucerne, where they were joined by Friburg, Soleure, and Glaris. There was nothing either in the letter or in the spirit of the federal compact to obstruct religious liberty. "Every state," said Zurich, "is free to choose the doctrine that it desires to profess." The Waldstettes, on the contrary, wished to deprive the cantons of this independence, and to subject them to the federal majority and to the pope. They protested, therefore, in the name of the confederation, against the proposed discussion. "Your ministers," wrote they to Berne, "dazzled and confounded at Baden by the brightness of truth, would desire by this new discussion to hide their shame; but we entreat you to desist from a plan so contrary to our ancient alliances."—"It is not we who have infringed them," replied Berne; "it is much rather your haughty missive that has destroyed them. We will not abandon the Word of our Lord Jesus Christ." Upon this the Roman cantons decided on refusing a safe-conduct to those who should proceed to Berne. This was giving token of sinister intentions. The Bishops of Lausanne, Constance, Basle, and Sion, being invited to the conference under pain of forfeiting all their privileges in the canton of Berne, replied that, since it was to be a disputation according to the Scriptures, they had nothing to do with it. Thus did these priests forget the words of one of the most illustrious Roman doctors of the fifteenth century: "In heavenly things man should be independent of his fellows, and trust in God alone." The Romanist doctors followed the example of the bishops. Eck, Murner, Cochlœus, and many others, said wherever they went: "We have received the letter of this leper, of this accursed heretic, Zwingle. They want to take the Bible for their judge; but has the Bible a voice against those who do it violence? We will not go to Berne; we will not crawl into that obscure

corner of the world; we will not go and combat in that gloomy cavern, in that school of heretics. Let these villians come out into the open air, and contend with us on level ground, if they have the Bible on their side, as they say." The emperor ordered the discussion to be adjourned; but on the very day of its opening, the council of Berne replied, that as every one was already assembled, delay would be impossible.

Then, in despite of the doctors and bishops, the Helvetic Church, assembled to decide upon its doctrines. Had it a right to do so? No;—not if priests and bishops were appointed as Rome pretends, to form a mystic bond between the Church and our Lord; Yes—if they were established, as the Bible declares, only to satisfy that law of order by virtue of which all society should have a directing power. The opinions of the Swiss reformers in this respect were not doubtful. The grace which creates the minister comes from the Lord, thought they; but the Church examines this grace, acknowledges it, proclaims it by the elders, and in every act in which faith is concerned, it can always appeal from the minister to the Word of God. Try the spirits—prove all things, it says to the faithful. The Church is the judge of controversies; and it is this duty, in which it should never be found wanting, that it was now about to fulfil in the disputation at Berne. The contest seemed unequal. On one side appeared the Roman hierarchy, a giant which had increased in strength during many centuries; and on the other, there was at first but one weak and timid man, the modest Berthold Haller. "I cannot wield the sword of the Word," said he in alarm to his friends. "If you do not stretch out your hands to me, all is over." He then threw himself trembling at the feet of the Lord, and soon arose enlightened and exclaiming, "Faith in the Saviour gives me courage, and scatters all my fears."

Yet he could not remain alone: all his looks were turned towards Zwingle: "It was I who took the bath at Baden," wrote Œcolampadius to Haller, "and now it is Zwingle who should lead off the bear-dance in Berne."—"We are between the hammer and the anvil," wrote Haller to Zwingle; "we hold the wolf by the ears, and know not how to let him go.3 The houses of De Watteville, Noll, Tremp, and Berthold are open to you. Come, then, and command the battle in person."

Zwingle did not hesitate. He demanded permission of the Council of Zurich to visit Berne, in order to show there "that his teaching was full of the fear of God, and not blasphemous; mighty to spread concord through Switzerland, and not to cause troubles and dissension." At the very time that Haller received news of Zwingle's coming, Œcolampadius wrote to him: "I am ready, if it be necessary, to sacrifice my life. Let us inaugurate the new year, by embracing one another to the glory of Jesus Christ." Other doctors wrote to the same effect. "These, then," cried Haller with emotion, "these are the auxiliaries that the Lord sends to my infirmity, to aid me in fighting this rude battle!"

It was necessary to proceed with circumspection, for the violence of the oligarchs and of the Five Cantons is well known. The doctors of Glaris, Schaffhausen, St. Gall, Constance, Ulm, Lindau, and Augsburg assembled at Zurich, to proceed under the same escort as Zwingle, Pellican, Collin, Megander, Grossman, the commander Schmidt, Bullinger, and a great number of the rural clergy, selected to accompany the reformer. "When all this game traverses the country," said the pensioners, "we will go a-hunting, and see if we cannot kill some, or at least catch them and put them into a cage."

Three hundred chosen men, selected from the companies of Zurich and from the parishes within its precincts, donned their breastplates and shouldered their arquebuses; but in order not to give the journey of these doctors the appearance of a military expedition, they took neither colours, fife, nor drum; and the trumpeter of the city, a civil officer, rode alone at the head of the company. On Tuesday the 2d of January they set out. Never had Zwingle appeared more cheerful. “Glory be to the Lord,” said he, “my courage increases every day.” The burgomaster Roust, the town-clerk of Mangoldt, with Funck and Jaëkli, both masters of arts, and all four delegated by the council, were on horseback near him. They reached Berne on the 4th of January, having had only one or two unimportant alarms. The Cordeliers Church was to serve as the place of conference. Tillmann, the city architect, had made arrangements according to a plan furnished by Zwingle. A large platform had been erected, on which were placed two tables, and around them sat the champions of the two parties. On the evangelical side were remarked, besides Haller, Zwingle, and Œcolampadius, many distinguished men of the Reformed Church, strangers to Switzerland, as Bucer, Capito, and Ambrose Blarer. On the side of the Papacy, Dr. Treger of Friburg, who enjoyed a high reputation, appeared to keep up the fire of the combat. As for the rest, whether through fear or contempt, the most famous Roman doctors were absent. The first act was to publish the regulations of the conference. “No proof shall be proposed that is not drawn from, the Holy Scriptures, and no explanation shall be given of those Scriptures that does not come from Scripture itself, explaining obscure texts by such as are clear.” After this, one of the secretaries, rising to call over the roll, shouted with a loud voice that re-echoed through the church,—The Bishop of Constance! No one replied. He did the same for the Bishops of Zion, Basle, and Lausanne. Neither of these prelates was present at this meeting, either in person or by deputy. The Word of God being destined to reign alone, the Roman hierarchy did not appear. These two powers cannot walk together. There were present about three hundred and fifty Swiss and German ecclesiastics. On Tuesday, 7th January, 1528, the burgomaster Vadian of St. Gall, one of the presidents, opened the disputation. After him the aged Kolb stood up and said: “God is at this moment agitating the whole world; let us, therefore, humble ourselves before him;” and he pronounced with fervour a confession of sins. This being ended, the first thesis was read. It ran thus: “The holy christian Church, of which Christ is the sole head, is born of the Word of God, abideth in it, and listeneth not to the voice of a stranger.”

Alexis Grat, a Dominican monk—“The word sole is not in Seripture. Christ has left a vicar here below.”

Haller.—“The vicar that Christ left is the Holy Ghost.”

Treger.—“See then to what a pass things have come these last ten years. This man calls himself a Lutheran, that a Zwinglian; a third, a Carlstadtian; a fourth an Œcolampadist, a fifth, an Anabaptist.” …

Bucer.—“Whosoever preaches Jesus as the only Saviour, we recognise as our brother. Neither Luther, nor Zwingle, nor Œcolampadius, desires the faithful to bear his name. Besides, you should not boast so much of a mere external unity. When Antichrist gained the upperhand throughout the world, in the east by Mahomet, in the west by the pope, he was able to keep the people in unity of error. God permits divisions, in order that those who belong to him may learn not to look to men, but to the testimony of the Word, and to the assurance of the Holy Ghost in their hearts. Thus then,

dearly beloved brethren, to the Scriptures, the Scriptures! O Church of Berne, hold fast to the teaching of Him who said, Come unto me, and not, Come unto my vicar!" The disputation then turned successively on Tradition, the merits of Christ, Transubstantiation, the Mass, Prayer to the Saints, Purgatory, Images, Celibacy, and the disorders of the Clergy. Rome found numerous defenders, and among others, Murer, priest of Rapperswyl, who had said: "If they wish to burn the two ministers of Berne, I will undertake to carry them both to the stake." On Sunday the 19th of January, the day on which the doctrine of the mass was attacked, Zwingle, desirous of acting on the people also, went into the pulpit, and reciting the Apostles Creed, made a pause after these words: "He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead." These three articles," said he, "are in contradiction to the mass." All his hearers redoubled their attention; and a priest, clothed in his sacerdotal vestments, who was preparing to celebrate the holy sacrifice in one of the chapels, stopped in astonishment at Zwingle's words. Erect before the consecrated altar on which lay the chalice and the body of the Saviour with eyes fixed upon the reformer, whose words electrified the people, a prey to the most violent struggles, and beaten down by the weight of truth, the agitated priest resolved to give up everything for it. In the presence of the whole assembly, he stripped off his priestly ornaments, and throwing them on the altar, he exclaimed: "Unless the mass reposes on a more solid foundation, I can celebrate it no longer!" The noise of this conversion, effected at the very foot of the altar, immediately spread through the city, and it was regarded as an important omen. So long as the mass remains, Rome has gained everything: as soon as the mass falls, Rome has lost all. The mass is the creative principle of the whole system of Popery.

Three days later, on the 22d January, was the feast of St. Vincent, the patron of the city. The disputation that had been continued during Sunday was suspended on that day. The canons asked the council what they were to do. "Such of you," replied the council, "as receive the doctrine of the theses ought not to say mass; the others may perform divine worship as usual." Every preparation was accordingly made for the solemnity. On St. Vincent's eve the bells from every steeple announced the festival to the inhabitants of Berne. On the morrow the sacristans lit up the tapers; incense filled the temple, but no one appeared. No priests to say mass, no faithful to hear it! Already there was a vast chasm in the Roman sanctuary, a deep silence, as on the field of battle, where none but the dead are lying. In the evening it was the custom for the canons to chant vespers with great pomp. The organist was at his post, but no one else appeared. The poor man left thus alone beholding with sorrow the fall of that worship by which he gained his bread, gave utterance to his grief by playing a mourning-hymn instead of the majestic Magnificat: "Oh, wretched Judas, what hast thou done, that thou hast thus betrayed our Lord?" After this sad farewell, he rose and went out. Almost immediately, some men, excited by the passions of the moment, fell upon his beloved organ, an accomplice in their eyes of so many superstitious rites, and their violent hands broke it to pieces. No more mass, no more organ, no more anthems! A new Supper and new hymns shall succeed the rites of popery. On the next day there was the same silence. Suddenly, however, a band of men with loud voices and hasty step was heard. It was the Butchers' Company that, at this moment so fatal to Rome, desired to support it. They advanced, carrying small fir-trees and green branches, for the decoration of their chapel. In the midst of them was a foreign priest, behind whom walked a few poor scholars. The priest officiated; the sweet voices of the scholars supplied the place of the mute organ, and the butchers retired proud of their victory. The discussion was drawing to a close; the combatants had dealt vigorous

blows. Burgauer, pastor of St. Gall, had maintained the real presence in the host; but on the 19th January he declared himself convinced by the reasonings of Zwingle, Œcolampadius, and Bucer; and Matthias, minister of Saengen, had done the same. A conference in Latin afterwards took place between Farel and a Parisian doctor. The latter advanced a strange argument. “Christians,” said he, “are enjoined to obey the devil; for it is said, Submit unto thine adversary (Matthew 5:25); now our adversary is the devil. How much more then should we submit to the Church!” Loud bursts of laughter greeted this remarkable syllogism. A discussion with the anabaptists terminated the conference. The two councils decreed that the mass should be abolished, and that every one might remove from the churches the ornaments he had placed there.

Immediately twenty-five altars and a great number of images were destroyed in the cathedral, yet without disorder or bloodshed; and the children began to sing in the streets (as Luther informs us): By the Word at length we’re saved From a god in a mortar brayed. The hearts of the adherents of the Papacy were filled with bitterness as they heard the objects of their adoration fall one after another. “Should any man,” said John Schneider, “take away the altar of the Butchers’ Company, I will take away his life.” Peter Thorman compared the cathedral stripped of its ornaments to a stable. “When the good folks of the Oberland come to market,” added he, “they will be happy to put up their cattle in it.” And John Zehender member of the Great Council, to show the little value he set on such a place of worship, entered it riding on an ass, insulting and cursing the Reform. A Bernese, who chanced to be there, having said to him, “It is by God’s will that these images have been pulled down,”—“Say rather by the devil’s,” replied Zehender; “when have you ever been with God so as to learn his will?” He was fined twenty livres, and expelled from the council. What times! what manners!” exclaimed many Romanists; “what culpable neglect! How easy would it have been to prevent so great a misfortune! Oh! if our bishops had only been willing to occupy themselves more with learning and a little less with their mistresses!”2 This Reform was necessary. When Christianity in the fourth century had seen the favour of princes succeed to persecution, a crowd of heathens rushing into the church had brought with them the images, pomps, statues, and demigods of paganism, and a likeness of the mysteries of Greece and Asia, and above all of Egypt, had banished the Word of Jesus Christ from the christian oratories. This Word returning in the sixteenth century, a purification must necessarily take place; but it could not be done without grievous rents. The departure of the strangers was drawing near. On the 28th January, the day after that on which the images and altars had been thrown down, while their piled fragments still encumbered here and there the porches and aisles of the cathedral, Zwingle crossing these eloquent ruins, once more ascended the pulpit in the midst of an immense crowd. In great emotion, directing his eyes by turns on these fragments and on the people, he said: “Victory has declared for the truth, but perseverance alone can complete the triumph. Christ persevered even until death. Ferendo vincitur fortuna. Cornelius Scipio, after the disaster at Cannæ, having learnt that the generals surviving the slaughter meditated quitting Italy, entered the senate-house, although not yet of senatorial age, and drawing his sword, constrained the affrighted chiefs to swear that they would not abandon Rome. Citizens of Berne, to you I address the same demand: do not abandon Jesus Christ.”

We may easily imagine the effect produced on the people by such words, pronounced with Zwingle’s energetic eloquence.

Then, turning towards the fragments that lay near him: “Behold,” said he, “behold these idols! Behold them conquered, mute, and shattered before us! These corpses must be dragged to the shambles, and the gold you have spent upon such foolish images must henceforth be devoted to comforting in their misery the living images of God. Feeble souls, ye shed tears over these sad idols; do ye not see that they break, do ye not hear that they crack like any other wood, or like any other stone? Look! here is one deprived of its head…. (Zwingle pointed to the image, and all the people fixed their eyes upon it); here is another maimed of its arms. If this ill usage had done any harm to the saints that are in heaven, and if they had the power ascribed to them, would you have been able, I pray, to cut off their arms and their heads?”

“Now then,” said the powerful orator in conclusion, “stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1). Fear not! That God who has enlightened you, will enlighten your confederates also, and Switzerland, regenerated by the Holy Ghost, shall flourish in righteousness and peace.” The words of Zwingle were not lost. The mercy of God called forth that of man. Some persons condemned to die for sedition were pardoned, and all the exiles were recalled. “Should we not have done so,” said the council, “had a great prince visited us? Shall we not much more do so, now that the King of kings and the Redeemer of our souls has made his entry among us, bearing an everlasting amnesty?” The Romish cantons, exasperated at the result of the discussion, sought to harass the return of the doctors. On arriving before Bremgarten, they found the gates closed. The bailiff Sehutz, who had accompanied them with two hundred men-at-arms, placed two halberdiers before Zwingle’s horse, two behind him, and one on each side; then putting himself at the Reformer’s left hand, while the burgomaster Roust stationed himself on the right, he ordered the escort to proceed, lance in rest. The avoyers of the town being intimidated, came to a parley; the gates were opened; the escort traversed Bremgarten amidst an immense crowd, and on the 1st February reached Zurich without accident, which Zwingle re-entered, says Luther, like a conqueror. The Roman-catholic party did not dissemble the cheek they had received. “Our cause is falling,” said the friends of Rome. “Oh! that we had had men skilled in the Bible! The impetuosity of Zwingle supported our adversaries; his ardour was never relaxed. That brute has more knowledge than was imagined. Alas! alas! the greater party has vanquished the better.”2 The Council of Berne, desirous of separating from the pope, relied upon the people. On the 30th January, messengers going from house to house convoked the citizens; and on the 2d February, the burgesses and inhabitants, masters and servants, uniting in the cathedral, and forming but one family, with hands upraised to heaven, swore to defend the two councils in all they should undertake for the good of the State or of the Church. On the 7th February 1528, the council published a general edict of Reform, and “threw for ever from the necks of the Bernese the yoke of the four bishops, who,” said they, “know well how to shear their sheep, but not how to feed them.” At the same time the reformed doctrines were spreading among the people. In every quarter might be heard earnest and keen dialogues, written in rhyme by Manuel, in which the pale and expiring mass, stretched on her death-bed, was loudly calling for all her physicians, and finding their advice useless, at length dictating with a broken voice her last will and testament, which the people received with loud bursts of laughter. The Reformation generally, and that of Berne in particular, has been reproached as being brought about by political motives. But, on the contrary, Berne, which of all the Helvetic states was the greatest favourite of the court of Rome—which had in its canton neither a bishop to dismiss nor a powerful clergy to humiliate—Berne, whose most influential

families, the Weingartens, Manuels, Mays, were reluctant to sacrifice the pay and the service of the foreigner, and all whose traditions were conservative, ought to have opposed the movement. The Word of God was the power that overcame this political tendency. At Berne, as elsewhere, it was neither a learned, nor a democratic, nor a sectarian spirit that gave birth to the Reformation. Undoubtedly, the men of letters, the liberals, the sectarian enthusiasts, rushed into the great struggle of the sixteenth century; but the duration of the Reform would not have been long had it received its life from them. The primitive strength of Christianity, reviving after ages of long and complete prostration, was the creative principle of the Reformation; and it was ere long seen separating distinctly from the false allies that had presented themselves, rejecting an incredulous learning by elevating the study of the classics, checking all demagogic anarchy by upholding the principles of true liberty, and repudiating the enthusiastic sects by consecrating the rights of the Word and of the Christian people. But while we maintain that the Reformation was at Berne, as elsewhere, a truly christian work, we are far from saying that it was not useful to the canton in a political sense. All the European states that have embraced the Reformation have been elevated, while those which have combated it have been lowered.

CHAPTER III The Reform accepted by the People—Faith, Purity, and Charity—First Evangelical Communion—Bernese Proposition to the Diet—Cavern, and Head of Beatus—Threatening Storm from the mountains—Revolt—Confusion in Berne—Unterwalden crosses the Brunig—Energy of Berne—Victory—Political Advantages.

It now became a question of propagating throughout all the canton the Reform accomplished in the city. On the 17th February, the council invited the rural parishes to assemble on the following Sunday to receive and deliberate upon a communication. The whole Church, according to the ancient usage of Christendom, was about to decide for itself on its dearest interests. The assemblies were crowded; all conditions and ages were present. Beside the hoary and the trembling head of the aged man might be seen the sparkling eye of the youthful herdsman. The messengers of the council first read the edict of the Reformation. They next proclaimed that those who accepted it should remain, and that those who rejected it should withdraw.

Almost all the assembled Parishioners remained in their places. An immense majority of the people chose the Bible. In some few parishes this decision was accompanied with energetic demonstrations. At Arberg, Zofingen, Brugg, Arau, and Buren, the images were burnt. “At Stauffberg,” it was said, “idols were seen carrying idols, and throwing one another into the flames.” The images and the mass had disappeared from this vast canton. “A great cry resounded far and wide,” writes Bullinger. In one day Rome had fallen throughout the country, without treachery, violence, or seduction, by the strength of truth alone. In some places, however, in the Hasli, at Frutigen, Unterseen, and Grindewald, the malcontents were heard to say: “If they abolish the mass, they should also abolish tithes.”2 The Roman form of worship was preserved in the Upper Simmenthal, a proof that there was no compulsion on the part of the state. The wishes of the canton being thus manifested, Berne completed the Reformation. All excesses in gambling, drinking, and dancing, and all unbecoming dress, were forbidden by proclamation. The houses of ill-fame were destroyed, and their wretched inhabitants expelled from the city. A consistory was appointed to watch over the public morals.

Seven days after the edict, the poor were received into the Dominican cloister, and a little later the convent of the Island was changed into an hospital; the princely monastery of Königsfield was also devoted to the same useful purpose. Charity followed everywhere in the steps of faith. “We will show,” said the council, “that we do not use the property of the convents to our own advantage;” and they kept their word. The poor were clothed with the priests’ garments; the orphans decorated with the ornaments of the church. So strict were they in these distributions, that the state was forced to borrow money to pay the annuities of the monks and nuns; and for eight days there was not a crown in the public treasury. Thus it was that the State, as it has been continually asserted, grew rich with the spoils of the Church! At the same time they invited from Zurich the ministers Hofmeister, Megander, and Rhellican, to spread throughout the canton the knowledge of the classics and of the Holy Scriptures. At Easter the Lord’s Supper was celebrated for the first time according to the evangelical rites. The two councils and all the people, with few exceptions, partook of it. Strangers were struck with the solemnity of this first communion. The citizens of Berne and their wives, dressed in decent garments, which recalled the ancient Swiss simplicity, approached Christ’s table with gravity and fervour; the heads of the state showed the same holy devotion as the people, and piously received the bread from the hands of Berthold Haller. Each one felt that the Lord was among them. Thus Hofmeister, charmed at this solemn service, exclaimed: “How can the adversaries of the Word, refuse to embrace the truth at last, seeing that God himself renders it so striking a testimony!”

Yet everything was not changed. The friends of the Gospel witnessed with pain the sons of the chief families of the republic parading the streets in costly garments, inhabiting sumptuous houses in the city, dwelling in magnificent mansions in the country—true seignorial abodes, following the chase with hound and horn, sitting down to luxurious banquets, conversing in licentious language, or talking with enthusiasm of foreign wars and of the French party. “Ah,” said the pious people, “could we but see old Switzerland revive with its ancient virtues!”

There was soon a powerful reaction. The annual renewal of the magistracy being about to take place, the councillor Butschelbach, a violent adversary of the Gospel, was ejected for adultery: four other senators and twenty members of the Great Council were also replaced by friends of the Reformation and of public morality. Emboldened by this victory, the evangelical Bernese proposed in the diet that every Swiss should renounce foreign service. At these words the warriors of Lucerne started under their weighty armour, and replied with a haughty smile: “When you have returned to the ancient faith we will listen to your homilies.” All the members of the government, assembled at Berne in sovereign council, resolved to set the example, and solemnly abjured the pay of foreign princes. Thus the Reformation showed its faith by its works.

Another struggle took place. Above the lake of Thun rises a chain of steep rocks, in the midst of which is situated a deep cavern, where, if we may believe tradition, the pious Breton, Beatus, came in ancient times to devote himself to all the austerities of an ascetic life; but especially to the conversion of the surrounding district that was still heathen. It was affirmed that the head of this saint, who had died in Gaul, was preserved in this cavern; and hence pilgrims resorted thither from every quarter. The pious citizens of Zug, Schwytz, Uri, and Argovia, groaned, as they thought that the holy head of the apostle of Switzerland would hereafter remain in a land of heretics. The abbot of the celebrated convent of Muri in Argovia and some of his friends set out, as in ancient times the Argonauts went in quest of the golden fleece. They arrived in the humble guise of poor pilgrims,

and entered the cavern; one skilfully took away the head, another placed it mysteriously in his hood, and they disappeared. The head of a dead man!—and this was all that Rome saved from the shipwreck. But even this conquest was more than doubtful. The Bernese, who had gained information of the procession, sent three deputies on the 18th May, who, according to their report, found this famous head, and caused it to be decently interred before their eyes in the cemetry belonging to the convent of Interlaken. This contest about a skull characterizes the Church that had just given way in Berne before the vivifying breath of the Gospel. Let the dead bury their dead. The Reformation had triumphed in Berne; but a storm was gathering unperceived in the mountains, which threatened to overthrow it. The State in union with the Church recalled its ancient renown. Seeing itself attacked by arms, it took up arms in its turn, and acted with that decision which had formerly saved Rome in similar dangers. A secret discontent was fermenting among the people of the valleys and mountains. Some were still attached to the ancient faith; some had only quitted the mass because they thought they would be exempted from tithes. Ancient ties of neighbourhood, a common origin, and similarity of manners, had united the inhabitants of the Obwald (Unterwalden) to those of the Hasli and of the Bernese Oberland, which were separated only by Mount Brunig and the high pass of the Yoke. A rumour had been set afloat that the government of Berne had profaned the spot where the precious remains of Beatus, the apostle of these mountains, were preserved, and indignation immediately filled these pastoral people, who adhere firmer than others to the customs and superstitions of their forefathers. But while some were excited by attachment to Rome, others were aroused by a desire for liberty. The subjects of the monastery of Interlaken, oppressed by the monkish rule, began to cry out, “We desire to become our own masters, and no longer pay rent or tithes.” The provost of the convent in affright ceded all his rights to Berne for the sum of one hundred thousand florins; and a bailiff accompanied by several councillors, went and took possession of the monastery. A report was soon spread that they were about to transfer all the property of the convent to Berne; and on the 21st April bands of men from Grindelwald, Lauterbrunnen, Ringelberg, Brienz, and other places, crossed the lake, or issued from their lofty valleys, and taking forcible possession of the cloister, swore they would go even to Berne in quest of the goods which the citizens had dared to take from them.

They were quieted for a time; But in the beginning of June, the people, at the instigation of Unterwalden, again arose in all the Hasli. The Landsgemeinde having been convoked, it decided by a majority of forty voices for the re-establishment of the mass. The pastor Jaëkli was immediately expelled; a few men crossed the Brunig, and brought back some priests from Unterwalden, to the sound of fifes and trumpets. They were seen from afar descending the mountain, and shouts, both loud and long, replied to them from the bottom of the valley. At last they arrived:—all embraced one another, and the people celebrated the mass anew with great demonstrations of joy. At the same time, the people of Frutigen and of the fertile valley of Adelboden assailed the castellan Reuter, carried off his flocks, and established a Roman-catholic priest in the place of their pastor. At Aeschi even the women took up arms, drove out the pastor from the church, and brought bach the images in triumph. The revolt spread from hamlet to hamlet and from valley to valley, and again took possession of Interlaken. All the malcontents assembled there on the 22d October, and swore, with hands upraised to heaven, boldly to defend their rights and liberty. The republic was in great danger. All the kings of Europe, and almost all the cantons of Switzerland, were opposed to the Gospel. The report of an army from Austria, destined to

interpose in favour of the pope, spread through the reformed cantons. Seditious meetings took place every day,3 and the people refused to pay their magistrates either quit-rent, service, tithes, or even obedience, unless they shut their eyes to the designs of the Roman-catholics. The council became confused. Amazed and confounded, exposed to the mistrust of some and to the insults of others, they had the cowardice to separate under the pretext of gathering the vintage, and folding their arms, in the presence of this great danger, they waited until a Messiah should descend from heaven (says a reformer) to save the republic. The ministers pointed out the danger, forewarned and conjured them; but they all turned a deaf ear. “Christ languishes in Berne,” said Haller, “and appears nigh perishing.” The people were in commotion: they assembled, made speeches, murmured, and shed tears! Everywhere—in all their tumultuous meetings—might be heard this complaint of Manuel on Papists and the Papacy:2 With rage our foes their hateful threats denounce, Because, O Lord, we love Thee best of all;

Because at sight of Thee the idols fall; And war and bloodshed, shuddering, we renounce.

Berne was like a troubled sea, and Haller, who listened to the roaring of the waves, wrote in the deepest anguish: “Wisdom has forsaken the wise, counsel has departed from the councillors, and energy from the chiefs and from the people. The number of the seditious augments every day. Alas! what can the Bear, oppressed with sleep, oppose to so many and to such sturdy hunters? If Christ withdraw himself, we shall all perish.”

These fears were on the point of being realized. The smaller cantons claimed to have the power of interfering in matters of faith without infringing the federal compact. While six hundred men of Uri kept themselves ready to depart, eight hundred men of Unterwalden, bearing pine-branches in their hats, symbols of the old faith, with haughty heads, with gloomy and threatening looks, crossed the Brunig under the ancient banner of the country, which was borne by Gaspard de Flue, a very unworthy grandson of the great Nicholas. This was the first violation of the national peace for many a year. Uniting at Hasli with the men of Brienz, this little army crossed the lake, passed under the cascades of Giesbach, and arrived at Unterseen, thirteen hundred strong, and ready to march on Berne to re-establish the pope, the idols, and the mass in that rebellious city. In Switzerland, as in Germany, the Reformation at its outset met with a peasant war. At the first success, new combatants would arrive and pour through the passes of the Brunig upon the unfaithful republic. The army was only six leagues from Berne, and already the sons of Unterwalden were proudly brandishing their swords on the banks of the lake of Thun.

Thus were the federal alliances trodden under foot by those very persons who aspired to the name of conservatives. Berne had the right to repel this criminal attack by force. Suddenly calling to mind her ancient virtues, the city roused herself, and vowed to perish rather than tolerate the intervention of Unterwalden, the restoration of the mass, and the fiery violence of the peasants. There was at that moment in the hearts of the Bernese one of those inspirations that come from above, and which save nations as well as individuals. “Let the strength of the city of Berne,” exclaimed the avoyer d’Erlach, “be in God alone, and in the loyalty of its people.” All the council and the whole body of the citizens replied by noisy acclamations. The great banner was hastily brought forth, the townspeople ran to arms, the companies assembled and the troops of the republic marched out with the valiant avoyer at their head.

Scarcely had the Bernese government acted thus energetically, before it saw the confidence of its friends increase, and the courage of its adversaries diminish. God never abandons a people who are true to themselves. Many of the Oberlanders became intimidated, and deserted the ranks of the revolt. At the same time deputies from Basle and Lucerne represented to Unterwalden that it was trampling the ancient alliances under foot. The rebels, disheartened by the firmness of the republic, abandoned Unterseen, and retired to the convent of Interlaken. And soon after, when they beheld the decision of their adversaries, distressed besides by the cold rains that fell incessantly, and fearing that the snow, by covering the mountains, would prevent their return to their homes, the men of Unterwalden evacuated Interlaken during the night. The Bernese, to the number of five thousand men, entered it immediately, and summoned the inhabitants of the Hasli and of the bailiwick of Interlaken to assemble on the 4th November in the plain that surrounds the convent. The day being arrived, the Bernese army drew up in order of battle, and then formed a circle within which D'Erlach ordered the peasants to enter. Hardly had he placed the rebels on the left and the loyal citizens on the right, before the muskets and artillery fired a general discharge, whose report re-echoing among the mountains, filled the insurgents with terror. They thought it the signal of their death. But the avoyer only intended to show that they were in the power of the republic. D'Erlach, who addressed them immediately after this strange exordium, had not finished his speech, before they all fell on their knees, and, confessing their crime, begged for pardon. The republic was satisfied: the rebellion was over. The banners of the district were carried to Berne, and the Eagle of Interlaken in union with the Wild-goat of Hasli, hung for a time beneath the Bear, as a trophy of this victory. Four of the chiefs were put to death, and an amnesty was granted to the remainder of the rebels. "The Bernese," said Zwingle, "as Alexander of Macedon in times of old, have cut the Gordian knot with courage and with glory." Thus thought the reformer of Zurich; but experience was one day to teach him, that to cut such knots is required a different sword from that of Alexander and of D'Erlach. However that may be, peace was restored, and in the valleys of the Hasli no other noise was heard than the sublime tumult borne afar by the Reichenbach and the surrounding torrents, as they pour from the mountain-tops their multitudinous and foaming waters.

While we repudiate on behalf of the Church the swords of the Helvetic bands, it would be unwise not to acknowledge the political advantages of this victory. The nobles had imagined that the Reformation of the Church would endanger the very existence of the State. They now had a proof to the contrary: they saw that when a nation receives the Gospel, its strength is doubled. The generous confidence with which, in the hour of danger, they had placed some of the adversaries of the Reformation at the head of affairs and of the army, produced the happiest results. All were now convinced that the Reformation would not trample old recollections under foot: prejudices were removed, hatred was appeased, the Gospel gradually rallied all hearts around it, and then was verified the ancient and remarkable saying, so often repeated by the friends and enemies of that powerful republic—"God is become a citizen of Berne."

CHAPTER IV

Reformation of St. Gall—Nuns of St. Catherine—Reformation of Glaris, Berne, Appenzell, the Grisons, Schaffhausen, and the Rhine District—A Popish Miracle—Obstacles in Basle—Zeal of the Citizens—Œcolampadius marries—Witticism of Erasmus—First Action—Half Measures—Petition of the Reformed The reformation of Berne was decisive for several cantons. The same wind that had blown from on high with so much power on the country of De Watteville

and Haller, threw down “the idols” in a great part of Switzerland. In many places the people were indignant at seeing the Reformation checked by the timid prudence of diplomatists; but when diplomacy was put to flight at Berne, the torrent so long restrained poured violently onwards.

Vadian, burgomaster of St. Gall, who presided at the Bernese disputation, had scarcely returned home, when the citizens, with the authority of the magistrates, removed the images from the church of St. Magnus, carried to the mint a hand of the patron saint in silver, with other articles of plate, and distributed among the poor the money they received in exchange; thus, like Mary, pouring their precious ointment on the head of Christ. The people of St. Gall, being curious to unveil the ancient mysteries, laid their hands on the abbey itself, on the shrines and crosses which had so long been presented to their adoration; but instead of saintly relies, they found, to their great surprise, nothing but some resin, a few pieces of money, several paltry wooden images, some old rags, a skull, a large tooth, and a snail’s shell! Rome, instead of that noble fall which marks the ends of great characters, sunk in the midst of stupid superstitions, shameful frauds, and the ironical laughter of a whole nation.

Such discoveries unfortunately excited the passions of the multitude. One evening some evil-disposed persons, wishing to alarm the poor nuns of St. Catherine, who had obstinately resisted the Reform, surrounded the convent with loud cries. In vain did the nuns barricade the doors: the walls were soon scaled, and the good wine, meat, confectionaries, and all the far from ascetic delicacies of the cloister became the prey of these rude jesters. Another persecution awaited them. Doctor Schappeler having been appointed their catechist, they were recommended to lay aside their monastic dress, and to attend his heretical sermons “clothed like all the world,” said the sister Wiborath. Some of them embraced the Reform, but thirty others preferred exile. On the 5th February, 1528, a numerous synod framed the constitution of the church of St. Gall. The struggle was more violent at Glaris. The seeds of the Gospel truth, which Zwingle had scattered there, prospered but little. The men in power anxiously rejected every innovation, and the people loved better “to leap and dance, and work miracles, glass in hand,” as an old chronicle says, “than to busy themselves about the Gospel.” The Landsgemeinde having pronounced, on the 15th May, 1528, in favour of the mass by a majority of thirty-three voices, the two parties were marked out with greater distinctness: the images were broken at Matt, Elm, and Bettschwanden, and as each man remained aloof in his own house and village, there was no longer in the canton either council of state or tribunal of justice. At Schwanden, the minister Peter Rumelin, having invited the Roman-catholics to a disputation with him in the church, the latter, instead of discussing, marched in procession to the sound of drums round the place of worship in which the Reformed were assembled, and then rushing into the pastor’s house, which was situated in the middle of the city, destroyed the stoves and the windows: the irritated Reformed took their revenge and broke the images. On the 15th April, 1529, an agreement was concluded, by virtue of which every man was free to choose between the mass and the sermon. At Wesen, where Schwytz exercised sovereignty conjointly with Glaris, the deputies of the former canton threatened the people. Upon this the young men took the images out of the churches, carried them to an open place near the banks of the picturesque lake of Wallenstadt, above which soar the mountains of the Ammon and of the Seven Electors, and cried: “Look! this road (that by the lake) leads to Coire and to Rome; that (to the south) to Glaris; this other (to the west) to Schwytz; and the fourth (by the Ammon) to St. Gall. Take which you please! But if you do not move off, you shall be burnt!” After waiting a few

moments, these young people flung the motionless images into the fire, and the Schwytz deputies, eye-witnesses of this execution, withdrew in consternation, and filled the whole canton with projects of vengeance that were but too soon realized. In the canton of Appenzell, where a conference had been opened, there suddenly appeared a band of Roman-catholics, armed with whips and clubs, and crying out; “Where are these preachers? we are resolved to put them out of the village.” These strange doctors wounded the ministers and dispersed the assembly with their whips. Out of the eight parishes of the canton, six embraced the Reform, and Appenzell became finally divided into two little sections, the one Romanist and the other Reformed. In the Grisons religious liberty was proclaimed; the parishes had the election of their pastors, several castles were rased to the ground to render all return to arbitrary government impossible, and the affrighted bishop went and hid in the Tyrol his anger and his desire for vengeance. “The Grisons,” said Zwingle, “advance daily. It is a nation that by its courage reminds us of the ancient Tuscans, and by its candour of the ancient Swiss.”

Schaffhausen, after having long “halted between two opinions,” at the summons of Zurich and of Berne removed the images from its churches without tumult or disorder. At the same time the Reformation invaded Thurgovia, the valley of the Rhine, and other bailiwicks subordinate to these cantons. In vain did the Roman-catholic cantons, that were in the majority, protest against it. “When temporal affairs are concerned,” replied Zurich and Berne, “we will not oppose a plurality of votes; but the Word of God cannot be subjected to the suffrages of men.” All the districts that lie along the banks of Thur, of the lake of Constance, and of the Upper Rhine, embraced the Gospel. The inhabitants of Mammeren, near the place where the Rhine issues from the lake, flung their images into the water. But the statue of St. Blaise, after remaining some time upright, and contemplating the ungrateful spot whence it was banished, swam across the lake to Catahorn, situated on the opposite shore, if we may believe the account of a monk named Lang. Even while running away, Popery worked it miracles.

Thus were the popular superstitions overthrown in Switzerland, and sometimes not without violence. Every great development in human affairs brings with it an energetic opposition to that which has existed. It necessarily contains an aggressive element, which ought to act freely, and by that means opens the new path. In the times of the Reformation the doctors attacked the pope, and the people the images. The movement almost always exceeded a just moderation. In order that human nature may make one step in advance, its pioneers must take many. Every superfluous step should be condemned, and yet we must acknowledge their necessity. Let us not forget this in the history of the Reformation, and especially in that of Switzerland.

Zurich was reformed; Berne had just become so: Basle still remained, before the great cities of the Confederation were gained over to the evangelical faith. The reformation of this learned city was the most important consequence resulting from that of the warlike Berne. For six years the Gospel had been preached in Basle. The meek and pious Œcolampadius was always waiting for happier times. “The darkness,” said he, “is about to retire before the rays of truth.” But his expectation was vain. A triple aristocracy—the superior clergy, the nobles, and the university—checked the free expansion of christian convictions. It was the middle classes who were destined to effect the triumph of the Reformation in Basle.2 Unhappily the popular wave invades nothing without tossing up some foul scum.

It is true that the Gospel had many friends in the councils: but being men of a middle party, they tacked backwards and forwards like Erasmus, instead of sailing straight to the port. They ordered “the pure preaching of the Word of God;” but stipulated at the same time that it should be “without Lutheranism.” The aged and pious Bishop Utenheim, who was living in retirement at Bruntrut, tottered daily into the church, supported by two domestics, to celebrate mass with a broken voice. Gundelsheim, an enemy of the Reformation, succeeded him erelong; and on the 23d September, followed by many exiles and with a train of forty horses, he made his triumphal entry into Basle, proposing to restore everything to its ancient footing. This made Œcolampadius write in alarm to Zwingle: “Our cause hangs upon a thread.” But in the citizens the Reform found a compensation for the disdain of the great, and for the terrors inspired by the new bishop. They organized repasts for fifty and a hundred guests each; Œcolampadius and his colleagues took their seats at these tables with the people, where energetic acclamations and reiterated cheers greeted the work of the Reformation. In a short time even the council appeared to incline to the side of the Gospel. Twenty feast-days were retrenched, and the priests were permitted to refuse celebrating the mass. “It is all over with Rome,” was now the cry. But Œcolampadius, shaking his head replied; “I am afraid that, by wishing to sit on two stools, Basle will at last fall to the ground.” This was at the period of his return from the discussion at Berne. He arrived in time to close the eyes of his pious mother; and then the reformer found himself alone, succumbing under the weight of public and domestic cares; for his house was like an inn for all fugitive Christians. “I shall marry a Monica,” he had often said, “or else I shall remain a bachelor.” He thought he had now discovered the “christian sister” of whom he was in search. This was Wilibrandis, daughter of one of the Emperor Maximilian’s knights, and widow of a master of arts named Keller,—a woman already proved by many trials. He married her, saying: “I look to the ordinances of God, and not to the scowling faces of men.” This did not prevent the sly Erasmus from exclaiming: “Luther’s affair is called a tragedy, but I maintain it is a comedy, for each act of the drama ends in a wedding.” This witticism has been often repeated. For a long time it was the fashion to account for the Reformation by the desire of the princes for the church-property, and of the priests for marriage. This vulgar method is now stigmatized by the best Roman controversialists as “a proof of a singularly narrow mind. The Reformation originated,” added they, in a true and christian, although unenlightened zeal.”3 The return of Œcolampadius had still more important consequences for Basle than it had for himself. The discussion at Berne caused a great sensation there. “Berne, the powerful Berne, is reforming!” was passed from mouth to mouth. “How, then!” said the people one to another, “the fierce Bear has come out of his den … he is groping about for the rays of the sun … and Basle, the city of learning—Basle, the adopted city of Erasmus and of Œcolampadius, remains in darkness!” On Good Friday (10th April 1528), without the knowledge of the council and Œcolampadius, five workmen of the Spinners’ Company entered the church of St. Martin, which was that of the reformer, and where the mass was already abolished, and carried away all the “idols.” On Easter Monday, after the evening sermon, thirty-four citizens removed all the images from the church of the Augustines. This was going too far. Were they desirous, then, of drawing Basle and its councils from that just medium in which they had till this moment so wisely halted? The council met hastily on Tuesday morning, and sent the five men to prison; but, on the intercession of the burghers, they were released, and the images suppressed in five other churches. These half measures sufficed for a time. On a sudden the flame burst out anew with greater violence. Sermons were preached at St. Martin’s and St. Leonard’s against the abominations of the

cathedral; and at the cathedral the reformers were called “heretics, knaves, and profligates.” The papists celebrated mass upon mass. The burgomaster Meyer, a friend of the Reform, had with him the majority of the people; the burgomaster Meltinger, an intrepid leader of the partizans of Rome, prevailed in the councils: a collision became inevitable. “The fatal hour approaches,” says Œcolampadius, “terrible for the enemies of God!”2 On Wednesday the 23d December, two days before Christmas, three hundred citizens from all the companies, pious and worthy men, assembled in the hall of the Gardeners’ Company, and there drew up a petition to the senate. During this time the friends of popery, who resided for the most part in Little Basle and the suburb of St. Paul, took up arms, and brandished their swords and lances against the reformed citizens at the very moment that the latter were bearing their petition to the council, and endeavoured, although ineffectually, to bar their road. Meltinger haughtily refused to receive the petition, and charged the burghers, on the faith of their civic oath, to return to their homes. The burgomaster Meyer, however, took the address, and the senate ordered it to be read.

“Honoured, wise, and gracious Lords,” it ran, “we, your dutiful fellow-citizens of the companies, address you as well-beloved fathers, whom we are ready to obey at the cost of our goods and of our lives. Take God’s glory to heart; restore peace to the city; and oblige all the people’s preachers to discuss freely with the ministers. If the mass be true, we desire to have it in our churches; but if it is an abomination before God, why, through love for the priests, should we draw down His terrible anger upon ourselves and upon our children?”

Thus spoke the citizens of Basle. There was nothing revolutionary either in their language or in their proceedings. They desired what was right with decision, but also with calmness. All might still proceed with order and decorum. But here begins a new period: the vessel of reform is about to enter the port, but not until it has passed through violent storms.

CHAPTER V

Crisis in Basle—Half-measures rejected—Reformed Propositions—A Night of Terror—Idols broken in the Cathedral—The Hour of Madness—Idols broken in all the Churches—Reform legalized—Erasmus in Basle—A great Transformation—Revolution and Reformation The bishop’s partisans first departed from the legal course. Filled with terror on learning that mediators were expected from Zurich and Berne, they ran into the city, crying that an Austrian army was coming to their aid, and collected stones in their houses. The reformed did the same. The disturbance increased hourly, and in the night of the 25th December the Papists met under arms: priests with arquebuse in hand were numbered among their ranks.

Scarcely had the reformed learnt this, when some of them running hastily from house to house, knocked at the doors and awoke their friends, who, starting out of bed, seized their muskets and repaired to the Gardeners’ Hall, the rendezvous of their party. They soon amounted to three thousand.

Both parties passed the night under arms. At every moment a civil war, and what is worse, “a war of hearths,” might break out. It was at last agreed that each party should nominate delegates to treat with the senate on this matter. The reformed chose thirty men of respectability, courage, faith, and experience, who took up their quarters at the Gardeners’ Hall. The partisans of the ancient faith chose also a commission, but less numerous and less respectable: their station was at the

Fishmongers' Hall. The council was constantly sitting. All the gates of the city, except two, were closed; strong guards were posted in every quarter. Deputies from Lucerne, Uri, Schaffhausen, Zug, Schwytz, Mulhausen, and Strasburg, arrived successively. The agitation and tumult increased from hour to hour.

It was necessary to put an end to so violent a crisis. The senate faithful to its ideas of half-measures, decreed that the priests should continue to celebrate the mass; but that all, priests and ministers, should preach the Word of God, and for this purpose should meet once a-week to confer upon the Holy Scriptures. They then called the Lutherans together in the Franciscan church, and the Papsits in that belonging to the Dominicans. The senate first repaired to the former church, where they found two thousand five hundred citizens assembled. The secretary had hardly read the ordinance before a great agitation arose. "That shall not be," cried one of the people. "We will not put up with the mass, not even a single one!" exclaimed another; and all repeated, "No mass,—no mass,—we will die sooner!"2 The senate having next visited the Dominican church, all the Romanists, to the number of six hundred, among whom were many foreign servants, cried out: we are ready to sacrifice our lives for the mass. We swear it, we swear it!" repeated they with uplifted hands. "If they reject the mass—to arms! to arms!" The senate withdrew more embarrassed than ever. The two parties were again assembled three days after. Œcolampadius was in the pulpit. "Be meek and tractable," said he; and he preached with such unction that many were ready to burst into tears. The assembly offered up prayers, and then decreed that it would accept a new ordinance, by virtue of which, fifteen days after Pentecost, there should be a public disputation, in which no arguments should be employed but such as were drawn from the Word of God: after this a general vote should take place upon the mass, that the majority should decide the question, and that in the meanwhile the mass should be celebrated in three churches only; it being however understood, that nothing should be taught there that was in opposition to the Holy Scriptures. The Romanist minority rejected these propositions: "Basle," said they, "is not like Berne and Zurich. Its revenues are derived in great measure from countries opposed to the Reformation!" The priests having refused to resort to the weekly conferences, they were suspended; and during a fortnight there was neither sermon nor mass at the cathedral, or in the churches of St. Ulric, St. Peter, and St. Theodore.

Those who remained faithful to Rome resolved upon an intrepid defence. Meltinger placed Sebastian Muller in the pulpit at St. Peter's, from which he had been interdicted, and this hot-headed priest vented such abusive sarcasms against the Reform, that several of the evangelicals, who were listening to the sermon, were insulted and nearly torn in pieces.

It was necessary to arouse Basle from this nightmare, and strike a decisive blow. "Let us remember our liberty," said the reformed citizens, "and what we owe to the glory of Christ, to public justice, and to our posterity." They then demanded that the enemies of the Reformation, friends and relations of the priests, who were the cause of all these delays and of all these troubles, should no longer sit in the councils until peace was re-established. This was the 8th February. The council notified that they would return an answer on the morrow. At six o'clock in the evening, twelve hundred citizens were assembled in the corn-market. They began to fear that the delay required by the senate concealed some evil design. "We must have a reply this very night," they said. The senate was convoked in great haste. From that period affairs assumed a more threatening attitude in Basle. Strong guards were posted by the burghers in the halls of the

different guilds; armed men patrolled the city, and bivouacked in the public places, to anticipate the machinations of their adversaries; the chains were stretched across the streets; torches were lighted, and resinous trees, whose flickering light scattered the darkness, were placed at intervals through the town; six pieces of artillery were planted before the town-hall; and the gates of the city, as well as the arsenal and the ramparts, were occupied. Basle was in a state of siege.

There was no longer any hope for the Romish party. The burgomaster, Meltinger, an intrepid soldier and one of the heroes of Marignan, where he had led eight hundred men into battle, lost courage. In the darkness he gained the banks of the Rhine with his son-in-law, the councillor Eglof d'Offenburgh, embarked unnoticed in a small boat, and rapidly descended the stream amid the fogs of the night. Other members of the council escaped in a similar manner. This gave rise to new alarms. "Let us beware of their secret manœuvres," said the people. "Perhaps they are gone to fetch the Austrians, with whom they have so often threatened us!" The affrighted citizens collected arms from every quarter, and at break of day they had two thousand men on foot. The beams of the rising sun fell on this resolute but calm assembly.

It was midday. The senate had come to no decision: the impatience of the burghers could be restrained no longer. Forty men were detached to visit the posts. As this patrol was passing the cathedral, they entered it, and one of the citizens, impelled by curiosity, opened a closet with his halberd, in which some images had been hidden. One of them fell out, and was broken into a thousand pieces against the stone pavement. The sight of these fragments powerfully moved the spectators, who began throwing down one after another all the images that were concealed in this place. None of them offered any resistance: heads, feet, and hands—all were heaped in confusion before the halberdiers. "I am much surprised," said Erasmus, "that they performed no miracle to save themselves; formerly the saints worked frequent prodiges for much smaller offences."2 Some priests ran to the spot, and the patrol withdrew. A rumour, however, having spread that a disturbance had taken place in this church, three hundred men came to the support of the forty. "Why," said they, "should we spare the idols that light up the flames of discord?" The priests in alarm had closed the gates of the sanctuary, drawn the bolts, raised barricades, and prepared everything for maintaining a siege. But the townspeople, whose patience had been exhausted by the delays of the council, dashed against one of the doors of the church; it yielded to their blows, and they rushed into the cathedral. The hour of madness had arrived. These men were no longer recognizable, as they brandished their swords, rattled their pikes, and uttered formidable cries: were they Goths, or fervent worshippers of God, animated by the zeal which in times of yore inflamed the prophets and the kings of Israel? However that may have been, these proceedings were disorderly, since public authority alone can interfere in public reforms. Images, altars, pictures—all were thrown down and destroyed. The priests who had fled into the vestry, and there concealed themselves, trembled in every limb at the terrible noise made by the fall of their holy decorations. The work of destruction was completed without one of them venturing to save the objects of his worship, or to make the slightest remonstrance. The people next piled up the fragments in the squares and set fire to them; and during the chilly night the armed burghers stood round and warmed themselves at the crackling flame. The senate collected in amazement, and desired to interpose their authority and appease the tumult; but they might as well have striven to command the winds. The enthusiastic citizens replied to their magistrates in these haughty words: "What you have not been able to effect in three years, we will complete in one hour." In truth the

anger of the people was no longer confined to the cathedral. They respected all kinds of private property; but they attacked the Churches of St. Peter, St. Ulric, St. Alban, and of the Dominicans; and in all these temples the “idols” fell under the blows of these good citizens of Basle, who were inflamed by an extraordinary zeal. Already they were making preparations to cross the bridge and enter Little Basle, which was devoted to the cause of popery, when the alarmed inhabitants begged to be allowed to remove the images themselves, and with heavy hearts they hastily carried them into the upper chambers of the church, whence they hoped to be able after a time to restore them to their old position.

They did not stop at these energetic demonstrations; the most excited talked of going to the town-hall, and of constraining the senate to accede to the wishes of the people; but the good sense of the majority treated these brawlers as they deserved, and checked their guilty thoughts. The senators now perceived the necessity of giving a legal character to this popular movement, and of thus changing a tumultuous revolution into a durable reformation. Democracy and the Gospel were thus established simultaneously in Basle. The senate, after an hour’s deliberation, granted that in future the burghers should participate in the election of the two councils; that from this day the mass and images should be abolished throughout all the canton, and that in every deliberation which concerned the glory of God or the good of the state the opinion of the guilds should be taken. The people, delighted at having obtained these conditions, which secured their political and religious liberty, returned joyful to their houses. It was now the close of day. On the morrow, Ash-Wednesday, it was intended to distribute the ruins of the altars and other ornaments of the church among the poor, to serve them for firewood. But these unhappy creatures, in their eagerness for the fragments, having begun to dispute about them, great piles were constructed in the cathedral close and set on fire. “The idols,” said some wags, “are really keeping their Ash-Wednesday to-day!” The friends of popery turned away their horror-stricken eyes from this sacrilegious sight, says Œcolampadius, and shed tears of blood. “Thus severely did they treat the idols,” continues the reformer, “and the mass died of grief in consequence.” On the following Sunday hymns in German were sung at every church; and on the 18th February a general amnesty was published. Everything was changed in Basle. The last had become first, and the first last. While Œcolampadius, who a few years before had entered the city as a stranger, without resources and without power, found himself raised to the first station in the Church, Erasmus, disturbed in the quiet study whence during so long a period he had issued his absolute commands to the world of letters, saw himself compelled to descend into the arena. But this king of the schools had no desire to lay down his sceptre before the sovereign people. For a long time he used to turn aside his head when he met his friend Œcolampadius. Besides, he feared by remaining at Basle to compromise himself with his protectors. “The torrent,” said he, “which was hidden underground has burst forth with violence, and committed frightful ravages. My life is in danger: Œcolampadius possesses all the churches. People are continually bawling in my ears; I am besieged with letters, caricatures, and pamphlets. It is all over: I am resolved to leave Basle. Only shall I or shall I not depart by stealth? The one is more becoming, the other more secure.”

Wishing as much as possible to make his honour and his prudence agree, Erasmus desired the boatman with whom he was to descend the Rhine to depart from an unfrequented spot. This was opposed by the senate, and the timid philosopher was compelled to enter the boat as it lay near the bridge, at that time covered with a crowd of people. He floated down the river, sadly bade

adieu to the city he had so much loved, and retired to Friburg in Brisgau with several other learned men.

New professors were invited to fill the vacant chairs in the university, and in particular Oswald Myconius, Phrygio, Sebastian Munster, and Symon Grynæus. At the same time was published an ecclesiastical order and confession of faith, one of the most precious documents of this epoch.

Thus had a great transformation been effected without the loss of a single drop of blood. Popery had fallen in Basle in despite of the secular and spiritual power. “The wedge of the Lord,” says Œcolampadius, “has split this hard knot.”

We cannot, however, help acknowledging that the Basle Reformation may afford ground for some objections. Luther had opposed himself to the power of the many. “When the people prick up their ears, do not whistle too loud. It is better to suffer at the hand of one tyrant, that is to say, of a king, than of a thousand tyrants, that is to say, of the people.” On this account the German Reformer has been reproached for acknowledging no other policy than servilism.

Perhaps when the Swiss reformation is canvassed, a contrary objection will be made against it, and the Reform at Basle in particular, will be looked upon as a revolution. The Reformation must of necessity bear the stamp of the country in which it is accomplished: it will be monarchical in Germany, republican in Switzerland. Nevertheless, in religion as in politics, there is a great difference between reformation and revolution. In no sphere does Christianity desire either despotism, servitude, stagnation, retrogression, or death. But while looking for progress, it seeks to accomplish it by reformation and not by revolution.

Reformation works by the power of the Word, of doctrine, cultivation, and truth; while revolution, or rather revolt, operates by the power of riot, of the sword, and of the club.

Christianity proceeds by the inner man, and charters themselves, if they stand alone, cannot satisfy it. No doubt political constitutions are one of the blessings of our age; but it is not sufficient for these securities to be committed to parchment: they must be written in the heart, and guaranteed by the manners of the people.

Such were the principles of the Swiss Reformers; such were those of the Reform at Basle, and by these it is distinguished from a revolution.

There were, it is true, some excesses. Never perhaps has a reformation been accomplished among men without some mixture of revolution. But it was doctrines, however, that were in question at Basle: these doctrines had acted powerfully on the moral convictions and on the lives of the people; the movement had taken place within before it showed itself without. But more than this: the Reformation was not satisfied with taking away; it gave more than it took; and, far from confining itself to the work of destruction, it scattered rich blessings over all the people.

CHAPTER VI

Farel’s Commission—Farel at Lausanne and Morat—Neufchatel—Farel preaches at Serrière—Enters Neufchatel—Sermon—The Monks—Farel’s Preaching—Popery in Neufchatel—Canons and Monks unite—Farel at Morat and in the Vully—Reformation of the Bishopric of Basle—Farel again in Neufchatel—Placards—The Hospital Chapel—Civil Power

invoked by the Romanists. The recoil of the discussion at Berne had overthrown Popery in a considerable part of German Switzerland. It was also felt in many of the churches of French Switzerland, lying at the foot of the Jura, or scattered amid the pine-forests of its elevated valleys, and which up to this time had shown the most absolute devotion to the Roman pontiff.

Farel, seeing the Gospel established in the places where the Rhone mingles its sandy waters with the crystal Leman, turned his eyes to another quarter. He was supported by Berne. This state, which possessed jointly with Friburg the bailiwicks of Morat, Orbe, and Granson, and which had alliances with Lausanne, Avenches, Payerne, Neufchatel, and Geneva, saw that both its interest and its duty alike called it to have the Gospel preached to its allies and subjects. Farel was empowered to carry it among them, provided he obtained the consent of the respective governments.

One day, therefore, journeying towards Morat, Farel arrived and preached the Gospel at the foot of those towers and battlements that had been attacked at three different periods by the armies of Conrad the Salie, Rodolph of Hapsburg, and Charles the Bold. Erelong the friends of the Reform amounted to a great number. A general vote having nevertheless declared in favour of the Pope, Farel proceeded to Lausanne.

He was at first driven away by the bishop and the clergy, but soon reappeared provided with a letter from the lords of Berne. “We send him to you,” said their excellencies to the authorities of the city, “to defend his own cause and ours. Allow him to preach the Word of God, and beware that you touch not a hair of his head.”

There was great confusion in the councils. Placed between Berne and the bishop, what could they do? The Council of Twenty-four, finding the matter very serious, convoked the Council of Sixty; and this body excusing itself, they convoked the Council of Two Hundred, on the 14th November, 1529. But these in their turn referred the business to the Smaller Council. No one would have anything to do with it. The inhabitants of Lausanne, it is true, complained loudly of the holy members of their chapters, whose lives (they said) were one long train of excesses; but when their eyes turned on the austere countenance of Reform, they were still more terrified. Besides, how deprive Lausanne of her bishop, her court, and her dignitaries? What! no more pilgrims in the churches,—no more suitors in the ecclesiastical courts,—no more purchasers in the markets, or boon companions in the taverns!—The widowed and desolate Lausanne would no longer behold the noisy throng of people, that were at once her wealth and her glory!—Better far a disorder that enriches, than a reform that impoverishes! Farel was compelled to depart a second time.

He returned to Morat, and soon the Word gained over the hearts of the people. On feast-days, the roads from Payerne and Avenches were covered with merry bands, who laughingly said to one another, “Let us go to Morat and hear the preachers!” and exhorted each other slily as they went along the road, “not to fall into the nets of the heretics.” But at night all was changed. Grasped by the strong hand of truth, these very people returned,—some in deep thought, others discussing with animation the doctrines they had heard. The fire was sparkling throughout all this district, and spreading in every direction its long rays of light. This was enough for Farel: he required new conquests. At a short distance from Morat lay one of the strongholds of Popery—the earldom of Neufchatel. Joan of Hochberg, who had inherited this principality from her ancestors, had married, in 1504, Louis of Orleans, duke of Longueville. This French nobleman having supported the King

of France in 1512, in a war against the Swiss, the cantons had taken possession of Neufchatel, but had restored it to his widow in 1529.

Few countries could have presented greater difficulties to the daring reformer. The Princess of Longueville, residing in France in the suite of Francis I., a woman of courtly habits, vain, extravagant, always in debt, and thinking of Neufchatel only as a farm that should bring her in a large revenue, was devoted to the Pope and Popery. Twelve canons with several priests and chaplains formed a powerful clergy, at whose head was the provost Oliver of Hochberg, natural brother to the princess. Auxiliaries full of zeal flanked this main army. On the one side there was the abbey of the Premonstrantes of Fontaine-André, three quarters of a league beyond the town, the monks of which, after having in the twelfth century cleared the grounds with their own hands, had gradually become powerful lords, and, on the other side, the Benedictines of the Island of St. John, whose abbot, having been deposed by the Bernese, had taken refuge, burning with hatred and vengeance, in his priory at Corcelles. The people of Neufchatel had a great respect for ancient rights, and it was easy to take advantage of this state of feeling, considering the general ignorance, to maintain the innovations of Popery. The canons improved the opportunity. For the instructions of the Gospel they substituted pomps and shows. The church, situated on a steep rock, was filled with altars, chapels, and images of saints: and religion, descending from this sanctuary, ran up and down the streets, and was travestied in dramas and mysteries, mingled with indulgences, miracles, and debauchery. The soldiers of Neufchatel, however, who had made the campaign of 1529 with the Bernese army, brought back to their homes the liveliest enthusiasm for the evangelical cause. It was at this period that a frail boat, quitting the southern bank of the lake, on the side opposite Morat, and carrying a Frenchman of mean appearance, steered towards the Neufchatel shore. Farel, for it was he, had learnt that the village of Serrière, situated at the gates of Neufchatel, depended as to spiritualities on the evangelical city of Bienne, and that Emer Beynon, the priest of the place, “had some liking for the Gospel.” The plan of his campaign was immediately drawn up. He appeared before parson Emer, who received him with joy; but what could be done? for Farel had been interdicted from preaching in any church whatever in the earldom. The poor priest thought to reconcile everything by permitting Farel to mount on a stone in the cemetery, and thus preach to the people, turning his back upon the church. A great disturbance arose in Neufchatel. On one side the government, the canons, and the priests, cried, “Heresy!” but on the other, “some inhabitants of Neufchatel, to whom God had given a knowledge of the truth,” flocked to Serrière. In a short time these last could not contain themselves: “Come,” said they to Farel, “and preach to us in the town.”3 This was at the beginning of December. They entered by the gate of the castle, and leaving the church on the hill to the left, they passed in front of the canons’ houses, and descended to the narrow streets inhabited by the citizens. On reaching the market-cross, Farel ascended a platform and addressed the crowd, which gathered together from all the neighbourhood,—weavers, vine-dressers, husbandmen, a worthy race, possessing more feeling than imagination. The preacher’s exterior was grave, his discourse energetic, his voice like thunder: his eyes, his features, his gestures, all showed him a man of intrepidity. The citizens accustomed to run about the streets after the mountebanks, were touched by his powerful language. “Farel preached a sermon of such great efficacy,” says a manuscript, “that he gained over much people.”

Some monks, however, with shaven crowns glided among his hearers, seeking to excite them against the heretical minister. “Let us beat out his brains,” said some. “Duck him, duck him!” cried others, advancing to throw Farel into a fountain, which may still be seen near the spot where he preached. But the reformer stood firm. This first preaching was succeeded by others. To this Gospel missionary every place was a church; every stone, every bench, every platform was a pulpit. Already the cutting winds and the snows of December should have kept the Neufchatelans around their firesides; “the canons made a vigorous defence;” and in every quarter “the shorn crowns” were in agitation, supplicating, menacing, shouting, and threatening,—but all was useless. No sooner did this man of small stature rise up in any place, with his pale yet sunburnt complexion, with red and uncombed beard, with sparkling eye and expressive mouth, than the monks’ labour was lost: the people collected around him, for it was the Word of God that fell from his lips. All eyes were fixed on him: with open mouth and attentive ears they hung upon his words.2 And scarcely did he begin to speak, when—Oh! wonderful work of God! he himself exclaims—this multitude believed as if it had but one soul. The Word of God carried the town, as it were, at the first assault; and throwing down the devices Rome had taken ages to compose, established itself in triumph on the ruins of human traditions. Farel saw in imagination Jesus Christ himself walking in spirit through the midst of this crowd, opening the eyes of the blind, softening the hard heart, and working miracles … so that scarcely had he returned to his humble residence before he wrote to his friends with a heart full of emotion: “Render thanks with me to the Father of mercies, in that he has shown his favour to those bowed down by a weighty tyranny;” and falling on his knees, he worshipped God.4 But during this time what were the adherents of the pope doing in Neufchatel? The canons, members of the General Audiences, of which they formed the first estate, treated both priests and laymen with intolerable haughtiness. Laying the burden of their offices on poor curates, they publicly kept dissolute women, clothed them sumptuously, endowed their children by public acts, fought in the church, haunted the streets by night, or went into a foreign country to enjoy in secret the produce of their avarice and of their intrigues. Some poor lepers placed in a house near the city were maintained by the produce of certain offerings. The rich canons, in the midst of their banquets, dared take away the bread of charity from these unhappy wretches. The Abbey of Fontaine-André was at a little distance from the town. Now the canons of Neufchatel and the monks or Fontaine were at open war. These hostile powers, encamped on their two hills, disputed each other’s property, wrested away each other’s privileges, launched at one another the coarsest insults, and even came to blows. “Debaucher of women!” said the canons to the Abbot of Fontaine-André, who returned the compliment in the same coin. It is the Reformation which, through faith, has re-established the moral law in Christendom,—a law that Popery had trodden under foot. For a long time these conventual wars had disturbed the country. On a sudden they ceased. A strange event was passing in Neufchatel,—the Word of God was preached there. The canons, seized with affright in the midst of their disorders, looked down from their lofty dwellings on this new movement. The report reached Fontaine-André. The monks and priests suspended their orgies and their quarrels. The heathen sensualism that had invaded the Church was put to the rout; Christian spiritualism had re-appeared.

Immediately the monks and canons, so long at war, embrace and unite against the reformer. “We must save religion,” said they, meaning their tithes, banquets, scandals, and privileges. Not one of them could oppose a doctrine to the doctrine preached by Farel: to insult him was their sole weapon. At Corcelles, however, they went farther. As the minister was proclaiming the Gospel

near the priory, the monks fell upon him: in the midst of them was the prior Rodolph de Benoit, storming, exciting, and striving to augment the tempest. He even had a dagger in his hand, according to one writer. Farel escaped with difficulty. This was not enough. Popery, as it has always done, had recourse to the civil power. The canons, the abbot, and the prior, solicited the governor George de Rive at the same time. Farel stood firm. “The glory of Jesus Christ,” said he, “and the lively affection his sheep bear to his Word, constrain me to endure sufferings greater than tongue can describe.” Erelong, however, he was compelled to yield. Farel again crossed the lake; but this passage was very different from the former. The fire was kindled!—On the 22d December he was at Morat; and shortly after at Aigle.

He was recalled thence. On the 7th January, religion was put to the vote at Morat, and the majority was in favour of the Gospel. But the Romish minority, supported by Friburg, immediately undertook to recover its ancient position by insults and bad treatment. “Farel! Farel!” cried the reformed party. A few days after this, Farel, accompanied by a Bernese messenger, scaled that magnificent amphitheatre of mountains above Vevay, whence the eye plunges into the waters of the Leman; and soon he crossed the estates of Count John of Gruyère, who was in the habit of saying, “We must burn this French Luther!” Scarcely had Farel reached the heights of Saint Martin de Vaud,2 when he saw the vicar of the place with two priests running to meet him. “Heretic! devil!” cried they. But the knight, through fear of Berne, remained behind his walls, and Farel passed on. The reformer, not allowing himself to be stopped by the necessity of defending himself in Morat, or by the inclemency of the season, immediately carried the Gospel to those beautiful hills that soar between the smiling waters of lakes Morat and Neufchatel into the villages of the Vully. This manœuvre was crowned with the most complete success. On the 15th February four deputies from the Vully came to Morat to demand permission to embrace the Reform, which was immediately granted them. “Let our ministers preach the Gospel,” said their excellencies of Berne to the Friburgers, “and we will let your priests play their monkey tricks. We desire to force no man.” The Reform restored freedom of will to the christian people. It was about this time that Farel wrote his beautiful letter “To all lords, people, and pastors,” which we have so often quoted.4 The indefatigable reformer now went forward to new conquests. A chain of rocks separates the Juran valley of Erguel, already evangelized by Farel, from the country of the ancient Rauraci, and a passage cut through the rock serves as a communication between the two districts. It was the end of April when Farel, passing through the Pierre-Pertuis, descended to the village of Tavannes, and entered the church just as the priest was saying mass. Farel went into the pulpit: the astonished priest stopped,—the minister filled his hearers with emotion, and seemed to them an angel come down from heaven. Immediately the images and the altars fell, and “the poor priest who was chanting the mass could not finish it.”6 To put down Popery had required much less time than the priest had spent at the altar. A great part of the bishopric of Basle was in a few weeks gained over to the Reformation.

During this time the Gospel was fermenting in Neufchatel. The young men who had marched with Berne to deliver Geneva from the attacks of Savoy, recounted in their jovial meetings the exploits of the campaign, and related how the soldiers of Berne, feeling cold, had taken the images from the Dominican church at Geneva, saying, “Idols of wood are of no use but to make a fire with in winter.”

Farel re-appeared in Neufchatel. Being master of the lower part of the town, he raised his eyes to the lofty rocks on which soared the cathedral and the castle. The best plan, thought he, is to bring these proud priests down to us. One morning his young friends spread themselves in the streets, and posted up large placards bearing these words: “All those who say mass are robbers, murderers, and seducers of the people. Great was the uproar in Neufchatel. The canons summoned their people, called together the clerks, and marching at the head of a large troop, armed with swords and clubs, descended into the town, tore down the sacrilegious placards, and cited Farel before the tribunal as a slanderer, demanding ten thousand crowns damages. The two parties appeared in court, and this was all that Farel desired. “I confess the fact,” said he, “but I am justified in what I have done. Where are there to be found more horrible murderers than these seducers who sell paradise, and thus nullify the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ? I will prove my assertion by the Gospel.” And he prepared to open it, when the canons, flushed with anger, cried out: “The common law of Neufchatel, and not the Gospel, is in question here! Where are the witnesses?” But Farel, constantly reverting to that fearful assertion, proved by the Word of God that the canons were really guilty of murder and robbery. To plead such a cause was to ruin Popery. The court of Neufchatel, that had never heard a similar case, resolved according to ancient custom to lay it before the council of Besançon, which not daring to pronounce the first estate of the General Audiences guilty of murder and robbery, referred the matter to the emperor and to a general council. Bad causes gain nothing by making a disturbance. At every step they wished to drive him back, Farel made one in advance. The streets and the houses were still his temple. One day when the people of Neufchatel were around him, “Why,” cried they, “should not the Word of God be proclaimed in a church?” They then hurried Farel along with them, opened the doors of the Hospital Chapel, set the minister in the pulpit, and a numerous crowd stood silent before him. “In like manner as Jesus Christ, appearing in a state of poverty and humility, was born in a stable at Bethlehem,” said the reformer; “so this hospital, this abode of the sick and of the poor, is to-day become his birthplace in the town of Neufchatel.” Then feeling ill at ease in the presence of the painted and carved figures that decorated the chapel, he laid his hands on these objects of idolatry, removed them, and broke them in pieces.

Popery, which anger had blinded, now took a step that it undoubtedly had a right to take, but which destroyed it: it had recourse to the secular arm, and the governor sent a deputation to the Bernese council, praying the removal of Farel and his companions. But almost at the same time deputies from the townspeople arrived at Berne. “Did not these hands bear arms at Interlaken and at Bremgarten to support your Reformation,” said they, “and will you abandon us in ours?”

Berne hesitated. A public calamity was at that time filling the whole city with mourning. One of the most illustrious citizens of the republic, the Banneret of Weingarten, attacked by the plague, was expiring amid the tears of his sons and of his fellow-citizens. Being informed of the arrival of the Neufchatclans, he rallied his waning strength: “Go,” said he, and beg the senate in my name to ask for a general assembly of the people of Neufchatel for Sunday next. This message of the dying banneret decided the council. The deputies from Berne arrived in Neufchatel on the 7th August. Farel thought that during the debates he had time to make a new conquest, and quitted the city. His zeal can be compared only to St. Paul’s. His body was small and feeble, but his activity was wholly apostolic: danger and bad treatment wasted him every day, but he had within him a divine power that rendered him victorious.

CHAPTER VII

Valangin—Guillemette de Vergy—Farel goes to the Val de Ruz—The Mass interrupted—Farel dragged to the River—Farel in Prison—Apostles and Reformers compared—Farel preaching at Neufchatel—Installed in the Cathedral—A Whirlwind sweeps over the People—The Idols destroyed—Interposition of the Governor—Triumph of the Reformed. At the distance of a league from Neufchatel, beyond the mountain, extends the Val de Ruz, and near its entrance, in a precipitous situation, where roars an impetuous torrent, surrounded by steep crags, stands the town of Valangin. An old castle built on a rock, raises its vast walls into the air, overlooking the humble dwellings of the townspeople, and extending its jurisdiction over five valleys of these lofty and severe mountains, at that time covered with forests of pine, but now peopled by the most active industry. In this castle dwelt Guillemette de Vergy, dowager-countess of Valangin, strongly attached to the Romish religion and full of respect for the memory of her husband. A hundred priests had chanted high mass at the count's burial: when many penitent young women had been married, and large alms distributed; the curate of Locle had been sent to Jerusalem, and Guillemette herself had made a pilgrimage for the repose of the soul of her departed lord.

Sometimes, however, the Countess of Gruyère and other ladies would come and visit the widow of Vergy, who assembled in the castle a number of young lords. The fife and tambourine re-echoed under its vaulted roofs, chattering groups collected in the immense embrasures of its Gothic windows, and merry dances followed hard upon a long silence and gloomy devotion. There was but one sentiment that never left Guillemette—this was her hatred against the Reformation, in which she was warmly seconded by her intendant, the Sieur of Bellegarde.

Guillemette and the priests had in fact reason to tremble. The 15th August was a great Romish festival—Our Lady of August, or the Assumption, which all the faithful of the Val de Ruz were preparing to keep. This was the very day Farel selected. Animated by the fire and courage of Elijah, he set out for Valangin, and a young man, his fellow-countryman, and, as it would appear, a distant relation, Anthony Boyve, an ardent Christian and a man of decided character, accompanied him. The two missionaries climbed the mountain, plunged into the pine forest, and then descending again into the valley, traversed Valangin, where the vicinity of the castle did not give them much encouragement to pause, and arrived at a village, probably Boudevilliers, proposing to preach the Gospel there.2

Already on all sides the people were thronging to the church; Farel and his companion entered also with a small number of the inhabitants who had heard him at Neufchatel. The reformer immediately ascended the pulpit, and the priest prepared to celebrate mass. The combat began. While Farel was preaching Jesus Christ and his promises, the priest and the choir were chanting the missal. The solemn moment approached: the ineffable transubstantiation was about to take place: the priest pronounced the sacred words over the elements. At this instant the people hesitate no longer; ancient habits, an irresistible influence, draw them towards the altar; the preacher is deserted; the kneeling crowd has recovered its old worship; Rome is triumphant.… Suddenly a young man springs from the throng,—traverses the choir,—rushes to the altar,—snatches the host from the hands of the priest, and cries, as he turns towards the people: "This is not the God whom you should worship. He is above,—in heaven,—in the majesty of the Father, and not, as you believe, in the hands of a priest." This man was Anthony Boyve.

Such a daring act at first produced the desired effect. The mass was interrupted, the chanting ceased, and the crowd, as if struck by a supernatural intervention, remained silent and motionless. Farel, who was still in the pulpit, immediately took advantage of this calm, and proclaimed that Christ “whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things.” Upon this the priests and choristers with their adherents rushed to the towers, ran up into the belfry, and sounded the tocsin.

These means succeeded: a crowd was collected, and if Farel had not retired, his death and Boyve’s would have been inevitable. “But God,” says the chronicle, “delivered them.” They crossed the interval that separates Boudevilliers from Valangin, and drew near the steep gorges of the torrent of the Seyon. But how traverse that town, which the tocsin had already alarmed?

Leaving Chaumont and its dark forests to the left, these two heralds of the Gospel took a narrow path that wound beneath the castle: they were stealing cautiously along, when suddenly a shower of stones assailed them, and at the same time a score of individuals,—priests, men, and women,—armed with clubs, fell furiously upon them. “The priests had not the gout either in their feet or arms,” says a chronicler; “the ministers were so beaten that they nearly lost their lives.”

Madame de Vergy, who descended to the terrace, far from moderating the anger of the priests, cried out, “Drown them—drown them! throw them into the Seyon—these Lutheran dogs, who have despised the host!” In fact, the priests were beginning to drag the two heretics towards the bridge. Never was Farel nearer death. On a sudden, from behind the last rock that hides Valangin in the direction of the mountain, there appeared “certain good persons of the Val de Ruz, coming from Neufchatel” and descending into the valley. “What are you doing?” asked they of the priests, with the intention no doubt of saving Farel; “put them rather in a place of safety, that they may answer for their proceedings? Would you deprive yourselves of the only means in your power of discovering those infected by the poison of heresy?” The priests left off at these words, and conducted the prisoners to the castle. As they were passing before a little chapel, which contained an image of the virgin, “Kneel down,” said they to Farel and Boyve, showing them the statue; “prostrate yourselves before Our Lady!” Farel began to admonish them: “Worship one God alone in spirit and in truth,” said he to them, “and not dumb images without life or power.” But they, continues the chronicle, “greatly vexed at his words and his firmness, inflicted on him so many blows that he was covered with blood, which even spirted on the walls of the chapel. For a long time after the traces of it might still be seen.”

They resumed their march—they entered the town—they climbed the steep road that led to the esplanade where Guillemette de Vergy and her attendants waited for the “Lutherans;” so that, continues the chronicle, “from beating them thus continually, they were conducted all covered with filth and blood to the prisons, and let down almost lifeless into the dungeon (croton) of the castle of Valangin.” Thus had Paul at Lystra been stoned by the Jews, drawn out of the city, and left for dead. The apostles and the reformers preached the same doctrine and suffered the same treatment.

It may perhaps be said, that Farel and Boyve were too violent in their attack; but the Church of the Middle Ages, which had fallen back into the legal spirit of Judaism, and into all the corruptions that flow from it, needed an energetic opposition to lead it again to the principle of grace. Augustine and St. Paul reappeared in the Church of the sixteenth century; and whan we read of Boyve

rushing in great emotion on those who were about to worship the bread of the mass, may we not recall to mind the action of St. Paul, rending his clothes, and running in among the people, who were desirous of worshipping “men of like passions with themselves”?

Farel and Boyve, thrust into the dungeons of the castle, could, like Paul and Silas in the prison at Philippi, “sing praises unto God.” Messire de Bellegarde, ever ready to persecute the Gospel, was preparing for them a cruel end, when some townsmen of Neufchatel arrived to claim them. Madame de Valangin dared not refuse, and at the demand of the Bernese even instituted an inquiry, “to put a good face on the matter,” says a manuscript. “Nevertheless the priest who had beaten Farel most, never after failed to eat daily at the lady’s table, by way of recompense.” But this was of little consequence: the seed of truth had been sown in the Val de Ruz. At Neufchatel the Bernese supported the evangelical citizens. The governor, whose resources were exhausted, sent deputies to the princess, “begging her to cross the mountains, to appease her people, who were in terrible trouble in consequence of this Lutheran religion.”

Meantime the ferment increased. The townspeople prayed the canons to give up the mass: they refused; whereupon the citizens presented them their reasous in writing, and begged them to discuss the question with Farel. Still the same refusal!—“But, for goodness’ sake, speak either for or against!” It was all of no use! On Sunday, the 23d of October, Farel, who had returned to Neufchatel, was preaching at the hospital. He knew that the magistrates of the city had deliberated on the expediency of consecrating the cathedral itself to the evangelical worship. “What then,” said he, “will you not pay as much honour to the Gospel as the other party does to the mass?… And if this superstitious act is celebrated in the high church, shall not the Gospel be proclaimed there also?” At these words all his hearers arose. “To the church!” cried they; “to the church!” Impetuous men are desirous of putting their hands to the work, to accomplish what the prudence of the burgesses had proposed. They leave the hospital, and take Farel with them. They climb the steep street of the castle: in vain would the canons and their frightened followers stop the crowd: they force a passage. Convinced that they are advancing for God’s glory, nothing can check them. Insults and shouts assail them from every side, but in the name of the truth they are defending, they proceed: they open the gates of the Church of our Lady; they enter, and here a fresh struggle begins. The canons and their friends assembled around the pulpit endeavour to stop Farel; but all is useless. They have not to deal with a band of rioters. God has pronounced in his Word, and the magistrates themselves have passed a definitive resolution. The townspeople advance, therefore, against the sacerdotal coterie; they form a close battalion, in the centre of which they place the reformer. They succeed in making their way through the opposing crowd, and at last place the minister in the pulpit without any harm befalling him.2

Immediately all is calm within the church and without; even the adversaries are silent, and Farel delivers “one of the most effective sermons he had hitherto preached.” Their eyes are opened; their emotion increases; their hearts are melted; the most obstinate appear converted; and from every part of the old church these cries resound: “We will follow the evangelical religion, both we and our children, and in it will we live and die.”

Suddenly a whirlwind, as it were, sweeps over this multitude, and stirs it up like a vast sea. Farel’s hearers desire to imitate the pious King Josiah. “If we take away these idols from before our eyes, will it not be aiding us,” said they, “in taking them from our own hearts? Once these idols broken,

how many souls among our fellow-citizens, now disturbed and hesitating, will be decided by this striking manifestation of the truth! We must save them as it were by fire."2 This latter motive decided them, and then began a scene that filled the Romanists with horror, and which must, according to them, bring down the terrible judgment of God on the city. The very spot where this took place would seem to add to its solemnity. To the north, the castle-walls rise above the pointed crags of the gloomy but picturesque valley of the Seyon, and the mountain in front of the castle presents to the observer's eye little more than bare rocks, vines, and black firs. But to the south, beneath the terrace on which this tumultuous scene was passing, lay the wide and tranquil waters of the lake, with its fertile and picturesque shores; and in the distance the continuous summits of the higher Alps, with their dazzling snows, their immense glaciers, and gigantic peaks, stretch far away before the enraptured eye. On this platform the people of Neufchatel were in commotion, paying little attention to these noble scenes of nature. The governor, whose castle adjoined the church, was compelled to remain an idle spectator of the excesses that he could not prevent; he was content to leave us a description of them. "These daring fellows," says he, "seize mattocks, hatchets, and hammers, and thus march against the images of the saints." They advance—they strike the statues and the altars—they dash them to pieces. The figures carved in the fourteenth century by the "imagers" of Count Louis are not spared; and scarcely do the statues of the counts themselves, which were mistaken for idols, escape destruction. The townspeople collect all these fragments of an idolatrous worship; they carry them out of the church, and throw them from the top of the rock. The paintings meet with no better treatment. "It is the devil," thought they with the early Christians, "who taught the world this art of statues, images, and all sorts of likenesses." They tear out the eyes in the pictures of the saints, and cut off their noses. The crucifix itself is thrown down, for this wooden figure usurps the homage that Jesus Christ claims in the heart. One image, the most venerated of all, still remains: it is our Lady of Mercy, which Mary of Savoy had presented to the collegiate church; but Our Lady herself is not spared. A hand more daring than the rest strikes it, as in the fourth century the colossal statue of Serapis was struck. "They have even bored out the eyes of Our Lady of Mercy, which the departed lady your mother had caused to be made," wrote the governor to the Duchess of Longueville. The reformed went still further: they seized the patens in which lay the corpus Domini, and flung them from the top of the rock into the torrent; after which, being desirous of showing that the consecrated wafers are mere bread, and not God himself, they distributed them one to another and ate them…. At this sight the canons and chaplains could no longer remain quiet. A cry of horror was heard; they ran up with their adherents, and opposed force to force. At length began the struggle that had been so much dreaded. The provost Oliver of Hochberg, the canons Simon of Neufchatel and Pontus of Soleilant, all three members of the privy council, had repaired hastily to the castle, as well as the other councillors of the princess. Until this moment they had remained silent spectators of the scene; but when they saw the two parties coming to blows, they ordered all "the supporters of the evangelical doctrine" to appear before the governor. This was like trying to chain the winds. Besides, why should the reformers stop? They were not acting without legitimate authority. "Tell the governor," replied the townspeople haughtily, "that in the concerns of God and of our souls he has no command over us."3

George de Rive then discovered that his authority failed against a power superior to his own. He must yield, and save at least some remnants. He hastened therefore to remove the images that still remained, and to shut them up in secret chambers. The citizens of Neufchatel allowed him to

execute this measure. “Save your gods,” thought they, “preserve them under strong bars, lest perchance a robber should deprive you of the objects of your adoration!” By degrees the tumult died away, the popular torrent returned within its channel, and a short time after, in commemoration of this great day, these words were inscribed on a pillar of the church:— l’an 1530, le 23 octobre, fut otee et abattue l’idolatrie de ceant par les bourgeois. An immense revolution had been effected. Doubtless it would have been better if the images had been taken away and the Gospel substituted in their place with calmness, as at Zurich; but we must take into consideration the difficulties that so profound and contested a change brings with it, and make allowance for the inexperience and excesses inseparable from a first explosion. He who should see in this revolution its excesses only, would betray a singularly narrow mind. It is the Gospel that triumphed on the esplanade of the castle. It was no longer a few pictures or legends that were to speak to the imagination of the Neufchatelans: the revelation of Christ and of the apostles, as it had been preserved in the Holy Scriptures, was restored to them. In place of the mysteries, symbols, and miracles of Popery, the Reformation brought them sublime tenets, powerful doctrines, holy and eternal truths. Instead of a mass, void of God, and filled with human puerilities, it restored to them the Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, his invisible yet real and mighty presence, his promises giving peace to the soul, and his Spirit, which changes the heart, and is a sure pledge of a glorious resurrection. All is gain in such an exchange.

CHAPTER VIII The Romanists demand a Ballot—The Bernese in favour of the Reform—Both parties come to the Poll—The Prudhommes of Neufchatel—Proposed Delay—The Romanists grasp the Sword—The Voting—Majority for Reform—Protestantism perpetual—The image of Saint John—A Miracle—Retreat of the Canons—Popery and the Gospel. The governor and his trusty friends had not, however, lost all hope. “It is only a minority,” said they at the castle, “which has taken part in the destruction of the images; the majority of the nation still obeys the ancient doctrine.” M. de Rive had yet to learn that if, in a popular movement, the minority only appears, it is in some cases because the majority, being of the same mind with it, prefers leaving the action to others. However that may be, the governor, thinking himself upon sure ground, resolved to put the preservation of the mass to the vote. If the majority were doubtful, the combined influence of the government and clergy would make it incline to the side of Rome. The friends of the Reformation perceiving this trick, and feeling the necessity of securing the integrity of the votes, demanded the presence of Bernese commissioners. This was at first refused. But Neufchatel, divided into two hostile parties, might at any time see her streets run blood: De Rive therefore called Berne to his aid.

Anthony Noll and Sulpice Archer, both members of the council, with Jacques Tribolet, bailiff of the Isle of St. John, all three devoted to the Reform, made their entry into Neufchatel on the 4th November,—an eventful day for the principality, and one which would decide its reformation. The deputies proceeded to the castle, where they spoke with great haughtiness. “Their excellencies of Berne,” said they to the governor, “are much astonished that you should oppose the true and pure Word of God. Desist immediately, or else your state and lordship may suffer for it.”2

George de Rive was amazed; he had thought to summon helpers, and he had found masters. He made, however, an attempt to escape from the strait in which he was caught. The Roman-catholic cantons of Lucerne, Friburg, and Soleure, were also allies of the state. The governor insinuated to the Bernese deputies that he might well claim their intervention. At these words the deputies

indignantly arose, and declared to M. de Rive, that if he did so, he might be the cause of his sovereign's losing Neufchatel. The governor saw the impossibility of escaping from the net into which he had fallen. There remained no alternative but submission, and to watch the current of events which it was impossible for him to direct.

It was not thus with the canons and the nobles. Not considering themselves beaten, they surrounded the Bernese; and mingling religion and politics, as is their wont in similar cases, endeavoured to shake them. "Do you not see," said they, "that unless we support the spiritual power, we shall compromise the civil power? The surest bulwark of the throne is the altar! These men, whose defenders you have become, are but a handful of mischief-makers: the majority are for the mass!"—"Turn which way you like," repiled one of the stubborn Bernese, "even though the majority should be on your side, still you must go that way; never will our lordships abandon the defenders of the evangelical faith." The people assembled at the castle for the definitive vote. The destiny of Neufchatel was about to be decided. On one hand were crowded around the governor the privy council, the canons, and the most zealous of the Romanists; on the other were to be seen the four aldermen, the town-council, and a great number of the citizens, gravely ascending the steep avenue leading to the government-house, and drawing up in front of their adversaries. On both sides there was the same attachment to their faith and the same decision; but around the canons were many anxious minds, troubled hearts, and downcast eyes, while the friends of the Reform advanced with uplifted heads, firm looks, and hearts full of hope.

George de Rive, wishing to gain over their minds, began to address them. He described the violence with which the reformed had broken the images and thrown down the altars. "And yet," continued he, "who founded this church? It was the princess's predecessors, and not the citizens. For which reason, I demand that all those who have violently infringed our sovereign's authority, be obliged to restore what they have taken away, so that the holy mass and the canonical hours may be celebrated anew."

Upon this the prudhommes of Neufchatel advanced. They were not a troop of young and giddy persons, as the Papists had pretended; they were grave citizens, whose liberties were guaranteed, and who had weighed what they had to say. "By the illumination of the Holy Ghost," replied they, "and by the holy doctrines of the Gospel, which are taught us in the pure Word of God, we will show that the mass is an abuse, without any utility, and which conduces much more to the damnation than to the salvation of souls. And we are ready to prove that by taking away the altars, we have done nothing that was not right and acceptable to God."

Thus the two parties met face to face with "great hatred and division," says the Bernese report. The arbitrators consulted together. The governor persisted, feeling that this movement would decide the future. A few votes would suffice for the triumph of Rome, and he reckoned on gaining them by his assurance. "You should understand," said he, "that the majority of this town, men and women, adhere firmly to the ancient faith. The others are hot-headed young soldiers, vain of their persons, and puffed up with the new doctrine."—"Well!" replied the Bernese deputies, "to prevent all mischief, let us settle this difference by the plurality of suffrages, in accordance with the treaty of peace made at Bremgarten between the cantons." This was what the reformed desired. "The vote! the vote!" cried they according to the expression consecrated to such cases. But the lord of Prangins and the priests, who had desired it when they were alone, shrunk back in the presence of

Berne. “We ask for time,” said they. If the reformed allowed themselves to be cheated by these dilatory measures, all was over. When once the Bernese had quitted Neufehatel, the governor and the clergy would easily have the upperhand. They therefore remained firm. “No, no,” said they, “now!—no delay!—not a day! not an hour!” But the governor, in the face of a proceeding that would decide the legal fall of Popery, trembled, and obstinately opposed the cries of the people. The magistrates were already indignant, the burghers murmured, and the most violent looked at their swords. “They were resolved to compel us, sword in hand,” wrote the governor to the princess. A fresh storm was gathering over Neufchatel. Yet a few more minutes’ resistance, and it would burst forth upon the church, the town, and the castle, destroying not only statues, images, and altars, but “there would have remained dead men,” said the lord of Rive.3 He gave way in trouble and affright. At the news of this concession, the partizans of Rome saw all their danger. They conferred, they concerted their measures, and in an instant their resolution was taken: they were resolved to fight. “My Lord,” said they, turning to M. de Rive, and touching the hilt of their swords, “all of us who adhere to the holy Sacrament are resolved to die martyrs for our holy faith.”5 This demonstration did not escape the notice of the young soldiers who had returned from the Genevese war. One moment more and the swords would have been drawn, and the platform changed into a battlefield.

Monseigneur de Prangins, more wily than orthodox, shuddered at the thought. “I cannot suffer it,” said he to the most violent of his party; “such an enterprise would forfeit my mistress’s state and lordship.”—“I consent,” said he to the Bernese, “to take the votes, with reserve nevertheless of the sovereignty, rights, and lordship of Madame.”—“And we,” replied the townspeople, “with the reserve of our liberties and privileges.” The Romanists, seeing the political power they had invoked now failing them, felt that all was lost. They will save their honour at least in this great shipwreck; they will subscribe their names, that posterity may know who had remained faithful to Rome. These proud supporters of the hierarchy advanced towards the governor; tears coursed down their rough cheeks, betraying thus their stifled anger. They wrote their signatures as witnesses at the foot of the solemn testament that Popery was now drawing up in Neufchatel, in the presence of the Bernese deputies. They then asked, with tears in their eyes, “that the names and surnames of the good and of the perverse should be written in perpetual memory, and declared that they were still good and faithful burghers of Madame, and would do her service unto death!” The reformed burgesses were convinced that it was only by frankly bearing testimony to their religious convictions that they could discharge their duty before God, their sovereign, and their fellow-citizens. So that the Catholics had scarcely protested their fidelity towards their lady, when, turning towards the governor, the reformed cried out: “We say the same in every other thing in which it shall please our Mistress to command us, save and except the evangelical faith, in which we live and die.”

Everything was then prepared for taking the votes. The Church of Our Lady was opened, and the two parties advanced between the shattered altars, torn pictures, mutilated statues, and all those ruins of Popery, which clearly foretold to its partisans the last and irrevocable defeat it was about to undergo. The three lords of Berne took their station beside the governor as arbitrators of the proceedings and presidents of the assembly, and the voting began.

George de Rive, notwithstanding the despondency of his friends, was not altogether without hope. All the partisans of the ancient worship in Neufchatel had been forewarned; and but a few days

previously the reformed themselves, by refusing a poll, had acknowledged the numerical superiority of their adversaries. But the friends of the Gospel in Neufchatel had a courage and a hope that seemed to repose on a firmer basis. Were they not for the victorious party, and could they be vanquished in the midst of their triumph. The two parties, however, moved forward, confounded with one another, and each man gave his vote in silence. They counted each other: the result appeared uncertain; fear froze each party by turns. At length the majority seemed to declare itself;—they took out the votes,—the result was proclaimed. A majority of eighteen voices gave the victory to the Reformation, and the last blow to the Papacy! The Bernese lords immediately hastened to profit by this advantage. “Live henceforth,” said they, “in good understanding with one another; let the mass be no longer celebrated; let no injury be done to the priests; and pay to your Lady, or to whomsoever they may be justly due, all tithes, quit-rent, cense, and revenues.” These different points were proclaimed by the assembly, and a report was immediately drawn up, to which the deputies, the governors, and the magistrates of the city of Neufchatel affixed their respective seals.

Farel did not appear in all this business: one might have said that the reformer was not at Neufchatel: the citizens appealed only to the Word of God; and the governor himself, in his long report to the princess, does not once mention him. It was the apostles of our Lord, St. Peter, St. John, St. Paul, and St. James, who by their divine writings re-established the true foundations of the Church in the midst of the people of Neufchatel. The Word of God was the law of the prudhommes. In vain will the Roman Church say, “But these very Scriptures,—it is I who give them to you; you cannot therefore believe in them without believing in me.” It is not from the Church of Rome that the Protestant Church receives the Bible. Protestantism has always existed in the Church. It has existed alone in every place where men have been engaged in the study of the Holy Scriptures, of their divine origin, of their interpretation, and in their dissemination. The Protestantism of the sixteenth century received the Bible from the Protestantism of every age. When Rome speaks of the hierarchy, she is on her own ground: as soon as she speaks of the Scriptures, she is on ours. If Farel had been put forward in Neufchatel, he would not perhaps have been able to stand against the pope; but the Word of Christ alone was concerned, and Rome must fall before Jesus.

Thus terminated, by a mutual contract, that day at first so threatening. If the Reformed had sacrificed any of their convictions to a false peace, disorder would have been perpetuated in Neufchatel. A bold manifestation of the truth, and the inevitable shocks that accompanied it, far from destroying society, preserved it. This manifestation is the wind that lifts the vessel from the rocks and brings it into the harbour. The lord of Prangins felt that, between fellow-citizens, “it is better to touch one another, even if it be by collision, than to avoid each other continually.” The free explanation that had taken place had rendered the opposition of the two parties less irritating. “I give my promise,” said the governor, “to undertake nothing against the vote of this day, for I am myself a witness that it has been honest, upright, without danger, and without coercion.”

It was necessary to dispose of the spoils of the vanquished party: the governor opened the castle to them. Thither were transported the relics, the ornaments of the altars, the church papers, and even the organ; and the mass, expelled from the city, was there mournfully chanted every day.

All the ornaments, however, did not take this road. Some days after, as two citizens, named Fauche and Sauge, were going out together to their vineyards, they passed a little chapel, in which the latter had set up a wooden figure of St. John. He said to his companion, “There is an image I shall heat my stove with to-morrow.” And, in fact, as he returned, he carried away the saint and laid it down in front of his house. The next morning he took the image and put it on the fire. Immediately a horrible explosion spread dismay through this humble family. The trembling Fauche doubted not that it was a miracle of the saint, and hastened to return to the mass. In vain did his neighbour Sauge protest to him upon oath that, during the night, he had made a hole in the statue, filled it with gunpowder, and closed it up again. Fauche would listen to nothing, and resolved to flee from the vengeance of the saints. He went and settled with his family at Morteau in Franche Comte. Such are the miracles upon which the divinity of Rome reposes! By degrees everything became settled: some of the canons, as Jacques Baillod, William de Pury, and Benediet Chambrier, embraced the Reformation. Others were recommended by the governor to the priory of Motiers, in the Val de Travers; and, in the middle of November, at the time when the winds began to rage among the mountains, several canons, surrounded by a few singing-boys,—sad relies of the ancient, powerful, rich, voluptuous, and haughty chapter of Neufchatel,—painfully climbed the gorges of the Jura, and went to conceal in these lofty and picturesque valleys the disgrace of a defeat, which their long disorders and their insupportable tyranny had but too justly provoked.

During this time the new worship was organised. In room of the high-altar were substituted two marble tables to receive the bread and wine; and the Word of God was preached from a pulpit stripped of every ornament. The pre-eminence of the Word, which characterises the evangelical worship, replaced in the church of Neufchatel the pre-eminence of the sacrament, which characterises Popery. Towards the end of the second century, Rome, that ancient metropolis of all religions, after having welcomed the christian worship in its primitive purity, had gradually transformed it into mysteries; a magic power had been ascribed to certain forms; and the reign of the sacrifice offered by the priest had succeeded to the reign of the Word of God. The preaching of Farel had restored the Word to the rights which belonged to it; and those vaulted roofs, which the piety of Count Ulric II. had, on his return from Jerusalem, dedicated to the worship of the Virgin, served at last, after four centuries, to nourish the faithful, as in the time of the Apostles, “in the words of faith and of good doctrine.”

CHAPTER IX

Reaction preparing—Failure of the Plot—Farel in Valangin and near the Lake—De Bely at Fontaine—Farel’s Sufferings—Marcourt at Valangin—Disgraceful Expedient—Vengeance—The Reform established—French Switzerland characterized—Gathering Tempest. The convention, drawn up under the mediation of Berne, stipulated that “the change should take place only in the city and parish of Neufchatel.” Must the rest of the country remain in darkness? This was not Farel’s wish, and the zeal of the citizens, in its first fervour, effectually seconded him. They visited the surrounding villages, exhorting some, combating others. Those who were compelled to labour with their hands during the day went thither at night. “Now, I am informed,” writes the governor to the princess, “that they are working at a reformation night and day.”

George de Rive, in alarm, convoked the magistrates of all the districts in the earldom. These good folks believed that their consciences, as well as their places, depended upon Madame de Longueville. Affrighted at the thought of freely receiving a new conviction from the Word of God, they were quite ready to accept it from the countess as they would a new impost;—a sad helotism, in which religion springs from the soil, instead of descending from heaven! “We desire to live and die under the protection of our Lady,” said the magistrates to the lord of Rive, “without changing the ancient faith, until it be so ordered by her.” Rome, even after her fall, could not receive a deeper insult.

These assurances of fidelity and the absence of the Bernese restored De Rive’s confidence, and he secretly prepared a reaction among the nobles and the lower classes. There is in every historical catastrophe, in the fall of great establishments, and in the spectacle of their ruins, something which excites and improves the mind. This was what happened at the period in question. Some were more zealous for Popery after its fall than in its day of power. The clergy gliding into the houses said mass to a few friends mysteriously called together around a temporary altar. If a child was born, the priest noiselessly arrived, breathed on the infant, made the sign of the cross on its forehead and breast, and baptized it according to the Roman ritual. Thus they were rebuilding in secret what had been overthrown in the light of day. At length a counter-revolution was agreed upon; and Christmas-day was selected for the restoration of Roman-catholicism. While the Christians’ songs of joy should be rising to heaven, the partisans of Rome were to rush into the church, expel the heretical assembly, overthrow the pulpit and the holy table, restore the images, and celebrate the mass in triumph. Such was the plan of the Neufchatelan vespers.2 The plot got wind. Deputies from Berne arrived at Neufchatel on the very eve of the festival. “You must see to this,” said they to the governor: if the reformed are attacked, we, their co-burghers, will protect them with all our power.” The conspirators laid down their arms, and the Christmas hymns were not disturbed. This signal deliverance augmented the devotion and zeal of the friends of the Gospel. Already Emer Beynon of Serrière, where Farel had one day landed from a small boat, ascending the pulpit, had said to his parishioners: If I have been a good priest, I desire by the grace of God to be a still better pastor.” It was necessary for these words to be heard from every pulpit. Farel recommenced a career of labours, fatigues, and struggles, which the actions of the apostles and missionaries alone can equal.

Towards the end of the year 1530, he crossed the mountain in the middle of winter, entered the church of Valangin, went into the pulpit, and began to preach at the very moment that Guillemette de Vergy was coming to mass. She endeavoured to shut the reformer’s mouth, but in vain, and the aged and noble dowager retired precipitately saying: “I do not think this is according to the old Gospels; if there are any new ones that encourage it, I am quite amazed.” The people of Valangin embraced the Gospel. The affrighted lieutenant ran to Neufchatel, thence to Berne, and on the 11th February, 1531, laid his complaint before the council; but all was useless. “Why,” said their excellencies of Berne to him, “why should you disturb the water of the river? let it flow freely on.”

Farel immediately turned to the parishes on the slopes between the lake and Mount Jura. At Corcelles a fanatic crowd, well armed and led on by the curate of Neufchatel, rushed into the church where the minister was preaching, and he did not escape without a wound. At Bevay, the abbot John of Livron and his monks collected a numerous body of friends, surrounded the church, and having thus completed the blockade, entered the building, dragged the minister from the

pulpit, and drove him out with blows and insults. Each time he reappeared, they pursued him as far as Auvernier with stones and gun-shots.

While Farel was thus preaching in the plain, he sent one of his brethren into the valley: it was John de Bély, a man of good family from Crest in Dauphiny. Beyond Valangin, at a little distance from Fontaine, on the left side of the road to Cernier, was a stone that remains to this day. Here in the open air, as if in a magnificent temple, this hearld of the Gospel began to proclaim salvation by grace. Before him stretched the declivity of Chaumont, dotted with the pretty villages of Fenin, Villars, Sole, and Savagnier, and beyond, where the mountains fell away, might be seen the distant and picturesque chain of the Alps. The most zealous of his hearers entreated him to enter the church. He did so; but suddenly the priest and his curate “arrived with great noise.” They proceeded to the pulpit, dragged Bély down; and then turning to the women and young persons of the place, “excited them to beat him and drive him away.”2

John de Bély returned to Neufchatel, hooted and bruised, like his friend after the affair at Valangin; but these evangelists followed the traces of the Apostle Paul, whom neither whips nor scourges could arrest. De Bély often returned to Fontaine. The mass was abolished erelong in this village; Bély was its pastor for twenty-seven years; his descendants have more than once exercised the ministry there, and now they form the most numerous family of agriculturists in the place.

Farel, after evangelizing the shores of the lake to the south of Neufchatel, had gone to the north and preached at St. Blaise. The populace, stirred up by the priests and the lieutenant, had fallen upon him, and Farel escaped from their hands, severely beaten, spitting blood, and scarcely to be recognised. His friends had thrown him hurriedly into a boat, and conveyed him to Morat, where his wounds detained him for some time. At the report of this violence the reformed Neufchatelans felt their blood boil. If the lieutenant, the priest, and his flock have bruised the body of Christ’s servant, which is truly the altar of the living God, why should they spare dead idols? Immediately they rush to St. Blaise, throw down the images, and do the same at the abbey of Fontaine-André,—a sanctuary of the ancient worship. The images still existed at Valangin, but their last hour was about to strike. A Frenchman, Anthony Marcourt, had been nominated pastor of Neufchatel. Treading in Farel’s footsteps, he repaired with a few of the citizens to Valangin on the 14th June, a great holiday in that town. Scarcely had they arrived when a numerous crowd pressed around the minister, listening to his words. The canons, who were on the watch in their houses, and Madame de Vergy and M. de Bellegarde from their towers, sought how they could make a diversion against this heretical preaching? They could not employ force because of Berne. They had recourse to a brutal expedient, worthy of the darkest days of Popery, and which, by insulting the minister, might divert (they imagined) the attention of the people, and change it into shouts and laughter. A canon,2 assisted by the countess’s coachman, went to the stables and took thence two animals, which they led to the spot where Marcourt was preaching. We will throw a veil over this scene: it is one of those disgraceful subjects that the pen of history refuses to transcribe. But never did punishment follow closer upon crime. The conscience of the hearers was aroused at the sight of this infamous spectacle. The torrent, that such a proceeding was intended to check, rushed out of its channel. The indignant people, undertaking the defence of that religion which their opponents had wished to insult, entered the church like an avenging wave; the ancient windows were broken, the shields of the lords were demolished, the relics scattered about, the books torn, the images thrown down, and the altar overturned. But this was not enough: the

popular wave, after sweeping out the church, flowed back again, and dashed against the canons' houses. Their inhabitants fled in consternation into the forests, and everything was destroyed in their dwellings.

Guillemette de Vergy and M. de Bellegarde, agitated and trembling behind their battlements, repented, but too late, of their monstrous expedient. They were the only ones who had not yet felt the popular vengeance. Their restless eyes watched the motions of the indignant townspeople. The work is completed: the last house is sacked! The burghers consult together.—O horror!—they turn towards the castle,—they ascend the hill,—they draw near. Is then the abode of the noble counts of Arberg about to be laid waste? But no!—"We come," said the delegates standing near the gate of the castle, "We are come to demand justice for the outrage committed against religion and its minister." They are permitted to enter, and the trembling countess orders the poor wretches to be punished who had acted solely by her orders. But at the same time she sends deputies to Berne, complaining of the "great insults that had been offered her." Berne declared that the reformed should pay for the damage; but that the countess should grant them the free exercise of their worship. Jacques Veluzat, a native of Champagne, was the first pastor of Valangin. A little later we shall see new struggles at the foot of Mount Jura.

Thus was the Reformation established at Valangin, as it had been at Neufchatel: the two capitals of these mountains were gained to the Gospel. Erelong it received a legal sanction. Francis, marquis of Rothelin, son of the Duchess of Longueville, arrived in the principality in March 1531, with the intention of playing on this small theatre the part of a Francis I. But he soon found out that there are revolutions which an irresistible hand has accomplished, and that must be submitted to. Rothelin excluded from the estates of the earldom the canons who had hitherto formed the first power, and replaced them by four bannerets and four burgesses. Then, availing himself of the principle that all abandoned property falls to the state, he laid his hands upon their rich heritage, and proclaimed freedom of conscience throughout the whole country. All the necessary forms having been observed with Madame, the politic M. de Rive became reformed also. Such was the support Rome received from the state, to which she had looked for her deliverance. A great energy characterized the Reformation of French Switzerland; and this is shown by the events we have just witnessed. Men have attributed to Farel this distinctive feature of his work; but no man has ever created his own times; it is always, on the contrary, the times that create the man. The greater the epoch, the less do individualities prevail in it. All the good contained in the events we have just related came from that Almighty Spirit, of which the strongest men are but weak instruments. All the evil proceeded from the character of the people; and, indeed, it was almost always Popery that began these scenes of violence. Farel submitted to the influence of his times, rather than the times received his. A great man may be the personification and the type of the epoch for which God destines him: he is never its creator. But it is time to quit the Jura and its beautiful valleys, brightened by the vernal sun, to direct our steps towards the Alps of German Switzerland, along which thick clouds and horrible tempests are gathering. The free and courageous people, who dwell there below the eternal glaciers, or on the smiling banks of the lakes, daily assume a fiercer aspect, and the collision threatens to be sudden, violent, and terrible. We have just been witnessing a glorious conquest: a dreadful catastrophe awaits us.

BOOK XVI Switzerland—Catastrophe. 1528–1531

CHAPTER I

Two great Lessons—Christian Warfare—Zwingle, Pastor, Statesman, and General—His noble Character—Persecutions—Swiss Catholics seek an Alliance with Austria—Great Dissatisfaction—Deputation to the Forest Cantons—Zwingle's Proposal—Moderation of Berne—Keyser's Martyrdom—Zwingle and War—Zwingle's Error.

It was the will of God that at the very gates of his revived Church there should be two great examples to serve as lessons for future generations. Luther and the German Reformation, declining the aid of the temporal power, rejecting the force of arms, and looking for victory only in the confession of the truth, were destined to see their faith crowned with the most brilliant success; while Zwingle and the Swiss Reformation, stretching out their hands to the mighty ones of the earth, and grasping the sword, were fated to witness a horrible, cruel, and bloody catastrophe fall upon the Word of God—a catastrophe which threatened to engulf the evangelical cause in the most furious whirlpool. God is a jealous God, and gives not his glory to another; he claims to perform his own work himself, and to attain his ends sets other springs in motion than those of a skilful diplomacy.

We are far from forgetting that we are called upon to relate facts and not to discuss theories: but there is a principle which the history we are narrating sets forth in capital letters: it is that professed in the Gospel, where it says: The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God! In maintaining this truth we do not place ourselves on the ground of any particular school, but on that of universal conscience and of the Word of God. Of all carnal support that religion can invoke, there is none more injurious to it than arms and diplomacy. The latter throws it into tortuous ways; the former hurries it into paths of bloodshed; and religion, from whose brow has been torn the double wreath of truth and meekness, presents but a degraded and humiliated countenance that no person can, that no person desires to recognise.

It was the very extension of the Reform in Switzerland that exposed it to the dangers under which it sunk. So long as it was concentrated at Zurich, it continued a religious matter; but when it had gained Berne, Basle, Schaffhausen, St. Gall, Glaris, Appenzell, and numerous bailiwicks, it formed inter-cantonal relations; and—here was the error and misfortune—while the connexion should have taken place between church and church, it was formed between state and state. As soon as spiritual and political matters became mingled together, the latter took the upperhand. Zwingle crelong thought it his duty to examine not only doctrinal, but also federal questions; and the illustrious reformer might be seen, unconscious of the snares beneath his feet, precipitating himself into a course strewn with rocks, at the end of which a cruel death awaited him. The primitive Swiss cantons had resigned the right of forming new alliances without the consent of all; but Zurich and Berne had reserved the power. Zwingle thought himself therefore quite at liberty to promote an alliance with the evangelical states. Constance was the first city that gave her adhesion. But this christian co-burghery, which might become the germ of a new confederation, immediately raised up numerous adversaries against Zwingle, even among the partisans of the Reformation.

There was yet time: Zwingle might withdraw from public affairs, and occupy himself entirely with those of the Gospel. But no one in Zurich had, like him, that application to labour, that correct, keen, and sure eye, so necessary for politicians. If he retired, the vessel of the state would be left

without a pilot. Besides, he was convinced that political acts alone save the Reform. He resolved, therefore, to be at one and the same time the man of the State and of the Church. The registers prove that in his later years he took part in the important deliberations; and he was commissioned by the councils of his canton to write letters, compose proclamations, and draw up opinions. Already, before the dispute with Berne, looking upon war as possible, he had traced out a very detailed plan of defence, the manuscript of which is still in existence. In 1528 he did still more; he showed in a remarkable paper, how the republic should act with regard to the empire, France, and other European states, and with respect to the several cantons and bailiwicks. Then, as if he had grown gray at the head of the Helvetic troops (and it is but just to remark that he had long lived among soldiers), he explained the advantages there would be in surprising the enemy; and described even the nature of the arms, and the manner of employing them. In truth, an important revolution was then taking place in the art of war. The pastor of Zurich is at once the head of the state and general of the army: this double—this triple part of the reformer was the ruin of the Reformation and of himself. Undoubtedly we must make allowances for the men of this age, who, being accustomed to see Rome wield two swords for so many centuries, did not understand that they must take up one and leave the other. We must admire the strength of that superior genius, which, while pursuing a political course, in which the greatest minds would have been absorbed, ceased not however to display an indefatigable activity as pastor, preacher, divine, and author. We must acknowledge that the republican education of Zwingle had taught him to confound his country with his religion, and that there was in this great man enough to fill up many lives. We must appreciate that indomitable courage which relying upon justice, feared not, at a time when Zurich had but one or two weak cities for allies, to confront the redoubtable forces of the empire and of the confederation; but we should also see in the great and terrible lesson that God gave him, a precept for all times and every nation; and finally, understand what is often forgotten, “that the kingdom of Christ is not of this world.” The Roman-catholic cantons, on hearing of the new alliances of the reformed, felt a violent indignation. William of Diesbach, deputy from Berne at the diet, was forced to submit to the keenest reproaches. The sitting for a while interrupted, was resumed immediately after his departure. “They may try to patch up the old faith,” said the Bernese, as he withdrew; “it cannot, however, last any longer.” In truth, they patched away with all their might, but with a sharp and envenomed needle that drew blood. Joseph Am Berg of Schwytz and Jacques Stocker of Zug, bailiffs of Thurgovia, behaved with cruelty towards all who were attached to the Gospel. They enforced against them fines, imprisonment, torture, the scourge, confiscation, and banishment; they cut out the ministers tongues, beheaded them, or condemned them to be burnt.2 At the same time they took away the Bibles and all the evangelical books; and if any poor Lutherans, fleeing from Austria, crossed the Rhine and that low valley where its calm waters flow between the Alps of the Tyrol and of Appenzell,—if these poor creatures, tracked by the lansquenets, came to seek a refuge in Switzerland, they were cruelly given up to their persecutors. The heavier lay the hands of the bailiffs on Thurgovia and the Rheinthal, the greater conquests did the Gospel make. The Bishop of Constance wrote to the Five Cantons, that if they did not act with firmness, all the country would embrace the Reform. In consequence of this, the cantons convoked at Frauenfeld all the prelates, nobles, judges, and persons of note in the district; and a second meeting taking place six days after (6th December, 1528) at Weinfeld, deputies from Berne and Zurich entreated the assembly to consider the honour of God above all things, and in no respect to care for the threats of the world. A great agitation followed upon this discourse. At

last a majority called for the preaching of the Word of God; the people came to the same decision; and the Rheinthal, as well as Bremgarten, followed this example.

What was to be done? The flood had become hourly more encroaching. Must then the Forest Cantons open their valleys to it at last? Religious antipathies put an end to national antipathies; and these proud mountaineers, directing their looks beyond the Rhine, thought of invoking the succour of Austria, which they had vanquished at Morgarten and at Sempach. The fanatical German party that had crushed the revolted Swabian peasants was all-powerful on the frontiers. Letters were exchanged; messengers passed to and fro across the river; at last they took advantage of a wedding in high rank that was to take place at Feldkirch in Swabia, six leagues from Appenzell. On the 16th February, 1529, the marriage-party, forming a brilliant cavalcade, in the midst of which the deputies of the Five Cantons were concealed, made their entry into Feldkirch, and Am Berg had an immediate interview with the Austrian governor. “The power of the enemies of our ancient faith has so increased,” said the Swiss, “that the friends of the Church can resist them no longer. We therefore turn our eyes to that illustrious prince who has saved in Germany the faith of our fathers.” This alliance was so very unnatural, that the Austrians had some difficulty in believing it to be sincere. “Take hostages,” said the Waldstettes, “write the articles of the treaty with your own hands; command and we will obey!”—“Very good!” replied the Austrians; “in two months you will find us again at Waldshut, and we will let you know our conditions.” A rumour of these negotiations which spread abroad excited great dissatisfaction, even in the partisans of Rome. In no place did it burst out with greater force than in the council of Zug. The opposing parties were violently agitated; they stamped their feet, they started from their seats, and were nearly coming to blows; but hatred prevailed over patriotism. The deputies of the Forest Cantons appeared at Waldshut. they suspended the arms of their cantons by the side of those of the oppressors of Switzerland; decorated their hats with peacocks’ feathers (the badge of Austria), and laughed, drank, and chattered with the Imperialists. This strange alliance was at last concluded. “Whoever shall form new sects among the people,” it ran, “shall be punished with death; and, if need be, with the help of Austria. This power, in case of emergency, shall send into Switzerland six thousand foot soldiers, and four hundred horse, with all requisite artillery. If necessary, the reformed cantons shall be blockaded, and all provisions intercepted.” To the Romish cantons, then, belongs the initiative of this measure so much decried. Finally, Austria guaranteed to the Waldstettes the possession, not only of the common bailiwicks, but of all the conquests that might be made on the left bank of the Rhine.

Dejection and consternation immediately pervaded all Switzerland. This national complaint, which Bullinger has preserved, was sung in every direction:—

Wail, Helvetians, wail, For the peacock’s plume of pride To the forest cantons’ savage bull In friendship is allied.

All the cantons not included in this alliance, with the exception of Friburg, assembled in diet at Zurich, and resolved to send a deputation to their mountain confederates, with a view to reconciliation. The deputation, admitted at Schwytz in the presence of the people, was able to execute its mission without tumult. At Zug there was a cry of “No sermon! no sermon!” At Altorf the answer was: “Would to God that your new faith was buried for ever!” At Lucerne they received this haughty reply: “We shall know how to defend ourselves, our children, and our children’s children,

from the poison of your rebellious priests." It was at Unterwalden that the deputation met with the worst reception. "We declare our alliance at an end," said they. "It is we,—it is the other Waldstettes who are the real Swiss. We graciously admitted you into our confederation, and now you claim to become our masters!—The emperor, Austria, France, Savoy, and Valais will assist us!" The deputies retired in astonishment, shuddering, as they passed before the house of the secretary of state, where they saw the arms of Zurich, Berne, Basle, and Strasburg hanging from a lofty gibbet. The deputation had scarcely returned to Zurich and made this report, when men's minds were inflamed. Zwingle proposed to grant no peace to Unterwalden, if it would not renounce foreign service, the alliance with Austria, and the government of the common bailiwicks. "No! no!" said Berne, that had just stifled a civil war in its own canton, "let us not be so hasty. When the rays of the sun shine forth, each one wishes to set out; but as soon as it begins to rain, every man loses heart! The Word of God enjoins peace. It is not with pikes and lances that faith is made to enter the heart. For this reason, in the name of our Lord's sufferings, we entreat you to moderate your anger." This christian exhortation would have succeeded, if the fearful news that reached Zurich, on the very day when the Bernese delivered their moderate speech, had not rendered it unavailing. On Saturday the 22d May, Jacques Keyser, a pastor and father of a family in the neighbourhood of the Greiffensee, after coasting the fertile shores of this little lake, crossed the rich pastures of the bailiwick of Gruningen, passed near the Teutonic house of Bubikon and the convent of Ruti, and reached that simple and wild district bathed by the upper part of Lake Zurich. Making his way to Oberkirk, a parish in the Gaster district, between the two lakes of Zurich and Wallenstadt, of which he had been nominated pastor, and where he was to preach on the morrow, he crossed on foot the lengthened and rounded flanks of the Buchberg, fronting the picturesque heights of the Ammon. He was confidently advancing into those woods which for many weeks he had often traversed without obstruction, when he was suddenly seized by six men, posted there to surprise him and carried off to Schwytz. "The bailiffs," said they to the magistrates, "have ordered all innovating ministers to be brought before the tribunals: here is one that we may bring you." Although Zurich and Glaris interposed; although the government of Gaster, where Keyser had been taken, did not then belong to Schwytz; the landsgemeinde desired a victim, and on the 29th May they condemned the minister to be burnt alive. On being informed of his sentence, Keyser burst into tears. But when the hour of execution arrived, he walked cheerfully to death, freely confessed his faith, and gave thanks to the Lord even with his latest breath. "Go and tell them at Zurich how he thanks us!" said one of the Schwytz magistrates, with a sarcastic smile, to the Zurich deputies. Thus had a fresh martyr fallen under the hands of that formidable power that is "drunk with the blood of the saints."2 The cup was full. The flames of Keyser's pile became the signal of war. Exasperated Zurich uttered a cry that resounded through all the confederation. Zwingle above all called for energetic measures. Everywhere,—in the streets, in the councils, and even in the pulpits,—he surpassed in daring even the most valiant captains. He spoke at Zurich,—he wrote to Berne. "Let us be firm, and fear not to take up arms," said he. "This peace, which some desire so much, is not peace, but war: while the war that we call for is not war but peace. We thirst for no man's blood, but we will clip the wings of the oligarchy.4 If we shun it, the truth of the Gospel and the ministers lives will never be secure among us."

Thus spoke Zwingle. In every part of Europe he beheld the mighty ones of the earth aiding one another to stifle the reviving animation of the Church; and he thought that without some decisive and energetic movement, Christianity, overwhelmed by so many blows, would soon fall back into

its ancient slavery. Luther under similar circumstances arrested the swords ready to be crossed, and demanded that the Word of God alone should appear on the field of battle. Zwingle thought not thus. In his opinion war was not revolt, for Switzerland had no master. “Undoubtedly,” said he, “we must trust in God alone; but when He gives us a just cause, we must also know how to defend it, and like Joshua and Gideon, shed blood in behalf of our country and our God.”

If we adopt the principles of justice which govern the rulers of nations, the advice of Zwingle was judicious and irreproachable. It was the duty of the Swiss magistrates to defend the oppressed against the oppressor. But is not such language, which might have been suitable in the mouth of a magistrate, blamable in a minister of Christ? Perhaps Zwingle forgot his quality of pastor, and considered himself only as a citizen, consulted by his fellow-citizens; perhaps he wished to defend Switzerland, and not the Church, by his counsels; but it is a question if he ought ever to have forgotten the Church and his ministry. We think we may go even further; and while granting all that may be urged in favour of the contrary supposition, we may deny that the secular power ought ever to interfere with the sword to protect the faith. To accomplish his designs, the reformer needed even in Zurich the greatest unity. But there were many men in that city devoted to interests and superstitions which were opposed to him. “How long,” he had exclaimed in the pulpit on the 1st December, 1528, “how long will you support in the council these unbelievers, these impious men, who oppose the Word of God?” They had decided upon purging the council, as required by the reformer; they had examined the citizens individually; and then had excluded all the hostile members.

CHAPTER II

Free Preaching of the Gospel in Switzerland—Zwingle supports the common Bailiwicks—War—Zwingle joins the army—The Zurich Army threatens Zug—The Landamman Aebli—Bernese Interposition—Zwingle’s Opposition—Swiss Cordiality—Order in the Zurich Camp—A Conference—Peace restored—Austrian Treaty torn—Zwingle’s Hymn—Nuns of Saint Catherine. On Saturday the 15th June 1529, seven days after Keyser’s martyrdom, all Zurich was in commotion. The moment was come when Unterwalden should send a governor to the common bailiwicks; and the images, having been burnt in those districts, Unterwalden had sworn to take a signal revenge. Thus the consternation had become general. “Keyser’s pile,” thought they, “will be rekindled in all our villages.” Many of the inhabitants flocked to Zurich, and on their alarmed and agitated features, one might, in imagination, have seen reflected the flames that had just consumed the martyr.

These unhappy people found a powerful advocate in Zwingle. The reformer imagined that he had at last attained the object he never ceased to pursue—the free preaching of the Gospel in Switzerland. To inflict a final blow would, in his idea, suffice to bring this enterprise to a favourable issue. “Greedy pensioners,” said Zwingle to the Zurichers, “profit by the ignorance of the mountaineers to stir up these simple souls against the friends of the Gospel. Let us therefore be severe upon these haughty chiefs. The mildness of the lamb would only serve to render the wolf more ferocious. Let us propose to the Five Cantons to allow the free preaching of the Word of the Lord, to renounce their wicked alliances, and to punish the abettors of foreign service. As for the mass, idols, rites, and superstitions, let no one be forced to abandon them. It is for the Word of God alone to scatter with its powerful breath all this idle dust.2 Be firm, noble lords, and despite of

certain black horses, as black at Zurich as they are at Lucerne, but whose malice will never succeed in overturning the chariot of Reform, we shall clear this difficult pass, and arrive at the unity of Switzerland and at unity of faith." Thus Zwingle, while calling for force against political abuses, asked only liberty for the Gospel; but he desired a prompt intervention, in order that this liberty might be secured to it. Œcolampadius thought the same: "It is not a time for delay," said he: "it is not a time for parsimony and pusillanimity! So long as the venom shall not be utterly removed from this adder in our bosoms we shall be exposed to the greatest dangers.4 The council of Zurich, led away by the reformer, promised the bailiwicks to support religious liberty among them; and no sooner had they learnt that Anthony ab Acker of Unterwalden was proceeding to Baden with an army, than they ordered five hundred men to set out for Bremgarten with four pieces of artillery. This was the 5th June, and on the same evening the standard of Zurich waved over the convent of Mouri. The war of religion had begun. The horn of the Waldstettes re-echoed afar in the mountains: men were arming in every direction, and messengers were sent off in haste to invoke the assistance of the Valais and of Austria. Three days later (Tuesday the 8th June), six hundred Zurichers, under the command of Jacques Werdmüller, set out for Rapperschwyl and the district of Gaster; and, on the morrow, four thousand men repaired to Cappel, under the command of the valiant Captain George Berguer, to whom Conrad Schmidt, pastor of Kussnacht, had been appointed chaplain. "We do not wish you to go to the war," said Burgomaster Roust to Zwingle; "for the pope, the Archduke Ferdinand, the Romish cantons, the bishops, the abbots, and the prelates, hate you mortally. Stay with the council: we have need of you."—"No!" replied Zwingle, who was unwilling to confide so important an enterprise to any one; "when my brethren expose their lives I will not remain quietly at home by my fireside. Besides, the army also requires a watchful eye, that looks continually around it." Then, taking down his glittering halberd, which he had carried (as they say) at Marignan, and placing it on his shoulder, the reformer mounted his horse and set out with the army. The walls, towers, and battlements were covered with a crowd of old men, children, and women, among whom was Anna, Zwingle's wife.

Zurich had called for the aid of Berne; but that city, whose inhabitants showed little disposition for a religious war, and which besides was not pleased at seeing the increasing influence of Zurich, replied, "Since Zurich has begun the war without us, let her finish it in like manner." The evangelical states were disunited at the very moment of the struggle. The Romish cantons did not act thus. It was Zug that issued the first summons; and the men of Uri, of Schwytz, and of Underwalden had immediately begun to march. On the 8th June, the great banner floated before the townhouse of Lucerne, and on the next day the army set out to the sound of the antique horns that Lucerne pretended to have received from the Emperor Charlemagne. On the 10th June, the Zurichers, who were posted at Cappel, sent a herald at daybreak to Zug, who was commissioned, according to custom, to denounce to the Five Cantons the rupture of the alliance. Immediately Zug was filled with cries and alarm. This canton, the smallest in Switzerland, not having yet received all the confederate contingents, was not in a condition to defend itself. The people ran to and fro, sent off messengers, and hastily prepared for battle; the warriors fitted on their armour, the women shed tears, and the children shrieked.

Already the first division of the Zurich army, amounting to two thousand men, under the command of William Thöming, and stationed near the frontier below Cappel, was preparing to march, when they observed, in the direction of Baar, a horseman pressing the flanks of his steed, and galloping

up as fast as the mountain which he had to ascend would permit. It was Aebli, landamman of Glaris. “The Five Cantons are prepared,” said he, as he arrived, “but I have prevailed upon them to halt, if you will do the same. For this reason I entreat my lords and the people of Zurich, for the love of God and the safety of the confederation, to suspend their march at the present moment.” As he uttered these words, the brave Helvetian shed tears. “In a few hours,” continued he, “I shall be back again. I hope with God’s grace to obtain an honourable peace, and to prevent our cottages from being filled with widows and orphans.”

Aebli was known to be an honourable man, friendly to the Gospel and opposed to foreign service: his words, therefore, moved the Zurich captains, who resolved to halt. Zwingle alone, motionless and uneasy, beheld in his friend’s intervention the machinations of the adversary. Austria, occupied in repelling the Turks, and unable to succour the Five Cantons, had exhorted them to peace. This, in Zwingle’s opinion, was the cause of the propositions brought to them by the Landamman of Glaris. So at the moment Aebli turned round to return to Zug, Zwingle approaching him, said with earnestness, “Gossip landamman, you will render to God an account of all this. Our adversaries are caught in a sack: and hence they give you sweet words. By and by they will fall upon us unawares, and there will be none to deliver us.” Prophetic words whose fulfilment went beyond all foresight! “Dear gossip!” replied the landamman, “I have confidence in God that all will go well. Let each one do his best.” And he departed. The army, instead of advancing upon Zug, now began to erect tents along the edge of the forest and the brink of the torrent, a few paces from the sentinels of the Five Cantons: while Zwingle, seated in his tent, silent, sad, and in deep thought, anticipated some distressing news from hour to hour.

He had not long to wait. The Deputies of the Zurich council came to give reality to his fears. Berne, maintaining the character that it had so often filled as representative of the federal policy, declared that if Zurich or the cantons would not make peace, they would find means to compel them: this state at the same time convoked a diet at Arau, and sent five thousand men into the field, under the command of Sebastian Diesbach. Zwingle was struck with consternation.

Aebli’s message, supported by that of Berne, was sent back by the council to the army; for, according to the principles of the time, “wherever the banner waves, there is Zurich.”—“Let us not be staggered,” cried the reformer, ever decided and firm; “our destiny depends upon our courage; to-day they beg and entreat, and in a month, when we have laid down our arms, they will crush us. Let us stand firm in God. Before all things, let us be just: peace will come after that.” But Zwingle, transformed to a statesman, began to lose the influence which he had gained as a servant of God. Many could not understand him, and asked if what they had heard was really the language of a minister of the Lord. “Ah!” said one of his friends, who perhaps knew him best, Oswald Myconius. “Zwingle certainly was an intrepid man in the midst of danger; but he always had a horror of blood, even of that of his most deadly enemies. The freedom of his country, the virtues of our forefathers, and, above all, the glory of Christ, were the sole end of all his designs.—I speak the truth, as if in the presence of God,” adds he.

While Zurich was sending deputies to Arau, the two armies received reinforcements. The men of Thurgovia and St. Gall joined their banners to that of Zurich: the Valaisans and the men of St. Gothard united with the Romanist cantons. The advanced posts were in sight of each other at Thun, Leematt, and Goldesbrunnen, on the delightful slopes of the Albis.

Never, perhaps, did Swiss cordiality shine forth brighter with its ancient lustre. The soldiers called to one another in a friendly manner, and shook hands, styling themselves confederates and brothers. “We shall not fight,” said they. “A storm is passing over our heads, but we will pray to God, and he will preserve us from every harm. Scarcity afflicted the army of the Five Cantons, while abundance reigned in the camp of Zurich. Some young famishing Waldstettes one day passed the outposts: the Zurichers made them prisoners, conducted them to the camp, and then sent them back laden with provisions, with still greater good-nature than was shown by Henry IV. at the siege of Paris. At another time, some warriors of the Five Cantons, having placed a bucket filled with milk on the frontier-line, cried out to the Zurichers that they had no bread. The latter came down immediately, and cut their bread into the enemies’ milk, upon which the soldiers of the two parties began with jokes to eat out of the same dish—some on this side, some on that. The Zurichers were delighted that notwithstanding the prohibition of their priests, the Waldstettes ate with heretics. When one of the troop took a morsel that was on the side of his adversaries, the latter sportively struck him with their spoons, and said: “Do not cross the frontier!” Thus did these good Helvetians make war upon one another; and hence it was that the Burgomaster Sturm of Strasburg, one of the mediators, exclaimed: “You confederates are a singular people! When you are disunited, you live still in harmony with one another, and your ancient friendship never slumbers.” The most perfect order reigned in the camp of Zurich. Every day Zwingle, the commander Schmidt, Zink, abbot of Cappel, or some other minister, preached among the soldiers. No oath or dispute was heard; all disorderly women were turned out of the camp; prayers were offered up before and after every meal; and each man obeyed his chiefs. There were no dice, no cards, no games calculated to excite quarrels; but psalms, hymns, national songs, bodily exercise, wrestling, or pitching the stone, were the military recreations of the Zurichers. The spirit that animated the reformer had passed into the army. The assembly at Arau, transported to Steinhausen in the neighbourhood of the two camps, decreed that each army should hear the complaints of the opposite party. The reception of the deputies of the Five Cantons by the Zurichers was tolerably calm; it was not so in the other camp. On the 15th June, fifty Zurichers, surrounded by a crowd of peasants, proceeded on horseback to the Waldstettes. The sound of the trumpet, the roll of the drum, and repeated salvos of artillery announced their arrival. Nearly twelve thousand men of the smaller cantons, in good order, with uplifted heads and arrogant looks, were under arms. Escher of Zurich spoke first, and many persons from the rural districts enumerated their grievances after him, which the Waldstettes thought exaggerated. “When have we ever refused you the federal right?” asked they. “Yes, yes!” replied Funk, Zwingle’s friend; “we know how you exercise it. That pastor (Keyser) appealed to it, and you referred him—to the executioner!” “Funk, you would have done better to have held your tongue,” said one of his friends. But the words had slipped out: a dreadful tumult suddenly arose; all the army of the Waldstettes was in agitation; the most prudent begged the Zurichers to retire promptly, and protected their departure. At length the treaty was concluded on the 26th June, 1529. Zwingle did not obtain all he desired. Instead of the free preaching of the Word of God, the treaty stipulated only liberty of conscience; it declared that the common bailiwicks should pronounce for or against the Reform by a majority of votes. Without decreeing the abolition of foreign pensions, it was recommended to the Romish cantons to renounce the alliance formed with Austria; the Five Cantons were to pay the expenses of the war, Murner to retract his insulting words, and an indemnity was secured to Keyser’s family. An incontrovertible success had just crowned the warlike demonstration of Zurich.

The Five Cantons felt it. Gloomy, irritated, silently champing the bit that had been placed in their mouths, their chiefs could not decide upon giving up the deed of their alliance with Austria. Zurich immediately recalled her troops, the mediators redoubled their solicitations, and the Bernese exclaimed: “If you do not deliver up this document, we will ourselves go in procession and tear it from your archives.” At last it was brought to Cappel on the 26th June, two hours after midnight. All the army was drawn out at eleven in the forenoon, and they began to read the treaty. The Zurichers looked with astonishment at its breadth and excessive length, and the nine seals which had been affixed, one of which was in gold. But scarcely had a few words been read, when Acbli, snatching the parchment, cried out, “Enough, enough!”—“Read it, read it!” said the Zurichers; “we desire to learn their treason!” But the Bailiff of Glaris replied boldly: “I would rather be cut in a thousand pieces than permit it.” Then dashing his knife into the parchment, he cut it in pieces in the presence of Zwingle and the soldiers, and threw the fragments to the secretary, who committed them to the flames. “The paper was not Swiss,” says Bullinger, with sublime simplicity. The banners were immediately struck. The men of Unterwalden retired in anger; those of Schywtz swore they would for ever preserve their ancient faith; while the troops of Zurich returned in triumph to their homes. But the most opposite thoughts agitated Zwingle’s mind. “I hope,” said he, doing violence to his feelings, “that we bring back an honourable peace to our dwellings. It was not to shed blood that we set out. God has once again shown the great ones of the earth that they can do nothing against us.” Whenever he gave way to his natural disposition, a very different order of thoughts took possession of his mind. He was seen walking apart in deep dejection, and anticipating the most gloomy future. In vain did the people surround him with joyful shouts. “This peace,” said he, “which you consider a triumph, you will soon repent of, striking your breasts.” It was at this time that, venting his sorrow, he composed, as he was descending the Albis, a celebrated hymn often repeated to the sound of music in the fields of Switzerland, among the burghers of the confederate cities, and even in the palaces of kings The hymns of Luther and of Zwingle play the same part in the German and Swiss Reformation as the Psalms in that of France. Do thou direct thy chariot, Lord, And guide it at thy will;

Without thy aid our strength is vain, And useless all our skill.

Look down upon thy saints brought low, And prostrate laid before the foe.

Beloved Pastor, who hast saved Our souls from death and sin, Uplift thy voice, awake thy sheep That slumbering lie within Thy fold, and curb with thy right hand The rage of Satan’s furious band.

Send down thy peace, and banish strife, Let bitterness depart;

Revive the spirit of the past In every Switzer’s heart:

Then shall thy Church for ever sing The praises of her heavenly King. An edict, published in the name of the confederates, ordered the revival everywhere of the old friendship and brotherly concord; but decrees are powerless to work such miracles. This treaty of peace was nevertheless favourable to the Reform. Undoubtedly it met with a violent opposition in some places. The nuns of the vale of St. Catherine in Thurgovia, deserted by their priests and excited by some noblemen beyond the Rhine, who styled them in their letters, “Chivalrous women of the house of God,” sang mass themselves, and appointed one of their number preacher to the convent. Certain deputies from the protestant cantons having had an interview with them the abbess and three of the nuns

secretly crossed the river by night, carrying with them papers of the monastery and the ornaments of the church. But such insolated resistance as this was unavailing. Already in 1529 Zwingle was able to hold a synod in Thurgovia, which organized the church there, and decreed that the property of the convents should be consecrated to the instruction of pious young men in sacred learning. Thus concord and peace seemed at last to be re-established in the confederation.

CHAPTER III

Conquests of Reform in Schaffhausen and Zurzack—Reform in Glaris—To-day the Cowl, To-morrow the Reverse—Italian Bailiwicks—The Monk of Como—Egidio's Hope for Italy—Call of the Monk of Locarno—Hopes of reforming Italy—The Monks of Wettingen—Abbey of Saint Gall—Kilian Kouffi—Saint Gall recovers its Liberty—The Reform in Soicure—Miracle of Saint Ours—Popery triumphs—The Grisons invaded by the Spaniards—Address of the Ministers to the Romish Cantons—God's Word the Means of Unity—Œcolampadius for spiritual influence—Autonomy of the Church.

Whenever a conqueror abandons himself to his triumph, in that very confidence he often finds destruction. Zurich and Zwingle were to exemplify this mournful lesson of history. Taking advantage of the national peace, they redoubled their exertions for the triumph of the Gospel. This was a legitimate zeal, but it was not always wisely directed. To attain the unity of Switzerland by unity of faith was the object of the Zurichers; but they forgot that, by desiring to force on a unity, it is broken to pieces, and that freedom is the only medium in which contrary elements can be dissolved, and a salutary union established. While Rome aims at unity by anathemas, imprisonment, and the stake, christian truth demands unity through liberty. And let us not fear that liberty, expanding each individuality beyond measure, will produce by this means an infinite multiplicity. While we urge every mind to attach itself to the Word of God, we give it up to a power capable of restoring its diverging opinions to a wholesome unity.

Zwingle at first signalized his victory by legitimate conquests. He advanced with courage. "His eye and his arm were everywhere." "A few wretched mischief-makers," says Salat, a Romanist chronicler, "penetrating into the Five Cantons, troubled men's souls, distributed their frippery, scattered everywhere little poems, tracts, and testaments, and were continually repeating that the people ought not to believe the priests." This was not all: while the Reform was destined to be confined around the lake of the Waldstettes to a few fruitless efforts, it made brilliant conquests among the cantons,—the allies and subjects of Switzerland; and all the blows there inflicted on the Papacy re-echoed among the lofty valleys of the primitive cantons, and filled them with affright. Nowhere had Popery shown itself more determined than in the Swiss mountains. A mixture of Romish despotism and Helvetian roughness existed there. Rome was resolved to conquer all Switzerland, and yet she beheld her most important positions successively wrested from her. On the 29th September 1529, the citizens of Schaffhausen removed the "great God" from the cathedral, to the deep regret of a small number of devotees whom the Roman worship still counted in this city; then they abolished the mass, and stretched out their hands to Zurich and to Berne. At Zurzack, near the confluence of the Rhine and the Aar, at the moment when the priest of the place, a man devoted to the ancient worship, was preaching with zeal, a person named Tüfel (devil), raising his head, observed to him: "Sir, you are heaping insults on good men, and loading the pope and the saints of the Roman calendar with honour; pray where do we find that in the Holy

Scriptures?" This question, put in a serious tone of voice, raised a sly smile on many faces, and the congregation with their eyes fixed on the pulpit awaited the reply. The priest in astonishment and at his wit's end, answered with a trembling voice: "Devil is thy name; thou actest like the Devil, and thou art the Devil! For this reason I will have nothing to do with thee." He then hastily left the pulpit, and ran away as if Satan himself had been behind him. Immediately the images were torn down, and the mass abolished. The Roman-catholics sought to console themselves by repeating everywhere: "At Zurzack it was the Devil who introduced the Reformation." The priests and warriors of the Forest Cantons beheld the overthrow of the Romish faith in countries that lay nearer to them. In the canton of Glaris, whence by the steep passes of the Klaus and the Pragel, the Reform might suddenly fall upon Uri and Schwytz, two men met face to face. At Mollis, Fridolin Brunner who questioned himself every day by what means he could advance the cause of Christ,2 attacked the abuses of the Church with the energy of his friend Zwingle, and endeavoured to spread among the people, who were passionately fond of war, the peace and charity of the Gospel. At Glaris, on the contrary, Valentine Tschudi studied with all the circumspection of his friend Erasmus to preserve a just medium between Rome and the Reform. And although, in consequence of Fridolin's preaching, the doctrines of purgatory, indulgences, meritorious works, and intercession of the saints, were looked at by the Glaronais as mere follies and fables,4 they still believed with Tschudi that the body and blood of Christ were substantially in the bread of the Lord's Supper. At the same time a movement in opposition to the Reform was taking place in that high and savage valley, where the Linth, roaring at the foot of vast rocks with jagged crests—enormous citadels which seem built in the air,—bathes the villages of Schwanden and Ruti with its waters. The Roman-catholics, alarmed at the progress of the Gospel, and wishing to save these mountains at least, had scattered with liberal hands the money they derived from their foreign pensions; and from that time violent hostility divided old friends, and men who appeared to have been won over to the Gospel basely sought for a pretext to conceal a disgraceful flight. "Peter6 and I," wrote Rasdorfer, pastor of Ruti, in despair, "are labouring in the vineyard, but alas! the grapes we gathered are not employed for the sacrifice, and the very birds do not eat them. We fish, but after having toiled all night, we find that we have only caught leeches. Alas! we are casting pearls before dogs, and roses before swine!" The spirit of revolt against the Gospel soon descended from these valleys with the noisy waters of the Linth as far as Glaris and Mollis. "The council, as if it had been composed only of silly women, shifting its sails every day," said Rasdorfer; "one day it will have the cowl, on the next it will not."2 Glaris, like a leaf carried along on the bosom of one of its torrents, and which the waves and eddies drive in different directions, wavered, wheeled about, and was nearly swallowed up. But this crisis came to an end: the Gospel suddenly regained strength, and on Easter Monday 1530, a general assembly of the people "put the mass and the altars to the vote." A powerful party that relied upon the Five Cantons vainly opposed the Reform. It was proclaimed, and its vanquished and disconcerted enemies were forced to content themselves, says Bullinger, with mysteriously concealing a few idols, which they reserved for better days. In the meanwhile, the Reform advanced in the exterior Rhodes of Appenzell, and in the district of Sargans. But what most exasperated the cantons that remained faithful to the Romish doctrines, was to see it pass the Alps and appear in Italy, in those beautiful districts round Lake Maggiore, where, near the embouchere of the Maggia, within the walls of Locarno, in the midst of laurels, pomegranates, and cypresses, flourished the noble families of Orelli, Muralto, Magoria, and Duni, and where floated since 1512 the sovereign standard of the

cantons. “What!” said the Waldstettes, “is it not enough that Zurich and Zwingle infest Switzerland! They have the impudence to carry their pretended reform even into Italy,—even into the country of the pope!”

Great irregularities prevailed there among the clergy: “Whoever wishes to be damned must become a priest,” was a common saying. But the Gospel succeeded in making its way even into that district. A monk of Como, Egedio à Porta, who had taken the cowl in 1511, against the wishes of his family, struggled for years in the Augustine convent, and nowhere found peace for his soul. Motionless, environed, as it appeared to him, with profound night, he cried aloud: “Lord, what wilt thou that I should do?” Erelong the monk of Como thought he heard these words in his heart: “Go to Ulrich Zwingle and he will tell thee.” He rose trembling with emotion. “It is you,” wrote he to Zwingle immediately, “but no! it is not you, it is God who, through you, will deliver me from the nets of the hunters.” “Translate the New Testament into Italian,” replied Zwingle; “I will undertake to get it printed at Zurich.” This is what the Reform did for Italy more than three centuries ago.

Egidio therefore remained. He commenced translating the Gospel; but at one time he had to beg for the convent, at another to repeat his “hours,” and then to accompany one of the fathers on his journeys. Everything that surrounded him increased his distress. He saw his country reduced to the greatest misery by desolating wars,—men formerly rich, holding out their hands for alms,—crowds of women driven by want to the most shameful degradation. He imagined that a great political deliverance could alone bring about the religious independence of his fellow-countrymen. On a sudden he thought that this happy hour was arrived. He perceived a band of Lutheran lansquenets descending the Alps. Their serried phalanxes, their threatening looks, were directed towards the banks of the Tiber. At their head marched Freundsberg, wearing a chain of gold around his neck, and saying: “If I reach Rome I will make use of it to hang the pope.” “God wills to save us,” wrote Egidio to Zwingle: “write to the constable; entreat him to deliver the people over whom he rules,—to take from the shaven crowns, whose God is their belly, the wealth which renders them so proud,—and to distribute it among the people who are dying of hunger. Then let each one preach without fear the pure Word of the Lord.—The strength of Antichrist is near at its fall!”

Thus, about the end of 1526, Egidio already dreamt of the Reformation of Italy. From that time his letters cease: the monk disappeared. There can be no doubt that the arm of Rome was able to reach him, and that like so many others, he was plunged into the gloomy dungeon of some convent. In the spring of 1530, a new epoch commenced for the Italian bailiwicks. Zurich appointed Jacques Werdmüller bailiff of Locarno; he was a grave man, respected by all, and who even in 1524 had kissed the feet of the pope; he had since then been won over to the Gospel, and had sat down at the feet of the Saviour. “Go,” said Zurich, “and bear yourself like a Christian, and in all that concerns the Word of God conform to the ordinances.” Werdmüller met with nothing but darkness in every quarter. Yet, in the midst of this gloom, a feeble glimmering seemed to issue from a convent situated on the delightful shores of Lake Maggiore. Among the Carmelites at Locarno was a monk named Fontana, skilled in the Holy Scriptures, and animated with the same spirit that had enlightened the monk of Como. The doctrine of salvation, “without money and without price,” which God proclaims in the Gospel, filled him with love and joy. “As long as I live,” said he, I will preach upon the Epistles of St. Paul;”2 for it was particularly in these epistles that he had found the truth. Two monks, of whose names we are ignorant, shared his sentiments. Fontana

wrote a letter “to all the Church of Christ in Germany,” which was forwarded to Zwingle. We may imagine we hear that man of Macedonia, who appeared in a vision to Paul in the night, calling him to Europe, and saying, “Come over and help us.”—“O, trusty and well-beloved of Christ Jesus,” cried the monk of Locarno to Germany, “remember Lazarus, the beggar, in the Gospel,—remember that humble Canaanitish woman, longing for the crumbs that fell from the Lord’s table! hungry as David, I have recourse to the shew-bread placed upon the altar. A poor traveller devoured by thirst, I rush to the springs of living water.4 Plunged in darkness, bathed in tears, we cry to you who know the mysteries of God to send us by the hands of the munificent J. Werdmüller all the writings of the divine Zwingle, of the famous Luther, of the skilful Melancthon, of the mild Œcolampadius, of the ingenious Pomeranus, of the learned Lambert, of the elegant Brentz, of the penetrating Bucer, of the studious Leo, of the vigilant Hütten, and of the other illustrious doctors, if there are any more. Excellent princes, pivots of the Church, our holy mother, make haste to deliver from the slavery of Babylon a city of Lombardy that has not yet known the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are but three who have combined together to fight on behalf of the truth; but it was beneath the blows of a small body of men, chosen by God, and not by the thousands of Gideon, that Midian fell. Who knows if, from a small spark, God may not cause a great conflgration?”

Thus three men on the banks of the Maggia hoped at that time to reform Italy. They uttered a call to which, for three centuries the evangelical world has not replied. Zurich, however, in these days of its strength and of its faith, displayed a holy boldness, and dared extend her heretical arms beyond the Alps. Hence, Uri, Schwytz, Unterwalden, and all the Romanists of Switzerland gave vent to loud and terrible threats, swearing to arrest even in Zurich itself the course of these presumptuous invasions. But the Zurichers did not confine themselves to this: they gave the confederates more serious cause of fear by waging incessant war against the convents,—these centres of ultra-montane fanaticism. The extensive monastery of Wittengen, around which roll the waters of the Limmat, and which, by its proximity to Zurich, was exposed more than any other to the breath of reform, was in violent commotion. On the 23d August, 1529, a great change took place; the monks ceased to sing mass; they cut off each other’s beards, not without shedding a few tears; they laid down their frocks and their hoods, and clothed themselves in becoming secular dresses. Then, in astonishment at this metamorphosis, they listened devoutly to the sermon which Sebastian Benli of Zurich came and preached to them, and erelong employed themselves in propagating the Gospel, and in singing psalms in German. Thus Wittengen fell into the current of that river which seemed to be everywhere reviving the confederation. The cloister, ceasing to be a house for gaming, gluttony, and drunkenness, was changed into a school. Two monks alone in all the monastery remained faithful to the cowl. The commander of Mulinen, without troubling himself about the threat of the Romish cantons, earnestly requested the commandery of St. John at Hitzkirch towards the Reformation. The question was put to the vote, and the majority declared in favour of the Word of God. “Ah!” said the commander, “I have been long pushing behind the chariot.” On the 4th September the commandery was reformed. It was the same with that of Wadenswyl, with the convent of Pfeffers, and others besides. Even at Mury the majority declared for the Gospel; but the minority prevailed through the support of the Five Cantons. A new triumph, and one of greater value, was destined to indemnify the reform, and to raise the indignation of the Waldstettes to the highest pitch. The Abbot of St. Gall, by his wealth, by the number of his subjects, and the influence which he exercised in Switzerland, was one of the most formidable

adversaries of the Gospel. In 1529, therefore, at the moment when the army of Zurich took the field against the Five Cantons, the Abbot Francis of Geisberg, in alarm and at the brink of death, caused himself to be hastily removed into the strong castle of Rohrschach, not thinking himself secure except within its walls. Four days after this, the illustrious Vadian, burgomaster of St. Gall, entered the convent, and announced the intention of the people to resume the use of their cathedral-church, and to remove the images. The monks were astonished at such audacity, and having in vain protested and cried for help, put their most precious effects in a place of safety, and fled to Einsidlen.

Among these was Kilian Kouffi, head-steward of the abbey, a cunning and active monk, and, like Zwingle, a native of the Tockenburg. Knowing how important it was to find a successor to the abbot, before the news of his death was bruited abroad, he came to an understanding with those who waited on the prelate; and the latter dying on Tuesday in Holy Week, the meals were carried as usual into his chamber, and with downcast eyes and low voice the attendants answered every inquiry about his health. While this farce was going on round a dead body, the monks who had assembled at Einsidlen repaired in all haste to Rapperschwyl, in the territory of St. Gall, and there elected Kilian, who had so skilfully managed the affair. The new abbot went immediately to Rohrschach, and on Good Friday he there proclaimed his own election and the death of his predecessor. Zurich and Glaris declared they would not recognise him, unless he could prove by the Holy Scriptures that a monkish life was in conformity with the Gospel. “We are ready to protect the house of God,” said they; “and for this reason we require that it be consecrated anew to the Lord. But we do not forget that it is our duty also to protect the people. The free Church of Christ should raise its head in the bosom of a free people.” At the same time the ministers of St. Gall published forty-two theses, in which they asserted that convents were not “houses of the Lord but houses of the devil.” The abbot supported by Lucerne and Schwytx, which with Zurich and Glaris exercised sovereign power in St. Gall, replied that he could not dispute about rights which he held from kings and emperors. The two natives of the Tockenburg, Zwingle and Kilian, were thus struggling around St. Gall,—the one claiming the people for the abbey, and the other the abbey for the people. The army of Zurich having approached Wyl, Kilian seized upon the treasures and muniments of the convent and fled precipitantly beyond the Rhine. As soon as peace was concluded, the crafty monk put on a secular dress, and crept mysteriously as far as Einsidlen, whence on a sudden he made all Switzerland re-echo with his cries. Zurich in conjunction with Glaris replied by publishing a constitution, according to which a governor, “confirmed in the evangelical faith,” should preside over the district, with a council of twelve members, while the election of Pastors was left to the parishes. Not long afterwards, the abbot, expelled and a fugitive, while crossing a river near Bregentz, fell from his horse, got entangled in his frock, and was drowned. Of the two combatants from the Tockenburg, it was Zwingle who gained the victory. The convent was put up to sale, and was purchased by the town of St. Gall, “with the exception,” says Bullinger, “of a detached building, called Hell, where the monks were left who had not embraced the Reform.” The time having arrived when the governor sent by Zurich was to give place to one from Lucerne, the people of St. Gall called upon the latter to swear to their constitution. “A governor has never been known,” replied he, “to make an oath to peasants; it is the peasants who should make the oath to the governor!” Upon this he retired: The Zurich governor remained, and the indignation of the Five Cantons against Zurich, which so daringly assisted the people of St. Gall in recovering their ancient liberties, rose to the highest paroxysm of anger. A few victories,

however, consoled in some degree the partisans of Rome. Soleure was for a long time one of the most contested battle-fields. The citizens and the learned were in favour of Reform: the patricians and canons for Popery. Philip Grotz of Zug was preaching the Gospel there, and the council desiring to compel him to say mass, one hundred of the reformed appeared in the hall of assembly on the 13th September 1529, and with energy called for liberty of conscience. As Zurich and Berne supported this demand, their prayer was granted.

Upon this the most fanatical of the Roman-catholics, exasperated at the concession, closed the gates of the city, pointed the guns, and made a show of expelling the friends of the Reform. The council prepare to punish these agitators, when the reformed, willing to set an example of christian moderation, declared that they would forgive them. The Great Council then published throughout the Canton that the dominion of conscience belonging to God alone, and faith being the free gift of His grace, each one might follow the religion which he thought best. Thirty-four parishes declared for the Reformation, and only two for the mass. Almost all the rural districts were in favour of the Gospel; but the majority in the city sided with the pope.2 Haller, whom the reformed of Soleure had sent for, arrived, and it was a day of triumph for them. It was in the middle of winter: “To-day,” ironically observed one of the evangelical Christians, “the patron saint (St. Ours) will sweat!” And in truth—oh! wonderful!—drops of moisture fell from the holy image! It was simply a little holy water that had frozen and then thawed. But the Romanists would listen to no raillery on so illustrious a prodigy, which may remind us of the blood of St. Januarius at Naples. All the city resounded with piteous cries,—the bells were tolled,—a general procession moved through the streets,—and high mass was sung in honour of the heavenly Prince who had shown in so marvellous a manner the pangs he felt for his dearly beloved. “It is the fat minister of Berne (Haller) who is the cause of the saint’s alarm,” said the devout old women. One of them declared that she would thrust a knife into his body; and certain Roman-catholics threatened to go to the Cordeliers’ church and murder the pastors who preached there. Upon this the reformed rushed to that church and demanded a public discussion: two hundred of their adversaries posted themselves at the same time in the church of St. Ours and refused all inquiry. Neither of the two parties was willing to be the first to abandon the camp in which it was entrenched. The senate, wishing to clear the two churches thus in a manner transformed into citadels, announced that at Martinmas, i.e. nine months later, a public disputation should take place. But as the reformed found the delay too long, both parties remained for a whole week more under arms. Commerce was interrupted,—the public offices were closed,—messengers ran to and fro,—arrangements were proposed; but the people were so stiff-necked, that no one would give way. The city was in a state of siege. At last all were agreed about the discussion, and the ministers committed four theses to writing, which the canons immediately attempted to refute.

Nevertheless they judged it a still better plan to elude them. Nothing alarmed the Romanists so much as a disputation. “What need have we of any?” said they. “Do not the writings of the two parties declare their sentiments?” The conference was therefore put off until the following year. Many of the reformed, indignant at these delays, imprudently quitted the city; and the councils, charmed at this result, which they were far from expecting, hastily declared that the people should be free in the canton, but that in the city no one should attack the mass. From that time the reformed were compelled every Sunday to leave Soleure and repair to the village of Zuchswyl to hear the Word of God. Thus popery, defeated in so many places, triumphed in Soleure.

Zurich and the other reformed cantons attentively watched these successes of their adversaries, and lent a fearful ear to the threats of the Roman-catholics, who were continually announcing the intervention of the emperor; when on a sudden a report was heard that nine hundred Spaniards had entered the Grisons; that they were led by the Chatelain of Musso, recently invested with the title of marquis by Charles the Fifth; that the chatelain's brother-in-law, Didier d'Embs, was also marching against the Swiss at the head of three thousand imperial lansquenets; and that the emperor himself was ready to support them with all his forces. The Grisons uttered a cry of alarm. The Waldstettes remained motionless; but all the reformed cantons assembled their troops, and eleven thousand men began their march. The emperor and the Duke of Milan having soon after declared that they would not support the chatelain, this adventurer beheld his castle razed to the ground, and was compelled to retire to the banks of the Sesia, giving guarantees of future tranquillity; while the Swiss soldiers returned to their homes, fired with indignation against the Five Cantons, who by their inactivity had infringed the federal alliance."3 "Our prompt and energetic resistance," said they, "has undoubtedly baffled their perfidious designs; but the reaction is only adjourned. Although the parchment of the Austrian alliance has been torn in pieces, the alliance itself still exists. The truth has freed us, but soon the imperial lansquenets will come and try to place us again under the yoke of slavery."

Thus in consequence of so many violent shocks, the two parties that divided Switzerland had attained the highest degree of irritation. The gulf that separated them widened daily. The clouds—the forerunners of the tempest—drove swiftly along the mountains, and gathered threateningly above the valleys. Under these circumstances Zwingle and his friends thought it their duty to raise their voices, and if possible to avert the storm. In like manner Nicholas de Flue had in former days thrown himself between the hostile parties. On the 5th September 1530, the principal ministers of Zurich, Berne, Basle, and Strasburg,—Œcolampadius, Capito, Megander, Leo Juda, and Myconius,—were assembled at Zurich in Zwingle's house. Desirous of taking a solemn step with the Five Cantons, they drew up an address that was presented to the Confederates at the meeting of the diet at Baden. However unfavourable the deputies were, as a body, to these heretical ministers, they nevertheless listened to this epistle but not without signs of impatience and weariness. "You are aware, gracious lords, that concord increases the power of states, and that discord overthrows them.2 You are yourselves a proof of the first of these truths. Setting out from a small beginning, you have, by a good understanding one with another, arrived at a great end. May God condescend to prevent you also from giving a striking proof of the second! Whence comes disunion, if not from selfishness? and how can we destroy this fatal passion, except by receiving from God the love of the common weal. For this reason we conjure you to allow the Word of God to be freely preached among you, as did your pious ancestors. When has there ever existed a government, even among the heathens, which saw not that the hand of God alone upholds a nation? Do not two drops of quicksilver unite as soon as you remove that which separates them? Away then with that which separates you from our cities, that is, the absence of the Word of God; and immediately the Almighty will unite us, as our fathers were united. Then placed in your mountains as in the centre of Christendom, you will be an example to it, its protection and its refuge; and after having passed through this vale of tears, being the terror of the wicked and the consolation of the faithful, you will at last be established in eternal happiness."

Thus frankly did these men of God address their brothers, the Waldstettes. But their voice was not attended to. “The ministers’ sermon is rather long,” said some of the deputies yawning and stretching their arms, while others pretended to find in it a new cause of complaint against the cities. This proceeding of the ministers was useless: the Waldstettes rejected the Word of God, which they had been entreated to admit; they rejected the hands that were extended towards them in the name of Jesus Christ. They called for the pope and not for the Gospel. All hope of reconciliation appeared lost.

Some persons, however, had at that time a glimpse of what might have saved Switzerland and the Reformation,—the autonomy (self-government) of the Church, and its independence of political interests. Had they been wise enough to decline the secular power to secure the triumph of the Gospel, it is probable that harmony might have been gradually established in the Helvetic cantons, and that the Gospel would have conquered by its Divine strength. The power of the Word of God presented chances of success that were not afforded by pikes and muskets. The energy of faith, the influence of charity, would have proved a securer protection to Christians against the burning piles of the Waldstettes than diplomatists and men-at-arms. None of the reformers understood this so clearly as Œcolampadius. His handsome countenance, the serenity of his features, the mild expression of his eyes, his long and venerable beard, the spirituality of his expression, a certain dignity that inspired confidence and respect, gave him rather the air of an apostle than a reformer. It was the power of the inner word that he particularly extolled; perhaps he even went too far in spiritualism. But, however that may be, if any man could have saved Reform from the misfortunes that were about to befall it—that man was he. In separating from the Papacy, he desired not to set up the magistracy in its stead. “The magistrate who should take away from the churches the authority that belongs to them,” wrote he to Zwingle, “would be more intolerable than Antichrist himself (i.e. the pope).”—“The hand of the magistrate strikes with the sword, but the hand of Christ heals. Christ has not said,—If thy brother will not hear thee, tell it to the magistrate, but—tell it to the Church. The functions of the State are distinct from those of the Church. The State is free to do many things which the purity of the Gospel condemns.” Œcolampadius saw how important it was that his convictions should prevail among the reformed. This man, so mild and so spiritual, feared not to stand forth bodily in defence of doctrines then so novel. He expounded them before a synodal assembly, and next developed them before the senate of Basle.3 It is a strange circumstance that these ideas, for a moment at least, were acceptable to Zwingle; but they displeased an assembly of the brethren to whom he communicated them; the politic Bucer above all feared that this independence of the Church would in some measure check the exercise of the civil power.5 The exertions of Œcolampadius to constitute the Church were not, however, entirely unsuccessful. In February, 1531, a diet of four reformed cantons (Basle, Zurich, Berne, and St. Gall), was held at Basle, in which it was agreed, that whenever any difficulty should arise with regard to doctrine or worship, an assembly of divines and laymen should be convoked, which should examine what the Word of God said on the matter. This resolution, by giving greater unity to the renovated Church, gave it also fresh strength.

CHAPTER IV

Zwingle and the Christian State—Zwingle’s double Part—Zwingle and Luther in Relation to Politics—Philip of Hesse and the Free Cities—Projected Union between Zwingle and Luther—Zwingle’s political Action—Project of Alliance against the Emperor—Zwingle advocates

active Resistance—He destines the Imperial Crown for Philip—Faults of the Reformation—Embassy to Venice—Giddiness of the Reformation—Projected Alliance with France—Zwingle's plan of Alliance—Approaching Ruin—Slanders in the Five Cantons—Violence—Mysterious Paper—Berne and Basle vote for Peace—General Diet at Baden—Evangelical Diet at Zurich—Political Reformation of Switzerland—Activity of Zurich. But it was too late to tread in this path which would have prevented so many disasters. The Reformation had already entered with all her sails set upon the stormy ocean of politics, and terrible misfortunes were gathering over her. The impulse communicated to the Reform came from another than Œcolampadius. Zwingle's proud and piercing eyes—his harsh features,—his bold step,—all proclaimed in him a resolute mind and the man of action. Nurtured in the exploits of the heroes of antiquity, he threw himself, to save Reform, in the footsteps of Demosthenes and Cato, rather than in those of St. John and St. Paul. His prompt and penetrating looks were turned to the right and to the left,—to the cabinets of kings and the councils of the people, whilst they should have been directed solely to God. We have already seen, that as early as 1527, Zwingle, observing how all the powers were rising against the Reformation, had conceived the plan of a co-burghery or Christian State, which should unite all the friends of the Word of God in one holy and powerful league. This was so much the easier as Zwingle's reformation had won over Strasburg, Augsburg, Ulm, Reutlingen, Lindau, Memmingen, and other towns of Upper Germany. Constance in December 1527, Berne in June 1528, St. Gall in November of the same year, Bienne in January 1529, Mulhausen in February, Basle in March, Schaffhausen in September, and Strasburg in December, entered into this alliance. This political phasis of Zwingle's character is in the eyes of some persons his highest claim to glory; we do not hesitate to acknowledge it as his greatest fault. The reformer, deserting the paths of the apostles, allowed himself to be led astray by the perverse example of Popery. The primitive Church never opposed their persecutors but with the sentiments derived from the Gospel of peace. Faith was the only sword by which it vanquished the mighty ones of the earth. Zwingle felt clearly that by entering into the ways of worldly politicians, he was leaving those of a minister of Christ; he therefore sought to justify himself. "No doubt, it is not by human strength," said he, "it is by the strength of God alone that the Word of the Lord should be upheld. But God often makes use of men as instruments to succour men. Let us therefore unite, and from the sources of the Rhino to Strasburg let us form but one people and one alliance."

Zwingle played two parts at once—he was a reformer and a magistrate. But these are two characters that ought not more to be united than those of a minister and of a soldier. We will not altogether blame the soldiers and the magistrates: in forming leagues and drawing the sword, even for the sake of religion, they act according to their point of view, although it is not the same as ours; but we must decidedly blame the christian minister who becomes a diplomatist or a general. In October, 1529, as we have already observed, Zwingle repaired to Marburg, whither he had been invited by Philip of Hesse; and while neither of them had been able to come to an understanding with Luther, the landgrave and the Swiss reformer, animated by the same bold and enterprising spirit, soon agreed together. The two reformers differed not less in their political than in their religious system. Luther, brought up in the cloister and in monastic submission, was imbued in youth with the writings of the fathers of the Church; Zwingle, on the other hand, reared in the midst of Swiss liberty, had, during those early years which decide the course of all the rest, imbibed the history of the ancient republics. Thus, while Luther was in favour of a passive

obedience, Zwingle advocated resistance against tyrants.

These two men were the faithful representatives of their respective nations. In the north of Germany, the princes and nobility were the essential part of the nation, and the people—strangers to all political liberty—had only to obey. Thus, at the epoch of the Reformation they were content to follow the voice of their doctors and chiefs. In Switzerland, in the south of Germany, and on the Rhine, on the contrary, many cities, after long and violent struggles, had won civil liberty; and hence we find in almost every place the people taking a decided part in the Reform of the Church. There was good in this; but evil was close at hand. The reformers, themselves men of the people, who dared not act upon princes, might be tempted to hurry away the people. It was easier for the Reformation to unite with republics than with kings. This facility nearly proved its ruin. The Gospel was thus to learn that its alliance is in heaven.

There was, however, one prince with whom the reformed party of the free states desired to be in union: this was Philip of Hesse. It was he who in great measure prompted Zwingle's warlike projects. Zwingle desired to make him some return, and to introduce his new friend into the evangelical league. But Berne, watchful to avert anything that might irritate the emperor and its ancient confederates, rejected this proposal, and thus excited a lively discontent in the "Christian State."—"What!" cried they, "do the Bernese refuse an alliance that would he honourable for us, acceptable to Jesus Christ, and terrible to our adversaries?" "The Bear," said the high-spirited Zwingle, "is jealous of the Lion (Zurich); but there will be an end to all these artifices, and victory will remain with the bold." It would appear, indeed, according to a letter in cipher, that the Bernese at last sided with Zwingle, requiring only that this alliance with a prince of the empire should not be made public.2

Still Œcolampadius had not given way, and his meekness contended, although modestly, with the boldness of his impetuous friend. He was convinced that faith was destined to triumph only by the cordial union of all believers. A valuable relief occurred to animate his exertions. The deputies of the christian co-burghery having assembled at Basle in 1530, the envoys from Strasburg endeavoured to reconcile Luther and Zwingle. Œcolampadius wrote to Zwingle on the subject, begging him to hasten to Basle, and not show himself too unyielding. "To say that the body and blood of Christ are really in the Lord's Supper, may appear to many too hard an expression," said he, "but is it not softened, when it is added—spiritually and not bodily?"4

Zwingle was immovable. "It is to flatter Luther that you hold such language, and not to defend the truth. Edere est credere." Nevertheless there were men present at the meeting who were resolved upon energetic measures. Brotherly love was on the eve of triumphing: peace was to be obtained by union. The Elector of Saxony himself proposed a concord of all evangelical Christians, to which the Swiss cities were invited by the landgrave to accede. A report spread that Luther and Zwingle were about to make the same confession of faith. Zwingle, calling to mind the early professions of the Saxon reformer, said one day at table before many witnesses, that. Luther would not think so erroneously about the Eucharist, if he were not misled by Melancthon. The union of the whole of the Reformation seemed about to be concluded: it would have vanquished by its own weapons. But Luther soon proved that Zwingle was mistaken in his expectations. He required a written engagement by which Zwingle and Œcolampadius should adhere to his sentiments, and the negotiations were broken off in consequence. Concord having failed, there remained nothing but

war. Œcolampadius must be silent, and Zwingle must act. And in truth from that hour Zwingle advanced more and more along that fatal path into which he was misled by his character, his patriotism, and his early habits. Stunned by so many violent shocks, attacked by his enemies and by his brethren, he staggered, and his head grew dizzy. From this period the reformer almost entirely disappears, and we see in his place the politician, the great citizen, who beholding a formidable coalition preparing its chains for every nation, stands up energetically against it. The emperor had just formed a close alliance with the pope. If his deadly schemes were not opposed it would be all over, in Zwingle's opinion, with Reformation, with religious and political liberty, and even with the confederation itself. "The emperor," said he, "is stirring up friend against friend, enemy against enemy: and then he endeavours to raise out of this confusion the glory of the Papacy, and, above all, his own power. He excites the Chatelain of Musso against the Grisons—Duke George of Saxony against Duke John—the Bishop of Constance against the city—the Duke of Savoy against Berne—the Five Cantons against Zurich—and the bishops of the Rhine against the landgrave; then, when the confusion shall have become general, he will fall upon Germany, will offer himself as a mediator, and ensnare princes and cities by fine speeches, until he has them all under his feet. Alas! what discord, what disasters, under the pretence of re-establishing the empire and restoring religion!" Zwingle went farther. The reformer of a small town in Switzerland, rising to the most astonishing political conceptions, called for a European alliance against such fatal designs. The son of a peasant of the Tockenburg held up his head against the heir of so many crowns. "That man must either be a traitor or a coward," wrote he to a senator of Constance, "who is content to stretch and yawn, when he ought to be collecting men and arms on every side, to convince the emperor that in vain he strives to re-establish the Romish faith, to enslave the free cities, and to subdue the Helvetians. He showed us only six months ago how he would proceed. To-day he will take one city in hand, to morrow another; and so, step by step, until they are all reduced. Then their arms will be taken away, their treasures, their machines of war, and all their power…. Arouse Lindau and all your neighbours; if they do not awake, public liberty will perish under the pretext of religion. We must place no confidence in the friendship of tyrants. Demosthenes teaches us that there is nothing so hateful in their eyes as τηv των πολεων ελευθεριαν. The emperor with one hand offers us bread, but in the other he conceals a stone."3 And a few months later Zwingle wrote to his friends in Constance; "Be bold; fear not the schemes of Charles. The razor will cut him who is sharpening it."

Away, then, with delay! Should they wait until Charles the Fifth claimed the ancient castle of Hapsburg? The papacy and the empire, it was said at Zurich, are so confounded together, that one cannot exist or perish without the other. Whoever rejects Popery should reject the empire, and whoever rejects the emperor should reject the pope.

It appears that Zwingle's thoughts even went beyond a simple resistance. When once the Gospel had ceased to be his principal study, there was nothing that could arrest him. "A single individual," said he, "must not take into his head to dethrone a tyrant; this would be a revolt, and the kingdom of God commands peace, righteousness, and joy. But if a whole people with common accord, or if the majority at least rejects him, without committing any excess, it is God himself who acts." Charles V. was at that time a tyrant in Zwingle's eyes; and the reformer hoped that Europe, awakening at length from its long slumber, would be the hand of God to hurl him from his throne.

Never since the time of Demosthenes and of the two Catos had the world seen a more energetic resistance to the power of its oppressors. Zwingle in a political point of view is one of the greatest characters of modern times: we must pay him this honour, which is, perhaps, for a minister of God, the greatest reproach. Everything was prepared in his mind to bring about a revolution that would have changed the history of Europe. He knew what he desired to substitute in place of the power he wished to overthrow. He had already cast his eyes upon the prince who was to wear the imperial crown instead of Charles. It was his friend the landgrave. “Most gracious prince,” wrote he on the 2nd November, 1529, “if I write to you as a child to a father, it is because I hope that God has chosen you for great events.… I dare think, but I dare not speak of them.… However, we must bell the cat at last.2 … All that I can do with my feeble means to manifest the truth, to save the universal Church, to augment your power and the power of those who love God—with God’s help, I will do.” Thus was this great man led astray. It is the will of God that there be spots even in those who shine brightest in the eyes of the world, and that only one upon earth shall say—“Which of you convinceth me of sin?” We are now viewing the faults of the Reformation: they arise from the union of religion with politics. I could not take upon myself to pass them by; the recollection of the errors of our predecessors in perhaps the most useful legacy they have bequeathed to us.

It appears that already at Marburg Zwingle and the landgrave had drawn out the first sketch of a general alliance against Charles V. The landgrave had undertaken to bring over the princes, Zwingle the free cities of Southern Germany and Switzerland. He went still further, and formed a plan of gaining over to this league the republics of Italy—the powerful Venice at least—that she might detain the emperor beyond the Alps, and prevent him from leading all his forces into Germany. Zwingle, who had earnestly pleaded against all foreign alliances, and proclaimed on so many occasions that the only ally of the Swiss should be the arm of the Almighty, began now to look around for what he had condemned, and thus prepared the way for the terrible judgment that was about to strike his family, his country, and his Church.

He had hardly returned from Marburg, and had made no official communication to the Great Council, when he obtained from the senate the nomination of an ambassador to Venice. Great men, after their first success, easily imagine that they can do every thing. It was not a statesman who was charged with this mission, but one of Zwingle’s friends, who had accompanied him into Germany, to the court of the future chief of the new empire—the Greek professor, Rodolph Collins, a bold and skilful man, and who knew Italian. Thus the Reform stretched its hands to the Doge and the Procurator of St. Marc. The Bible was not enough for it—it must have the Golden Book: never did a greater humiliation befall God’s work. The opinion which Protestants then entertained of Venice may, however, partly excuse Zwingle. There was in that city more independence of the pope, more freedom of thought, than in all the rest of Italy. Luther himself about this time wrote to Gabriel Zwilling, pastor at Torgau: “With what joy do I learn what you write to me concerning the Venetians. God be praised and glorified, for that they have received his Word!”

Collins was admitted, on the 26th December, to an audience with the doge and senate, who looked with an air of astonishment at this schoolmaster, this strange ambassador, without attendants, and without parade. They could not even understand his credentials, in so singular a style were they drawn up, and Collins was forced to explain their meaning. “I am come to you,” said he, “in the name of the council of Zurich and of the cities of the christian coburghery—free cities like Venice, and to which common interests should unite you. The power of the emperor is

formidable to republics; he is aiming at a universal monarchy in Europe; if he succeeds, all the free states will perish. We must therefore check him." The doge replied that the republic had just concluded an alliance with the emperor, and betrayed the distrust that so mysterious a mission excited in the Venetian senate. But afterwards, in a private conference,3 the doge, wishing to preserve a retreat on both sides, added, that Venice gratefully received the message from Zurich, and that a Venetian regiment, armed and paid by the republic itself, should be always ready to support the evangelical Swiss. The chancellor, covered with his purple robe, attended Collins to the door, and, at the very gates of the ducal palace, confirmed the promise of support. The moment the Reformation passed the magnificent porticos of St. Marc it was seized with giddiness; it could but stagger onwards to the abyss. They dismissed poor Collins by placing in his hands a present of twenty crowns. The rumour of these negotiations soon spread abroad, and the less suspicious, Capito for example, shook their heads, and could see in this pretended agreement nothing but the accustomed perfidy of Venice. This was not enough. The cause of the Reform was fated to drink the cup of degradation to the very dregs. Zwingle, seeing that his adversaries in the empire increased daily in numbers and in power, gradually lost his ancient aversion for France; and, although there was now a greater obstacle than before between him and Francis I.,—the blood of his brethren shed by that monarch,—he showed himself favourably disposed to a union that he had once so forcibly condemned.

Lambert Maigret, a French general, who appears to have had some leaning to the Gospel—which is a slight excuse for Zwingle—entered into correspondence with the reformer, giving him to understand that the secret designs of Charles V. called for an alliance between the King of France and the Swiss republics. "Apply yourself," said this diplomatist to him in 1530, "to a work so agreeable to our Creator, and which, by God's grace, will be very easy to your mightiness." Zwingle was at first astonished at these overtures. "The King of France," thought he, "cannot know which way to turn."3 Twice he took no heed of this prayer; but the envoy of Francis I. insisted that the reformer should communicate to him a plan of alliance. At the third attempt of the ambassador, the simple child of the Tockenburg mountains could no longer resist his advances. If Charles V. must fall, it cannot be without French assistance; and why should not the Reformation contract an alliance with Francis I., the object of which would be to establish a power in the empire that should in its turn oblige the king to tolerate the Reform in his own dominions? Everything seemed to meet the wishes of Zwingle; the fall of the tyrant was at hand, and he would drag the pope along with him. He communicated the general's overtures to the secret council, and Collins set out, commissioned to bear the required project to the French ambassador. "In ancient times," it ran, "no kings or people ever resisted the Roman empire with such firmness as those of France and Switzerland. Let us not degenerate from the virtues of our ancestors. His most Christian Majesty—all whose wishes are that the purity of the Gospel may remain undefiled—engages therefore to conclude an alliance with the christian coburghery that shall be in accordance with the Divine law, and that shall be submitted to the censure of the evangelical theologians of Switzerland." Then followed an outline of the different articles of the treaty.

Lanzerant, another of the king's envoys, replied the same day (27th February) to this astonishing project of alliance about to be concluded between the reformed Swiss and the persecutor of the French reformed, under reserve of the censure of the theologians.… This was not what France desired: it was Lombardy, and not the Gospel that the king wanted. For that purpose, he needed

the support of all the Swiss. But an alliance which ranged the Roman-catholic cantons against him, would not suit him. Being satisfied, therefore, for the present with knowing the sentiments of Zurich, the French envoys began to look coolly upon the reformers' scheme. "The matters you have submitted to us are admirably drawn up," said Lanzerant to the Swiss commissioner, "but I can scarcely understand them, no doubt because of the weakness of my mind.… We must not put any seed into the ground, unless the soil be properly prepared for it."

Thus, the Reform acquired nothing but shame from these propositions. Since it had forgotten these precepts of the Word of God: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers!" how could it fail to meet with striking reverses? Already, Zwingle's friends began to abandon him. The landgrave, who had pushed him into this diplomatic career, drew towards Luther, and sought to check the Swiss reformer, particularly after this saying of Erasmus had sounded in the cars of the great: "They ask us to open our gates, crying aloud—the Gospel! the Gospel!… Raise the cloak, and under its mysterious folds you will find—democracy."

While the Reform, by its culpable proceedings, was calling down the chastisement of Heaven, the Five Cantons, that were to be the instruments of its punishment, accelerated with all their might those fatal days of anger and of vengeance. They were irritated at the progress of the gospel throughout the confederation, while the peace they had signed became every day more irksome to them. "We shall have no repose," said they, "until we have broken these bonds and regained our former liberty." A general diet was convoked at Baden for the 8th January 1531. The Five Cantons then declared that if justice was not done to their grievances, particularly with respect to the abbey of St. Gall, they would no more appear in diet. "Confederates of St. Glaris, Schaffhausen, Friburg, Soleure, and Appenzell," cried they, "aid us in making our ancient alliances respected, or we will ourselves contrive the means of checking this guilty violence; and may the Holy Trinity assist us in this work!"

They did not confine themselves to threats. The treaty of peace had expressly forbidden all insulting language—"for fear," it is said, "that by insults and calumnies, discord should again be excited, and greater troubles than the former should arise." Thus was concealed in the treaty itself the spark whence the conflagration was to proceed. In fact, to restrain the rude tongues of the Waldstettes was impossible. Two Zurichers, the aged prior Ravensbühler, and the pensioner Gaspard Gödli, who had been compelled to renounce, the one his convent, and the other his pension, especially aroused the anger of the people against their native city. They used to say everywhere in these valleys, and with impunity, that the Zurichers were heretics; that there was not one of them who did not indulge in unnatural sins, and who was not a robber at the very least; that Zwingle was a thief, a murderer, and an arch-heretic; and that, on one occasion at Paris (where he had never been), he had committed a horrible offence, in which Leo Juda had been his pander.4 "I shall have no rest," said a pensioner, "until I have thrust my sword up to the hilt in the heart of this impious wretch." Old commanders of troops, who were feared by all on account of their unruly character; the satellites who followed in their train; insolent young people, sons of the first persons in the state, who thought everything lawful against miserable preachers and their stupid flocks; priests inflamed with hatred, and treading in the footsteps of these old captains and giddy young men, who seemed to take the pulpit of a church for the bench of a pot-house: all poured torrents of insults on the Reform and its adherents. "The townspeople," exclaimed with one accord these drunken soldiers and fanatic priests, "are heretics, soul-stealers, conscience-slayers, and

Zwingle—that horrible man, who commits infamous sins—is the Lutheran God."

They went still further. Passing from words to deeds, the Five Cantons persecuted the poor people among them who loved the Word of God, flung them into prison, imposed fines upon them, brutally tormented them, and mercilessly expelled them from their country. The people of Schwytz did even worse. Not fearing to announce their sinister designs, they appeared at a landsgemeinde wearing pine-branches in their hats, in sign of war, and no one opposed them. "The Abbot of St. Gall," said they, "is a prince of the empire, and holds his investiture from the emperor. Do they imagine that Charles V. will not avenge him?"—"Have not these heretics," said others, "dared to form a christian fraternity, as if old Switzerland was a heathen country?" Secret councils were continually held in one place or another. New alliances were sought with the Valais, the pope, and the emperor3—blamable alliances, no doubt, but such as they might at least justify by the proverb: "Birds of a feather go together;" which Zurich and Venice could not say. The Valaisans at first refused their support: they preferred remaining neuter; but on a sudden their fanaticism was inflamed. A sheet of paper was found on an altar—such at least was the report circulated in their valleys—in which Zurich and Berne were accused of preaching that to commit an offence against nature is a smaller crime than to hear mass! Who had placed this mysterious paper on the altar? Came it from man? Did it fall from heaven?… They know not; but however that might be, it was copied, circulated, and read everywhere; and the effects of this fable, invented by some villain, says Zwingle,5 was such that Valais immediately granted the support it had at first refused. The Waldstettes, proud of their strength, then closed their ranks; their fierce eyes menaced the heretical cantons; and the wind bore from their mountains to their neighbours of the towns a formidable clang of arms. At the sight of these alarming manifestations the evangelical cities were in commotion. They first assembled at Basle in February, 1531, then at Zurich in March. "What is to be done," said the deputies from Zurich, after setting forth their grievances; "how can we punish these infamous calumnies, and force these threatening arms to fall?"—"We understand," replied Berne, "that you would have recourse to violence; but think of these secret and formidable alliances that are forming with the pope, the emperor, the King of France, with so many princes, in a word with all the priests' party, to accelerate our ruin;—think on the innocence of so many pious souls in the Five Cantons, who deplore these perfidious machinations;—think how easy it is to begin a war, but that no one can tell when it will end." Sad foreboding! which a catastrophe, beyond all human foresight, accomplished but too soon. "Let us therefore send a deputation to the Five Cantons," continued Berne; "let us call upon them to punish these infamous calumnies in accordance with the treaty; and if they refuse, let us break off all intercourse with them."—"What will be the use of this mission?" asked Basle. "Do we not know the brutality of this people? And is it not to be feared that the rough treatment to which our deputies will be exposed, may make the matter worse? Let us rather convoke a general diet." Schaffhausen and St. Gall having concurred in this opinion, Berne summoned a diet at Baden for the 10th April, at which deputies from all the cantons were assembled.

Many of the principal men among the Waldstettes disapproved of the violence of the retired soldiers and of the monks. They saw that these continually repeated insults would injure their cause. "The insults of which you complain," said they to the diet, "afflict us no less than you. We shall know how to punish them, and we have already done so. But there are violent men on both sides. The other day a man of Basle having met on the highroad a person who was coming from

Berne, and having learnt that he was going to Lucerne:—'To go from Berne to Lucerne,' exclaimed he, 'is passing from a father to an arrant knave!'" The mediating cantons invited the two parties to banish every cause of discord. But the war of the Chatelain of Musso having then broken out, Zwingle and Zurich, who saw in it the first act of a vast conspiracy, destined to stifle the Reform in every place, called their allies together. "We must waver no longer," said Zwingle; "the rupture of the alliance on the part of the Five Cantons, and the unheard-of insults with which they load us, impose upon us the obligation of marching against our enemies, before the emperor, who is still detained by the Turks, shall have expelled the landgrave, seized upon Strasburg, and subjugated even ourselves." All the blood of the ancient Swiss seemed to boil in this man's veins; and while Uri, Schwytz, and Unterwalden basely kissed the hand of Austria, this Zuricher—the greatest Helvetian of the age—faithful to the memory of old Switzerland, but not so to still holier traditions, followed in the glorious steps of Stauffacher and Winkelried. The warlike tone of Zurich alarmed its confederates. Basle proposed a summons, and then, in case of refusal, the rupture of the alliance. Schaffhausen and St. Gall were frightened even at this step: "The mountaineers, so proud, indomitable, and exasperated," said they, "will accept with joy the dissolution of the confederation, and then shall we be more advanced?" Such was the posture of affairs, when, to the great astonishment of all, deputies from Uri and Schwytz made their appearance. They were coldly received; the cup of honour was not offered to them; and they had to walk, according to their own account, in the midst of the insulting cries of the people. They unsuccessfully endeavoured to excuse their conduct. "We have long been waiting," was the cold reply of the diet, "to see your actions and your words agree." The men of Schwytz and of Uri returned in sadness to their homes; and the assembly broke up, full of sorrow and distress.

Zwingle beheld with pain the deputies of the evangelical towns separating without having come to any decision. He no longer desired only a reformation of the Church; he wished for a transformation in the confederacy; and it was this latter reform that he now was preaching from the pulpit, according to what we learn from Bullinger." He was not the only person who desired it. For a long time the inhabitants of the most populous and powerful towns of Switzerland had complained that the Waldstettes, whose contingent of men and money was much below theirs, had an equal share in the deliberations of the diet, and in the fruits of their victories. This had been the cause of division after the Burgundian war. The Five Cantons, by means of their adherents, had the majority. Now Zwingle thought that the reins of Switzerland should be placed in the hands of the great cities, and, above all, in those of the powerful cantons of Berne and Zurich. New times, in his opinion, called for new forms. It was not sufficient to dismiss from every public office the pensioners of foreign princes, and substitute pious men in their place; the federal compact must be remodelled, and settled upon an equitable basis. A national constituent assembly would doubtless have responded to his wishes. These discourses, which were rather those of a tribune of the people than of a minister of Jesus-Christ, hastened on the terrible catastrophe. And indeed the animated words of the patriot reformer passed from the church where they had been delivered into the councils and the halls of the guilds, into the streets and the fields. The burning words that fell from this man's lips kindled the hearts of his fellow-citizens. The electric spark, escaping with noise and commotion, was felt even in the most distant cottage. The ancient traditions of wisdom and prudence seemed forgotten. Public opinion declared itself energetically. On the 29th and 30th April, a number of horsemen rode hastily out of Zurich; they were envoys from the council, commissioned to remind all the allied cities of the encroachment of the Five Cantons, and to call

for a prompt and definitive decision. Reaching their several destinations, the messengers recapitulated the grievances. “Take care,” said they in conclusion; “great dangers are impending over all of us. The emperor and King Ferdinand are making vast preparations; they are about to enter Switzerland with large sums of money, and with a numerous army.”

Zurich joined actions to words. This state, being resolved to make every exertion to establish the free preaching of the Gospel in those bailiwicks where it shared the sovereignty with the Romon-catholic cantons, desired to interfere by force wherever negotiations could not prevail. The federal rights, it must be confessed, were trampled under foot at St. Gall, in Thurgovia, in the Rheinthal; and Zurich substituted arbitrary decisions in their place, that excited the indignation of the Waldstettes to the highest degree. Thus the number of enemies to the Reform kept increasing; the tone of the Five Cantons became daily more threatening, and the inhabitants of the canton of Zurich, whom their business called into the mountains, were loaded with insults, and sometimes badly treated. These violent proceedings excited in turn the anger of the reformed cantons. Zwingle traversed Thurgovia, St. Gall, and the Tockenburg, everywhere organizing synods, taking part in their proceedings, and preaching before excited and enthusiastic crowds. In all parts he met with confidence and respect. At St. Gall an immense crowd assembled under his windows, and a concert of voices and instruments expressed the public gratitude in harmonious songs. Let us not abandon ourselves,” he repeated continually, “and all will go well.” It was resolved that a meeting should be held at Arau on the 12th May, to deliberate on a posture of affairs that daily became more critical. This meeting was to be the beginning of sorrows.

CHAPTER V

Diet of Arau—Helvetic Unity—Berne proposes to close the Markets—Opposition of Zurich—Proposition agreed to and published—Zwingle’s War Sermon—Blockade of the Waldstettes—No Bread, no Wine, no Salt—Indignation of the Forest Cantons—The Roads blockaded—Processions—Cry of Despair—France tries to conciliate—Diet at Bremgarten—Hope—The Cantons inflexible—The strength of Zurich broken—Discontent—Zwingle’s false Position—Zwingle demands his Dismission—The Council remonstrate—He remains—Zwingle at Bremgarten—Zwingle’s Farewell to Bullinger—Zwingle’s Agony—The Forest Cantons reject all Conciliation—Frightful Omens—The Comet—Zwingle’s Tranquillity.

Zwingle’s scheme with regard to the establishment of a new Helvetian constitution did not prevail in the diet of Arau. Perhaps it was thought better to see the result of the crisis. Perhaps a more christian, a more federal view—the hope of procuring the unity of Switzerland by unity of faith—occupied men’s minds more than the pre-eminence of the cities. In truth, if a certain number of cantons remained with the pope, the unity of the confederation was destroyed, it might be for ever. But if all the confederation was brought over to the same faith, the ancient Helvetic unity would be established on the strongest and surest foundation. Now was the time for acting—or never; and there must be no fear of employing a violent remedy to restore the whole body to health.

Nevertheless, the allies shrank back at the thought of restoring religious liberty or political unity by means of arms; and to escape from the difficulties in which the confederation was placed, they sought a middle course between war and peace. “There is no doubt,” said the deputies from

Berne, “that the behaviour of the Cantons with regard to the Word of God fully authorises an armed intervention; but the perils that threaten us on the side of Italy and the empire—the danger of arousing the lion from his slumber—the general want and misery that afflict our people—the rich harvests that will soon cover our fields, and which the war would infallibly destroy—the great number of pious men among the Waldstettes, and whose innocent blood would flow along with that of the guilty:—all these motives enjoin us to leave the sword in the scabbard. Let us rather close our markets against the Five Cantons; let us refuse them corn, salt, wine, steel, and iron; we shall thus impart authority to the friends of peace among them, and innocent blood will be spared.” The meeting separated forthwith to carry this intermediate proposition to the different evangelical cantons; and on the 15th May again assembled at Zurich.

Convinced that the means apparently the most violent were nevertheless both the surest and most humane, Zurich resisted the Bernese proposition with all its might. “By accepting this proposition,” said they, “we sacrifice the advantages that we now possess, and we give the Five Cantons time to arm themselves, and to fall upon us first. Let us take care that the emperor does not assail us on one side, while our ancient confederates attack us on the other; a just war is not in opposition to the Word of God; but this is contrary to it—taking the bread from the mouths of the innocent as well as the guilty; straitening by hunger the sick, the aged, pregnant women, children, and all who are deeply afflicted by the injustice of the Waldstettes. We should beware of exciting by this means the anger of the poor, and transforming into enemies many who at the present time are our friends and brothers!”

We must acknowledge that this language, which was Zwingle’s, contained much truth. But the other cantons, and Berne in particular, were immovable. “When we have once shed the blood of our brothers,” said they, “we shall never be able to restore life to those who have lost it; while from the moment the Waldstettes have given us satisfaction, we shall be able to put an end to all these severe measures. We are resolved not to begin the war.” There were no means of running counter to such a declaration. The Zurichers consented to refuse supplies to the Waldstettes; but it was with hearts full of anguish, as if they had foreseen all that this deplorable measure would cost them. It was agreed that the severe step that was now about to be taken should not be suspended except by common consent, and that, as it would create great exasperation, each one should hold himself prepared to repel the attacks of the enemy. Zurich and Berne were commissioned to notify this determination to the Five Cantons; and Zurich, discharging its task with promptitude, immediately forwarded an order to every bailiwick to suspend all communication with the Waldstettes, commanding them at the same time to abstain from ill usage and hostile language. Thus the Reformation, becoming imprudently mixed up with political combinations, marched from fault to fault; it pretended to preach the Gospel to the poor, and was now about to refuse them bread! On the Sunday following—it was Whitsunday—the resolution was published from the pulpits. Zwingle walked towards his, where an immense crowd was waiting for him. The piercing eye of this great man easily discovered the dangers of the measure in a political point of view, and his christian heart deeply felt all its cruelty. His soul was overburdened, his eyes downcast. If at this moment the true character of a minister of the Gospel had awoke within him;—if Zwingle with his powerful voice had called on the people to humiliation before God, to forgiveness of trespasses, and to prayer; safety might yet have dawned on “broken-hearted” Switzerland. But it was not so. More and more the Christian disappears in the reformer, and the citizen alone

remains; but in that character he soars far above all, and his policy is undoubtedly the most skilful. He saw clearly that every delay may ruin Zurich; and after having made his way through the congregation, and closed the book of the Prince of Peace, he hesitated not to attack the resolution which he had just communicated to the people, and on the very festival of the Holy Ghost, to preach war. “He who fears not to call his adversary a criminal,” said he in his usual forcible language, “must be ready to follow the word with a blow. If he does not strike, he will be stricken. Men of Zurich! you deny food to the Five Cantons, as to evil doers; well! let the blow follow the threat, rather than reduce poor innocent creatures to starvation. If, by not taking the offensive, you appear to believe that there is not sufficient reason for punishing the Waldstettes, and yet you refuse them food and drink, you will force them by this line of conduct to take up arms, to raise their hands, and to inflict punishment upon you. This is the fate that awaits you.

These words of the eloquent reformer moved the whole assembly. Zwingle’s politic mind already so influenced and misled all the people, that there were few souls christian enough to feel how strange it was, that on the very day when they were celebrating the outpouring of the Spirit of peace and love upon the Christian Church, the mouth of a minister of God should utter a provocation to war. They looked at this sermon only in a political point of view: “It is a seditious discourse; it is an excitement to civil war!” said some. “No,” replied others, “it is the language that the safety of the state requires!” All Zurich was agitated. “Zurich has too much fire, said Berne. “Berne has too much cunning,” replied Zurich. Zwingle’s gloomy prophecy was too soon to be fulfilled! No sooner had the reformed cantons communicated this pitiless decree to the Waldstettes than they hastened its execution; and Zurich showed the greatest strictness respecting it. Not only the markets of Zurich and of Berne, but also those of the free bailiwicks of St. Gall, of the Tockenburg, of the district of Sargans and of the valley of the Rhine, a country partly under the sovereignty of the Waldstettes, were shut against the Five Cantons. A formidable power had suddenly encompassed with barrenness, famine, and death the noble founders of Helvetian liberty. Uri, Schwytz, Unterwalden, Zug, and Lucerne, were, as it seemed, in the midst of a vast desert. Their own subjects, thought they at least, the communes that have taken the oath of allegiance to them, would range themselves on their side! But no; Bremgarten, and even Mellingen, refused all succour. Their last hope was in Wesen and the Gastal. Neither Berne nor Zurich had anything to do there; Schwytz and Glaris alone ruled over them; but the power of their enemies had penetrated everywhere. A majority of thirteen votes had declared in favour of Zurich at the landsgemeinde of Glaris; and Glaris closed the gates of Wesen and of the Gastal against Schwytz. In vain did Berne itself cry out: “How can you compel subjects to refuse supplies to their lords?” In vain did Schwytz raise its voice in indignation, Zurich immediately sent to Wesen—gunpowder and bullets. It was upon Zurich, therefore, that fell all the odium of a measure which that city had at first so earnestly combated. At Aran, at Bremgarten, at Mellingen, in the free bailiwicks, were several carriages laden with provisions for the Waldstettes. They were stopped, unloaded, and upset: with them barricades were erected on the roads leading to Lucerne, Schwytz, and Zug. Already a year of dearth had made provisions scarce in the Five Cantons;—already had a frightful epidemic, the Sweating Sickness, scattered everywhere despondency and death: but now the hand of man was joined to the hand of God; the evil increased, and the poor inhabitants of these mountains beheld unheard-of calamities approach with hasty steps. No more bread for their children—no more wine to revive their exhausted strength—no more salt for their flocks and herds! Everything failed them that man requires for

subsistence. One could not see such things, and be a man, without feeling his heart wrung. In the confederate cities, and out of Switzerland, numerous voices were raised against this implacable measure. What good can result from it? Did not St. Paul write to the Romans: “If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head”?2 And when the magistrates wished to convince certain refractory communes of the utility of the measure: “We desire no religious war,” cried they. “If the Waldstettes will not believe in God, let them stick to the devil!” But it was especially in the Five Cantons that earnest complaints were heard. The most pacific individuals, and even the secret partisans of the Reform, seeing famine invade their habitations, felt the deepest indignation. The enemies of Zurich skilfully took advantage of this disposition; they fostered these murmurs; and soon the cry of anger and distress re-echoed from all the mountains. In vain did Berne represent to the Waldstettes that it is more cruel to refuse men the nourishment of the soul than to cut off that of the body. “God,” replied these mountaineers in their despair, “God causes the fruits of the earth to grow freely for all men!” They were not content with groaning in their cottages, and venting their indignation in the councils; they filled all Switzerland with complaints and menaces.4 “They wish to employ famine to tear us from our ancient faith; they wish to deprive our wives and our children of bread, that they may take from us the liberty we derive from our forefathers. When did such things ever take place in the bosom of the confederation? Did we not see, in the last war, the confederates with arms in their hands, and who were ready to draw the sword, eating together from the same dish? They tear in pieces old friendships—they trample our ancient manners under foot—they violate treaties—they break alliances.… We invoke the charters of our ancestors. Help! help!… Wise men of our people, give us your advice, and all you who know how to handle the sling and the sword, come and maintain with us the sacred possessions, for which our fathers, delivered from the yoke of the stranger, united their arms and their hearts.” At the same time the Five Cantons sent into Alsace, Brisgau, and Swabia, to obtain salt, wine, and bread; but the administration of the cities was implacable; the orders were everywhere given and everywhere strictly executed. Zurich and the other allied cantons intercepted all communication, and sent back to Germany the supplies that had been forwarded to their brethren. The Five Cantons were like a vast fortress, all the issues from which are closely guarded by watchful sentinels. The afflicted Waldstettes, on beholding themselves alone with famine between their lakes and their mountains, had recourse to the observances of their worship. All sports, dances, and every kind of amusement were interdicted; prayers were directed to be offered up; and long processions covered the roads of Einsidlen and other resorts of pilgrims. They assumed the belt, and staff, and arms of the brotherhood to which they each belonged; each man carried a chaplet in his hands, and repeated paternosters; the mountains and the valleys re-echoed with their plaintive hymns. But the Waldstettes did still more: they grasped their swords—they sharpened the points of their halberds—they brandished their weapons in the direction of Zurich and of Berne, and exclaimed with rage: “They block up their roads, but we will open them with our right arms!”2 No one replied to this cry of despair; but there is a just Judge in heaven to whom vengeance belongs, and who will soon reply in a terrible manner, by punishing those misguided persons, who, forgetful of christian mercy, and making an impious mixture of political and religious matters, pretend to secure the triumph of the Gospel by famine and by armed men.

Some attempts, however, were made to arrange matters; but these very efforts proved a great humiliation for Switzerland and for the Reform. It was not the ministers of the Gospel, it was

France—more than once an occasion of discord to Switzerland—that offered to restore peace. Every proceeding calculated to increase its influence among the cantons was of service to its policy. On the 14th May, Maigret and Dangertin (the latter of whom had received the Gospel truth, and consequently did not dare return to France), after some allusions to the spirit which Zurich had shown in this affair—a spirit little in accordance with the Gospel—said to the council: “The king our master has sent you two gentlemen to consult on the means of preserving concord among you. If war and tumult invade Switzerland, all the society of the Helvetians will be destroyed,2 and whichever party is the conqueror, he will be as much ruined as the other.” Zurich having replied that if the Five Cantons would allow the free preaching of the Word of God, the reconciliation would be easy, the French secretly sounded the Waldstettes, whose answer was: “We will never permit the preaching of the Word of God as the people of Zurich understand it.”

These more or less interested exertions of the foreigners having failed, a general diet became the only chance of safety that remained for Switzerland. One was accordingly convoked at Bremgarten. It was opened in presence of deputies from France, from the Duke of Milan, from the Countess of Neufchatel, from the Grisons, Valais, Thurgovia, and the district of Sargans; and met on five different occasions,—on the 14th and 20th of June, on the 9th July, and the 10th and 23d August. The chronicler Bullinger, who was pastor of Bremgarten, delivered an oration at the opening, in which he earnestly exhorted the confederates to union and peace. A gleam of hope for a moment cheered Switzerland. The blockade had become less strict; friendship and good neighbourhood had prevailed in many places over the decrees of the state. Unusual roads had been opened across the wildest mountains to convey supplies to the Waldstettes. Provisions were concealed in bales of merchandise; and while Lucerne imprisoned and tortured its own citizens, who were found with the pamphlets of the Zurichers, Berne punished but slightly the peasants who had been discovered bearing food for Unterwalden and Lucerne; and Glaris shut its eyes at the frequent violation of its orders. The voice of charity, that had been momentarily stifled, pleaded with fresh energy the cause of their confederates before the reformed cantons. But the Five Cantons were inflexible. “We will not listen to any proposition before the raising of the blockade,” said they. “We will not raise it,” replied Berne and Zurich, “before the Gospel is allowed to be freely preached, not only in the common bailiwicks, but also in the Five Cantons.” This was undoubtedly going too far, even according to the natural law and the principles of the confederation. The councils of Zurich might consider it their duty to have recourse to war for maintaining liberty of conscience in the common bailiwicks; but it was unjust—it was a usurpation, to constrain the Five Cantons in a matter that concerned their own territory. Nevertheless the mediators succeeded, not without much trouble, in drawing up a plan of conciliation that seemed to harmonize with the wishes of both parties. The conference was broken up, and this project was hastily transmitted to the different states for their ratification. The diet met again a few days after; but the Five Cantons persisted in their demand, without yielding in any one point. In vain did Zurich and Berne represent to them, that by persecuting the reformed, the canons violated the treaty of peace; in vain did the mediators exhaust their strength in warnings and entreaties. The parties appeared at one time to approximate, and then on a sudden they were more distant and more irritated than ever. The Waldstettes at last broke up the third conference by declaring, that far from opposing the evangelical truth, they would maintain it, as it had been taught by the Redeemer, by his holy apostles, by the four doctors, and by their holy mother, the Church—a declaration that seemed a bitter irony to the deputies from Zurich and Berne. Nevertheless Berne, turning towards Zurich as

they were separating, observed: “Beware of too much violence, even should they attack you!” This exhortation was unnecessary. The strength of Zurich had passed away. The first appearance of the Reformation and of the reformers had been greeted with joy. The people, who groaned under a twofold slavery, believed they saw the dawn of liberty. But their minds, abandoned for ages to superstition and ignorance, being unable immediately to realize the hopes they had conceived, a spirit of discontent soon spread among the masses. The change by which Zwingle, ceasing to be a man of the Gospel, became a man of the State, took away from the people the enthusiasm necessary to resist the terrible attacks they would have to sustain. The enemies of the Reform had a fair chance against it, so soon as its friends abandoned the position that gave them strength. Besides, Christians could not have recourse to famine and to war to secure the triumph of the Gospel, without their consciences becoming troubled. The Zurichers “walked not in the Spirit, but in the flesh; now, the works of the flesh are hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions.” The danger without was increasing, while within, hope, union, and courage were far from being augmented: men saw on the contrary the gradual disappearance of that harmony and lively faith which had been the strength of the Reform. The Reformation had grasped the sword, and that very sword pierced its heart.

Occasions of discord were multiplied in Zurich. By the advice of Zwingle, the number of nobles was diminished in the two councils, because of their opposition to the Gospel; and this measure spread discontent among the most honourable families of the canton. The millers and bakers were placed under certain regulations, which the dearth rendered necessary and a great part of the townspeople attributed this proceeding to the sermons of the reformer, and became irritated against him. Rodolph Lavater, bailiff of Kibourg, was appointed captain-general, and the officers who were of longer standing than he were offended. Many who had been formerly the most distinguished by their zeal for the Reform, now openly opposed the cause they had supported. The ardour with which the ministers of peace demanded war spread in every quarter a smothered dissatisfaction, and many persons gave vent to their indignation. This unnatural confusion of Church and State, which had corrupted Christianity after the age of Constantine, was hurrying on the ruin of the Reformation. The majority of the Great Council, ever ready to adopt important and salutary resolutions, was destroyed. The old magistrates, who were still at the head of affairs, allowed themselves to be carried away by feelings of jealousy against men whose non-official influence prevailed over theirs. All those who hated the doctrine of the Gospel, whether from love of the world or from love to the pope, boldly raised their heads in Zurich. The partisans of the monks, the friends of foreign service, the malcontents of every class, coalesced in pointing out Zwingle as the author of all the sufferings of the people.

Zwingle was heart-broken. He saw that Zurich and the Reformation were hastening to their ruin, and he could not check them. How could he do so, since, without suspecting it, he had been the principal accomplice in these disasters? What was to be done? Should the pilot remain in the ship which he is no longer permitted to save? There was but one means of safety for Zurich and for Zwingle. He should have retired from the political stage, and fallen back on that kingdom which is not of this world; he should, like Moses, have kept his hands and his heart night and day raised towards heaven, and energetically preached repentance, faith, and peace. But religious and political matters were united in the mind of this great man by such old and dear ties, that it was impossible for him to distinguish their line of separation. This confusion had become his dominant

idea; the Christian and the citizen were for him one and the same character; and hence it resulted, that all resources of the state—even cannons and arquebuses—were to be placed at the service of the Truth. When one peculiar idea thus seizes upon a man, we see a false conscience formed within him, which approves of many things condemned by the Word of the Lord. This was now Zwingle's condition. War appeared to him legitimate and desirable; and if that was refused, he had only to withdraw from public life: he was for everything or nothing. He therefore, on the 26th July, appeared before the Great Council with dimmed eyes and disconsolate heart: "For eleven years," said he, "I have been preaching the Gospel among you, and have warned you faithfully and paternally of the woes that are hanging over you; but no attention has been paid to my words; the friends of foreign alliances, the enemies of the Gospel, are elected to the council, and while you refuse to follow my advice, I am made responsible for every misfortune. I cannot accept such a position, and I ask for my dismission." The reformer retired bathed in tears. The council shuddered as they heard these words. All the old feelings of respect which they had so long entertained for Zwingle were revived; to lose him now was to ruin Zurich. The burgomaster and the other magistrates received orders to persuade him to recall his fatal resolution. The conference took place on the same day; Zwingle asked time for consideration. For three days and three nights he sought the road that he should follow. Seeing the dark storm that was collecting from all quarters, he considered whether he ought to quit Zurich and seek refuge on the lofty hills of the Tockenburg, where he had been reared, at a time when his country and his Church were on the point of being assailed and beaten down by their enemies, like corn by the hail-storm. He groaned and cried to the Lord. He would have put away the cup of bitterness that was presented to his soul, but could not gather up the resolution. At length the sacrifice was accomplished, and the victim was placed shuddering upon the altar. Three days after the first conference, Zwingle reappeared in the council: "I will stay with you," said he, "and I will labour for the public safety—until death!" From this moment he displayed new zeal. On the one hand, he endeavoured to revive harmony and courage in Zurich; on the other, he set about arousing and exciting the allied cities to increase and concentrate all the forces of the Reformation. Faithful to the political vocation he imagined to have received from God himself—persuaded that it was in the doubts and want of energy of the Bernese that he must look for the cause of all the evil, the reformer repaired to Bremgarten with Collins and Steiner, during the fourth conference of the diet, although he incurred great danger in the attempt. He arrived secretly by night, and having entered the house of his friend and disciple, Bullinger, he invited the deputies of Berne (J. J. de Watteville and Im Hag) to meet him there with the greatest secrecy, and prayed them in the most solemn tone earnestly to reflect upon the dangers of the Reform. "I fear," said he, "that in consequence of our unbelief, this business will not succeed. By refusing supplies to the Five Cantons, we have begun a work that will be fatal to us. What is to be done? Withdraw the prohibition? The cantons will then be more insolent and haughty than ever. Enforce it? They will take the offensive, and if their attack succeed you will behold our fields red with the blood of the believers, the doctrine of truth cast down, the Church of Christ laid waste, all social relations overthrown, our adversaries more hardened and irritated against the Gospel, and crowds of priests and monks again filling our rural districts, streets, and temples.… And yet," added Zwingle, after a few instants of emotion and silence, "that also will have an end." The Bernese were filled with agitation by the solemn voice of the reformer. "We see," replied they, "all that is to be feared for our common cause, and we will employ every care to prevent such great disasters."—"I who write these things was present and heard them," adds Bullinger.

It was feared that if the presence of Zwingle at Bremgarten became known to the deputies of the Five Cantons, they would not restrain their violence. During this nocturnal conference three of the town-councillors were stationed as sentinels in front of Bullinger's house. Before daybreak, the reformer and his two friends, accompanied by Bullinger and the three councillors, passed through the deserted streets lending to the gate on the road to Zurich. Three different times Zwingle took leave of Bullinger, who was erelong to be his successor. His mind was filled with a presentiment of his approaching death; he could not tear himself from that young friend whose face he was never to see again; he blessed him amidst floods of tears. "O my dear Henry!" said he, "may God protect you! Be faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ and to his Church." At length they separated; but at that very moment, says Bullinger, a mysterious personage, clad in a robe as white as snow, suddenly appeared, and after frightening the soldiers who guarded the gate, plunged suddenly into the water, and vanished. Bullinger, Zwingle, and their friends did not perceive it; Bullinger himself sought for it all around, but to no purpose; still the sentinels persisted in the reality of this frightful apparition. Bullinger in great agitation returned in darkness and in silence to his house. His mind involuntarily compared the departure of Zwingle and the white phantom; and he shuddered at the frightful omen which the thought of this spectre impressed upon his mind.

Sufferings of another kind pursued Zwingle to Zurich. He had thought that by consenting to remain at the head of affairs, he would recover all his ancient influence. But he was deceived: the people desired to see him there, and yet they would not follow him. The Zurichers daily became more and more indisposed towards the war which they had at first demanded, and identified themselves with the passive system of Berne. Zwingle remained, for some time stupified and motionless before this inert mass, which his most vigorous exertions could not move. But soon discovering in every quarter of the horizon the prophetic signs, precursors of the storm about to burst upon the ship of which he was the pilot, he uttered cries of anguish, and showed the signal of distress. "I see," exclaimed he one day to the people from the pulpit, whither he had gone to give utterance to his gloomy forebodings,—"I see that the most faithful warnings cannot save you; you will not punish the pensioners of the foreigner…. They have too firm a support among us! A chain is prepared—behold it entire—it unrolls link after link,—soon will they bind me to it, and more than one pious Zuricher with me…. It is against me they are enraged! I am ready; I submit to the Lord's will. But these people shall never be my masters…. As for thee, O Zurich, they will give thee thy reward; they will strike thee on the head. Thou wiliest it. Thou refusest to punish them: well! it is they who will punish thee. But God will not the less preserve his Word, and their haughtiness shall come to an end." Such was Zwingle's cry of agony; hut the immobility of death alone replied. The hearts of the Zurichers were so hardened that the sharpest arrows of the reformer could not pierce them, and they fell at his feet blunted and useless. But events were pressing on, and justified all his fears. The Five Cantons had rejected every proposition that had been made to them. "Why do you talk of punishing a few wrongs?" they had replied to the mediators; "it is a question of quite another kind. Do you not require that we should receive back among us the heretics whom we have banished, and tolerate no other priests than those who preach conformably to the Word of God? We know what that means. No—no—we will not abandon the religion of our fathers; and if we must see our wives and our children deprived of food, our hands will know how to conquer what is refused to us: to that we pledge our bodies—our goods—our lives." It was with this threatening language that the deputies quitted the diet of Bremgarten. They had proudly shaken the folds of their mantles, and war had fallen from them. The terror was general, and the alarmed

citizens beheld everywhere frightful portents, terrific signs, apparently foreboding the most horrible events. It was not only the white phantom that had appeared at Bremgarten at Zwingle's side: the most fearful omens, passing from mouth to mouth, filled the people with the most gloomy presentiments. The history of these phenomena, however strange it may appear, characterizes the period of which we write. We do not create the times: it is our simple duty to paint them as they really were. On the 26th July, a widow chancing to be alone before her house, in the village of Castelenschloss, suddenly beheld a frightful spectacle—blood springing from the earth all around her. She rushed in alarm into the cottage.… but, oh horrible! blood is flowing everywhere—from the wainscot and from the stones;3—it falls in a stream from a basin on a shelf, and even the child's cradle overflows with it. The woman imagines that the invisible hand of an assassin has been at work, and rushes in distraction out of doors, crying murder! murder! The villagers and the monks of a neighbouring convent assemble at the noise—they succeed in partly effacing the bloody stains; but a little later in the day, the other inhabitants of the house, sitting down in terror to eat their evening meal under the projecting eaves, suddenly discover blood bubbling up in a pond—blood flowing from the loft—blood covering all the walls of the house. Blood—blood—everywhere blood! The bailiff of Schenkenberg and the pastor of Dalheim arrive—inquire into the matter—and immediately report it to the lords of Berne and to Zwingle.

Scarcely had this horrible recital—the particulars of which are faithfully preserved in Latin and in German—filled all minds with the idea of a horrible butchery, than in the western quarter of the heavens there appeared a frightful comet, whose immense train of a pale yellow colour turned towards the south. At the time of its setting, this apparition shone in the sky like the fire of a furnace.3 One night—on the 15th August as it would appear—Zwingle and George Müller, formerly abbot of Wettingen, being together in the cemetery of the cathedral, both filed their eyes upon this terrific meteor. "This ominous globe," said Zwingle, "is come to light the path that leads to my grave. It will be at the cost of my life and of many good men with me. Although I am rather shortsighted, I foresee great calamities in the future.5 The truth and the Church will mourn; but Christ will never forsake us." It was not only at Zurich that this flaming star spread consternation. Vadian being one night on an eminence in the neighbourhood of St. Gall, surrounded by his friends and disciples, after having explained to them the names of the stars and the miracles of the Creator, stopped before this comet, which denounced the anger of God; and the famous Theophrastus declared that it foreboded not only great bloodshed, but most especially the death of learned and illustrious men. This mysterious phenomenon prolonged its frightful visitation until the 3d September. When once the noise of these omens was spread abroad, men could no longer contain themselves. Their imaginations were excited; they heaped fright upon fright: each place had its terrors. Two banners waving in the clouds had been seen on the mountain of the Brunig; at Zug a buckler had appeared in the heavens; on the banks of the Reuss, reiterated explosions were heard during the night; on the lake of the Four Cantons, ships with aërial combatants careered about in every direction. War—war;—blood—blood!—these were the general cries. In the midst of all this agitation, Zwingle alone seemed tranquil. He rejected none of these presentiments, but contemplated them with calmness. "A heart that fears God," said he, "cares not for the threats of the world. To forward the designs of God, whatever may happen,—this is his task. A carrier who has a long road to go must make up his mind to wear his waggon and his gear during the journey. If he carry his merchandise to the appointed spot, that is enough for him. We are the waggon and the gear of God. There is not one of the articles that is not worn, twisted, or

broken; but our great Driver will not the less accomplish by our means his vast designs. Is it not to those who fall upon the field of battle that the noblest crown belongs? Take courage, then, in the midst of all these dangers, through which the cause of Jesus Christ must pass. Be of good cheer! although we should never here below see its triumphs with our own eyes. The Judge of the combat beholds us, and it is he who confers the crown. Others will enjoy upon earth the fruits of our labours; while we, already in heaven, shall enjoy an eternal reward."

Thus spoke Zwingle, as he advanced calmly towards the threatening noise of the tempest, which, by its repeated flashes and sudden explosions, foreboded death.

CHAPTER VI The Five Cantons decide for War—Deceitful Calm—Fatal Inactivity—Zurich forewarned—Banner of Lucerne planted—Manifesto—The Bailiwicks pillaged—The Monastery of Cappel—Letter—Infatuation of Zurich—New Warnings—The War begins—The Tocsin—A fearful Night—The War—Banner and Army of Zurich—Zwingle's Departure—Zwingle's Horse—Anna Zwingle. The Five Cantons, assembled in diet at Lucerne, appeared full of determination, and war was decided upon. "We will call upon the cities to respect our alliances," said they, "and if they refuse, we will enter the common bailiwicks by force to procure provisions, and unite our banners in Zug to attack the enemy." The Waldstettes were not alone. The nuncio, being solicited by his Lucerne friends, had required that auxiliary troops, paid by the pope, should be put in motion towards Switzerland, and he announced their near arrival.

These resolutions carried terror into Switzerland; the mediating cantons met again at Arau, and drew up a plan that should leave the religious question just as it had been settled by the treaty of 1529. Deputies immediately bore these propositions to the different councils. Lucerne haughtily rejected them. "Tell those who sent you," was the reply, "that we do not acknowledge them as our schoolmasters. We would rather die than yield the least thing to the prejudice of our faith." The mediators returned to Arau, trembling and discouraged. This useless attempt increased the disagreement among the reformed, and gave the Waldstettes still greater confidence. Zurich, so decided for the reception of the Gospel, now became daily more irresolute! The members of the council distrusted each other; the people felt no interest in this war; and Zwingle, notwithstanding his unshaken faith in the justice of his cause, had no hope for the struggle that was about to take place. Berne, on its side, did not cease to entreat Zurich to avoid precipitation. "Do not let us expose ourselves to the reproach of too much haste, as in 1529," was the general remark in Zurich. "We have sure friends in the midst of the Waldstettes; let us wait until they announce to us, as they have promised, some real danger."

It was soon believed that these temporizers were right. In fact the alarming news ceased. That constant rumour of war, which incessantly came from the Waldstettes, discontinued. There were no more alarms—no more fears! Deceitful omen! Over the mountains and valleys of Switzerland, hangs that gloomy and mysterious silence, the forerunner of the tempest.

Whilst they were sleeping at Zurich, the Waldstettes were preparing to conquer their rights by force of arms. The chiefs, closely united to each other by common interests and dangers, found a powerful support in the indignation of the people. In a diet of the Five Cantons, held at Brunnen on the banks of the Lake of Lucerne, opposite Grutli, the alliances of the confederation were read; and the deputies, having been summoned to declare by their votes whether they thought the war just and lawful, all hands were raised with a shudder. Immediately the Waldstettes had prepared

their attack with the profoundest mystery. All the passes had been guarded—all communication between Zurich and the Five Cantons had been rendered impossible. The friends upon whom the Zurichers had reckoned on the banks of the Lakes Lucerne and Zug, and who had promised them intelligence, were like prisoners in their mountains. The terrible avalanche was about to slip from the icy summits of the mountain, and to roll into the valleys, even to the gates of Zurich, overthrowing everything in its passage, without the least forewarning of its fall. The mediators had returned discouraged to their cantons. A spirit of imprudence and of error—sad forerunner of the fall of republics as well as of kings—had spread over the whole city of Zurich. The council had at first given orders to call out the militia; then, deceived by the silence of the Waldstettes, it had imprudently revoked the decree, and Lavater, the commander of the army, had retired in discontent to Rybourg, and indignantly thrown from him that sword which they had commanded him to leave in the scabbard. Thus the winds were about to be unchained from the mountains; the waters of the great deep, aroused by a terrible earthquake, were about to open; and yet the vessel of the state, sadly abandoned, sported up and down with indifference over a frightful gulf,—its yard struck, its sails loose and motionless—without compass or crew—without pilot, watch, or helm.

Whatever were the exertions of the Waldstettes, they could not entirely stifle the rumour of war, which from chalet to chalet called all their citizens to arms. God permitted a cry of alarm—a single one, it is true—to resound in the ears of the people of Zurich. On the 4th October, a little boy, who knew not what he was doing, succeeded in crossing the frontier of Zug, and presented himself with two loaves at the gate of the reformed monastery of Cappel, situated in the farthest limits of the canton of Zurich. He was led to the abbot, to whom the child gave the loaves without saying a word. The superior, with whom there chanced to be at that time a councillor from Zurich, Henry Peyer, sent by his government, turned pale at the sight. “If the Five Cantons intend entering by force of arms into the free bailiwicks,” had said these two Zurichers to one of their friends in Zug, “you will send your son to us with one loaf; but you will give him two if they are marching at once upon the bailiwicks and upon Zurich.” The abbot and the councillor wrote with all speed to Zurich. “Be upon your guard! take up arms,” said they; but no credit was attached to this information. The council were at that time occupied in taking measures to prevent the supplies that had arrived from Alsace from entering the cantons. Zwingle himself, who had never ceased to announce war, did not believe it. “These pensioners are really clever fellows,” said the reformer. “Their preparations may be after all nothing but a French manœuvre.”

He was deceived—they were a reality. Four days were to accomplish the ruin of Zurich. Let us retrace in succession the history of these disastrous moments. On Sunday, 8th October, a messenger appeared at Zurich, and demanded, in the name of the Five Cantons, letters of perpetual alliance. The majority saw in this step nothing but a trick; but Zwingle began to discern the thunderbolt in the black cloud that was drawing near. He was in the pulpit: it was the last time he was destined to appear in it; and as if he had seen the formidable spectre of Rome rise frightfully above the Alps, calling upon him and upon his people to abandon the faith:—“No—no!” cried he, “never will I deny my Redeemer!” At the same moment a messenger arrived in haste from Mulinen, commander of the Knights-hospitallers of St. John at Hitzkylch. “On Friday, 6th October,” said he to the councils of Zurich, “the people of Lucerne planted their banner in the Great Square. Two men that I sent to Lucerne have been thrown into prison. To-morrow morning, Monday, 9th October, the Five Cantons will enter the bailiwicks. Already the country-people,

frightened and fugitive, are running to us in crowds."—"It is an idle story," said the councils. Nevertheless they recalled the commander-in-chief Lavater, who sent off a trusty man, nephew of James Winckler, with orders to repair to Cappel, and if possible as far as Zug, to reconnoitre the arrangement of the cantons. The Waldstettes were in reality assembling round the banner of Lucerne. The people of this canton; the men of Schwytz, Uri, Zug, and Unterwalden; refugees from Zurich and Berne, with a few Italians, formed the main body of the army, which had been raised to invade the free bailiwicks. Two manifestations were published—one addressed to the cantons, the other to foreign princes and nations. The Five Cantons energetically set forth the attacks made upon the treaties, the discord sown throughout the confederation, and finally the refusal to sell them provisions—a refusal whose only aim was (according to them) to excite the people against the magistrates, and to establish the Reform by force. "It is not true," added they, "that—as they are continually crying out—we oppose the preaching of the truth and the reading of the Bible. As obedient members of the Church, we desire to receive all that our holy mother receives. But we reject the books and the innovations of Zwingle and his companions."

Hardly had the messengers charged with these manifestoes departed, before the first division of the army began to march, and arrived in the evening in the free bailiwicks. The soldiers having entered the deserted churches, and seen the images of the saints removed and the altars broken, their anger was kindled; they spread like a torrent over the whole country, pillaged everything they met with, and were particularly enraged against the houses of the pastors, where they destroyed the furniture with oaths and maledictions. At the same time the division that was to form the main army marched upon Zug, thence to move upon Zurich.

Cappel, at three leagues from Zurich, and about a league from Zug, was the first place they would reach in the Zurich territory, after crossing the frontier of the Five Cantons. Near the Albis, between two hills of similar height, the Granges on the north, and the Ifelsberg on the south, in the midst of delightful pastures, stood the ancient and wealthy convent of the Cistercians, in whose church were the tombs of many ancient and noble families of these districts. The Abbot Wolfgang Joner, a just and pious man, a great friend of the arts and letters, and a distinguished preacher, had reformed his convent in 1527. Full of compassion, rich in good works, particularly towards the poor of the canton of Zug and the free bailiwicks, he was held in great honour throughout the whole country. He predicted what would be the termination of the war; yet as soon as danger approached, he spared no labour to serve his country.

It was on Sunday night that the abbot received positive intelligence of the preparations at Zug. He paced up and down his cell with hasty steps; sleep fled from his eyes; he drew near his lamp, and addressing his intimate friend, Peter Simmler, who succeeded him, and who was then residing at Kylchberg, a village on the borders of the lake, and about a league from the town, he hastily wrote these words: "the great anxiety and trouble which agitate me prevent me from busying myself with the management of the house, and induce me to write to you all that is preparing. The time is come … the scourge of God appears.2 … After many journeys and inquiries, we have learnt that the Five Cantons will march to-day (Monday) to seize upon Hitzkylch, while the main army assembles its banners at Baar, between Zug and Cappel. Those from the valley of the Adige and the Italians will arrive to-day or to-morrow." This letter, through some unforeseen circumstance, did not reach Zurich till the evening.

Meanwhile the messenger whom Lavater had sent—the nephew of J. Winckler—creeping on his belly, gliding unperceived past the sentinels, and clinging to the shrubs that overhung the precipices, had succeeded in making his way where no road had been cleared. On arriving near Zug, he had discovered with alarm the banner and the militia hastening from all sides at beat of drum: then traversing again these unknown passes, he had returned to Zurich with this information.

It was high time that the bandage should fall from the eyes of the Zurichers; but the delusion was to endure until the end. The council which was called together met in small number. “The Five Cantons,” said they, “are making a little noise to frighten us, and to make us raise the blockade.” The council, however, decided on sending Colonel Rodolph Dumysen and Ulrich Funck to Cappel, to see what was going on; and each one, tranquillized by this unmeaning step, retired to rest.

They did not slumber long. Every hour brought fresh messengers of alarm to Zurich. “The banners of four cantons are assembled at Zug,” said they. “They are only waiting for Uri. The people of the free bailiwicks are flocking to Cappel, and demanding arms.… Help! help!”

Before the break of day the council was again assembled, and it ordered the convocation of the Two Hundred. An old man, whose hair had grown gray on the battle-field and in the council of the state—the banneret John Schweitzer—raising his head enfeebled by age, and darting the last beam, as it were, from his eyes, exclaimed, “Now—at this very moment, in God’s name, send an advanced-guard to Cappel, and let the army, promptly collecting round the banner, follow it immediately.” He said no more; but the charm was not yet broken. “The peasants of the free bailiwicks,” said some, “we know to be hasty, and easily carried away. They make the matter greater than it really is. The wisest plan is to wait for the report of the councillors.” In Zurich there was no longer either arm to defend or head to advise.

It was seven in the morning, and the assembly was still sitting, when Rodolph Gwerb, pastor of Rifferschwyl, near Cappel, arrived in haste. “The people of the lordship of Knonau,” said he, “are crowding round the convent, and loudly calling for chiefs and for aid. The enemy is approaching. Will our lords of Zurich (say they) abandon themselves, and us with them? Do they wish to give us up to slaughter?” The pastor, who had witnessed these mournful scenes, spoke with animation. The councillors, whose infatuation was to be prolonged to the last, were offended at his message. “They want to make us act imprudently,” replied they, turning in their arm-chairs.

They had scarcely ceased speaking before a new messenger appeared, wearing on his features the marks of the greatest terror: it was Schwytzer, landlord of the “Beech Tree” on Mount Albis. “My lords Dumysen and Funck,” said he, “have sent me to you with all speed to announce to the council that the Five Cantons have seized upon Hitzkylch, and that they are now collecting all their troops at Baar. My lords remain in the bailiwicks to aid the frightened inhabitants.” This time the most confident turned pale. Terror, so long restrained, passed like a flash of lightning through every heart. Hitzkylch was in the power of the enemy, and the war was begun.

It was resolved to expedite to Cappel a flying camp of six hundred men with six guns; but the command was intrusted to George Gödli, whose brother was in the army of the Five Cantons, and he was enjoined to keep on the defensive. Gödli and his troops had just left the city, when the captain-general Lavater, summoning into the hall of the Smaller Council the old banneret

Schweitzer, William Toning, captain of the arquebusiers, J. Dennikon, captain of the artillery, Zwingle, and some others, said to them, “Let us deliberate promptly on the means of saving the canton and the city. Let the tocsin immediately call out all the citizens.” The captain-general feared that the councils would shrink at this proceeding, and he wished to raise the landstrum by the simple advice of the chiefs of the army and of Zwingle. “We cannot take it upon ourselves,” said they; “the two councils are still sitting; let us lay this proposition before them.” They hastened towards the place of meeting; but fatal mischance! there were only a few members of the Smaller Council on the benches. “The consent of the Two Hundred is necessary,” said they. Again a new delay, and the enemy were on their march. Two hours after noon the Great Council met again, but only to make long and useless speeches. At length the resolution was taken, and at seven in the evening the tocsin began to sound in all the country districts. Treason united with this dilatoriness, and persons who pretended to be envoys from Zurich stopped the landstrum in many places, as being contrary to the opinion of the council. A great number of citizens went to sleep again.

It was a fearful night. The thick darkness—a violent storm—the alarm-bell ringing from every steeple—the people running to arms—the noise of swords and guns—the sound of trumpets and of drums, combined with the roaring of the tempest, the distrust, discontent, and even treason, which spread affliction in every quarter—the sobs of women and of children—the cries which accompanied many a heart-rending adieu—an earthquake which occurred about nine o’clock at night, as if nature herself had shuddered at the blood that was about to be spilt, and which violently shook the mountains and the valleys: all increased the terrors of this fatal night,—a night to be followed by a still more fatal day.

While these events were passing, the Zurichers encamped on the heights of Cappel to the number of about one thousand men, fixed their eyes on Zug and upon the lake, attentively watching every movement. On a sudden, a little before night, they perceived a few barks filled with soldiers coming from the side of Arth, and rowing across the lake towards Zug. Their number increases—one boat follows another—soon they distinctly hear the bellowing of the Bull (the horn) of Uri, and discern the banner. The barks draw near Zug; they are moored to the shore, which is lined with an immense crowd. The warriors Uri and the arquebusiers of the Adige spring up and leap on shore, where they are received with acclamations, and take up their quarters for the night: behold the enemies assembled! The council are informed with all speed. The agitation was still greater at Zurich than at Cappel: the confusion was increased by uncertainty. The enemy attacking them on different sides at once, they knew not where to carry assistance. Two hours after midnight five hundred men with four guns quitted the city for Bremgarten, and three or four hundred men with five guns for Wadenschwyl. They turned to the right and to the left, while the enemy was in front.

Alarmed at its own weakness, the council resolved to apply without delay to the cities of the Christian co-burghery. “As this revolt,” wrote they, “has no other origin than the Word of God, we entreat you once—twice—thrice, as loudly, as seriously, as firmly, and as earnestly, as our ancient alliances and our christian co-burghery permit and command us to do—to set forth without delay with all your forces. Haste! haste! haste! Act as promptly as possible—the danger is yours as well as ours.” Thus spake Zurich; but it was already too late. At break of day the banner was raised before the town house; instead of flaunting proudly in the wind, it hung drooping down the staff—a sad omen that filled many minds with fear. Lavater took up his station under this standard; but a

long period elapsed before a few hundred soldiers could be got together. In the square and in all the city disorder and confusion prevailed. The troops, fatigued by a hasty march or by long waiting, were faint and discouraged. At ten o'clock, only 700 men were under arms. The selfish, the lukewarm, the friends of Rome and of the foreign pensioners, had remained at home. A few old men who had more courage than strength—several members of the two councils who were devoted to the holy cause of God's Word—many ministers of the Church who desired to live and die with the Reform—the boldest of the townspeople and a certain number of peasants, especially those from the neighbourhood of the city—such were the defenders who, wanting that moral force so necessary for victory, incompletely armed, and without uniform, crowded in disorder around the banner of Zurich. The army should have numbered at least 4000 men; they waited still; the usual oath had not been administered; and yet courier after courier arrived breathless and in disorder, announcing the terrible danger that threatened Zurich. All this disorderly crowd was violently agitated—they no longer waited for the commands of their chiefs, and many without taking the oath rushed through the gates. About 200 men thus set out in confusion. All those who remained prepared to depart.

Zwingle was now seen issuing from a house before which a caparisoned horse was stamping impatiently: it was his own. His look was firm, but dimmed by sorrow. He parted from his wife, his children, and his numerous friends, without deceiving himself, and with a bruised heart. He observed the thick waterspout, which, driven by a terrible wind, advanced whirling towards him. Alas! he had himself called up this hurricane by quitting the atmosphere of the Gospel of peace, and throwing himself into the midst of political passions. He was convinced that he would be its first victim. Fifteen days before the attack of the Waldstettes, he had said from the pulpit: "I know the meaning of all this: I am the person specially pointed at. All this comes to pass—in order that I may die."2 The council, according to an ancient custom, had called upon him to accompany the army as its chaplain. Zwingle did not hesitate. He prepared himself without surprise and without anger,—with the calmness of a Christian who places himself confidently in the hands of his God. If the cause of Reform was doomed to perish, he was ready to perish with it. Surrounded by his weeping wife and friends—by his children who clung to his garments to detain him, he quitted that house where he had tasted so much happiness. At the moment that his hand was upon his horse, just as he was about to mount, the animal violently started back several paces, and when he was at last in the saddle, it refused for a time to move, rearing and prancing backwards, like that horse which the greatest captain of modern times had mounted as he was about to cross the Niemen. Many in Zurich at that time thought with the soldier of the Grand Army when he saw Napoleon on the ground: "It is a bad omen! a Roman would go back!" Zwingle having at last mastered his horse, gave the reins, applied the spur, started forward, and disappeared. At eleven o'clock the flag was struck, and all who remained in the square—about 500 men—began their march along with it. The greater part were torn with difficulty from the arms of their families, and walked sad and silent, as if they were going to the scaffold instead of battle. There was no order—no plan; the men were isolated and scattered, some running before, some after the colours, their extreme confusion presenting a fearful appearance; so much so, that those who remained behind—the woman, the children, and the old men, filled with gloomy forebodings, beat their breasts as they saw them pass, and many years after, the remembrance of this day of tumult and sadness drew this groan from Oswald Myconius: "Whenever I recall it to mind, it is as if a sword pierced my heart." Zwingle, armed according to the usage of the chaplains of the confederation, rode mournfully behind this

distracted multitude. Myconius, when he saw him, was nigh fainting.2 Zwingle disappeared, and Oswald remained behind to weep.

He did not shed tears alone; in all quarters were heard lamentations, and every house was changed into a house of prayer. In the midst of this universal sorrow, one woman remained silent; her only cry was a bitter heart, her only language the mild and suppliant eye of faith:—this was Anna, Zwingle's wife. She had seen her husband depart—her son, her brother, a great number of intimate friends and near relations, whose approaching death she foreboded. But her soul, strong as that of her husband, offered to God the sacrifice of her holiest affections. Gradually the defenders of Zurich precipitated their march, and the tumult died away in the distance.

CHAPTER VII The Scene of War—The Enemy at Zug—Declaration of War—Council—Army of the Forest Cantons appears—The first Gun fired—Zwingle's Gravity and Sorrow—Zurich Army ascending the Albis—Halt and Council at the Beech Tree—They quicken their March—Jauch's Reconnaissance—His Appeal—Ambuscade. This night, which was so stormy in Zurich, had not been calmer among the inhabitants of Cappel. They had received the most alarming reports one after another. It was necessary to take up a position that would allow the troops assembled round the convent to resist the enemy's attack until the arrival of the reinforcements that were expected from the city. They cast their eyes on a small hill, which lying to the north towards Zurich, and traversed by the highroad, presented an uneven but sufficiently extensive surface. A deep ditch that surrounded it on three sides defended the approaches; but a small bridge, that was the only issue on the side of Zurich, rendered a precipitate retreat very dangerous. On the south-west was a wood of beech-trees; on the south, in the direction of Zug, was the highroad and a marshy valley. "Lead us to the Granges," cried all the soldiers. They were conducted thither. The artillery was stationed near some ruins. The line of battle was drawn up on the side of the monastery and of Zug, and sentinels were placed at the foot of the slope.

Meantime, the signal was given at Zug, and Baar; the drums beat: the soldiers of the Five Cantons took up their arms. A universal feeling of joy animated them. The churches were opened, the bells rang, and the serried ranks of the cantons entered the cathedral of St. Oswald, where mass was celebrated and the Host offered up for the sins of the people. All the army began their march at nine o'clock, with banners flying. The avoyer John Gölder commanded the contigent of Lucerne; the landamman James Frouger that of Urd; the landamman Rychmuth, a mortal enemy of the Reformation, that of Schwytz; the landamman Zellger, that of Unterwalden; and Oswald Dooss that of Zug. Eight thousand men marched in order of battle: all the picked men of the Five Cantons were there. Fresh and active after a quiet night, and having only one short league to cross before reaching the enemy, these haughty Waldstettes advanced with a firm and regular step under the command of their chiefs. On reaching the common meadow of Zug, they halted to take the oath: every hand was upraised to heaven, and all swore to avenge themselves. They were about to resume their march, when some aged men made signs to them to stop. "Comrades," said they, "we have long offended God. Our blasphemies, our oaths, our wars, our revenge, our pride, our drunkenness, our adulteries, the gold of the stranger to whom our hands have been extended, and all the disorders in which we have indulged, have so provoked his anger, that if he should punish us to-day, we should only receive the desert of our crimes." The emotion of the chiefs had passed into the ranks. All the army bent the knee in the midst of the plain; deep silence prevailed, and every soldier, with bended head, crossed himself devoutly, and repeated in a low voice five paters,

as many aves, and the credo. One might have said that they were for a time in the midst of a vast and stilly desert. Suddenly the noise of an immense crowd was again heard. The army rose up. “Soldiers,” said the captains, “you know the cause of this war. Bear your wives and your children continually before your eyes.”

Then the chief usher (grand sautier) of Lucerne, wearing the colours of the canton, approached the chiefs of the army: they placed in his hands the declaration of war, dated on that very day, and sealed with the arms of Zug. He then set off on horseback, preceded by a trumpeter, to carry this paper to the commander of the Zurichers.

It was eleven in the morning. The Zurichers soon discovered the enemy’s army, and cast a sorrowful glance on the small force they were able to oppose to it. Every minute the danger increased. All bent their knees, their eyes were raised to heaven, and every Zuricher uttered a cry from the bottom of his heart, praying for deliverance from God. As soon as the prayer was ended, they got ready for battle. There were at that time about twelve hundred men under arms. At noon the trumpet of the Five Cantons sounded not far from the advanced posts. Gödli, having collected the members of the two councils who happened to be with the army, as well as the commissioned and non-commissioned officers, and having ranged them in a circle, ordered the secretary Rheinhard to read the declaration of which the Sautier of Lucerne was the bearer. After the reading, Gödli opened a council of war. “We are few in number, and the forces of our adversaries are great,” said Landolt, bailiff of Marpac, “but I will here await the enemy in the name of God.” “Wait!” cried the captain of the halberdiers, Rodolph Zigler: “impossible! let us rather take advantage of the ditch that cuts the road to effect our retreat, and let us everywhere raise a levée en masse.” This was in truth the only means of safety. But Rudi Gallmann, considering every step backwards as an act of cowardice, cried out, stamping his feet forcibly on the earth, and casting a fiery glance around him, “Here—here shall be my grave!”—“It is now too late to retire with honour,” said other officers. “This day is in the hands of God. Let us suffer whatever he lays upon us.” It was put to the vote. The members of the council had scarcely raised their hands in token of assent, when a great noise was heard around them. “The captain! the captain!” cried a soldier from the outposts who arrived in haste. “Silence, silence!” replied the ushers driving him hack; “they are holding a council!”—“It is no longer time to hold a council,” replied the soldier. “Conduct me immediately to the captain.” … “Our sentinels are falling back,” cried he with an agitated voice, as he arrived before Gödli. “The enemy is there—they are advancing through the forest with all their forces and with great tumult.” He had not ceased speaking before the sentinels, who were in truth retiring on all sides, ran up, and the army of the Five Cantons was soon seen climbing the slope of Ifelsberg in face of the Granges, and pointing their guns. The leaders of the Waldstettes were examining the position, and seeking to discover by what means their army could reach that of Zurich. The Zurichers were asking themselves the same question. The nature of the ground prevented the Waldstettes from passing below the convent, but they could arrive by another quarter. Ulrich Brüder, under-bailiff of Husen in the canton of Zurich, fixed his anxious look on the beech-wood. “It is thence that the enemy will fall upon us!” “Axes—axes!” immediately cried several voices: “let us cut down the trees!” Gödli, the abbot, and several others were opposed to this: “If we stop up the wood, by throwing down the trees, we shall ourselves be unable to work our guns in that direction,” said they.—“Well! at least let us place some arquebusiers in that quarter.”—“We are already so small a number,” replied the captain, “that it will be imprudent to

divide the forces." Neither wisdom nor courage were to save Zurich. They once more invoked the help of God, and waited in expectation. At one o'clock the Five Cantons fired the first gun: the ball passing over the convent fell below the Granges; a second passed over the line of battle; a third struck a hedge close to the ruins. The Zurichers, seeing the battle was begun, replied with courage: but the slowness and awkwardness with which the artillery was served in those days prevented any great loss being inflicted on either side. When the enemy perceived this, they ordered their advanced guard to descend from Ifelsberg and to reach the Granges through the meadow; and soon the whole army of the cantons advanced in this direction, but with difficulty and over bad roads. Some arquebusiers of Zurich came and announced the disorder of the cantons. "Brave Zurichers," cried Rudi Gallman, "if we attack them now, it is all over with them." At these words some of the soldiers prepared to enter the wood on the left, to fall upon the disheartened Waldstettes. But Gödli perceiving this movement, cried out: "Where are you going?—do you not know that we have agreed not to separate?" He then ordered the skirmishers to be recalled, so that the wood remained entirely open to the enemy. They were satisfied with discharging a few random shots from time to time to prevent the cantons from establishing themselves there. The firing of the artillery continued until three o'clock, and announced far and wide, even to Bremgarten and Zurich, that the battle had begun. In the meanwhile the great banner of Zurich and all those who surrounded it, among whom was Zwingle, came advancing in disorder towards the Albis. For a year past the gaiety of the reformer had entirely disappeared: he was grave, melancholy, easily moved, having a weight on his heart that seemed to crush it. Often would he throw himself weeping at the feet of his Master, and seek in prayer the strength of which he stood in need. No one had ever observed in him any irritation; on the contrary, he had received with mildness the counsels that had been offered, and had remained tenderly attached to men whose convictions were not the same as his own. He was now advancing mournfully along the road to Cappel; and John Maaler of Winterthour, who was riding a few paces behind him, heard his groans and sighs, intermingled with fervent prayers. If any one spoke to him, he was found firm and strong in the peace that proceeds from faith; but he did not conecal his conviction that he should never see his family or church again. Thus advanced the forces of Zurich. A woful march! resembling rather a funeral procession than an army going to battle. As they approached they saw express after express galloping along the road from Cappel, begging the Zurichers to hasten to the defence of their brothers. At Adliswyl, having passed the bridge under which flow the impetuous waters of the Sihl, and traversed the village through the midst of women, children, and old men, who, standing before their cottages, looked with sadness on this disorderly troop, they began to ascend the Albis. They were about half-way from Cappel when the first cannon-shot was heard. They stop, they listen: a second, a third succeeds.… There is no longer any doubt. The glory, the very existence of the republic are endangered, and they are not present to defend it! The blood curdles in their veins. On a sudden they arouse, and each one begins to run to the support of his brothers. But the road over the Albis was much steeper than it is in our days. The badly harnessed artillery could not ascend it; the old men and citizens, little habituated to marching, and covered with weighty armour, advanced with difficulty: and yet they formed the greater portion of the troops. They were seen stopping one after another, panting and exhausted, along the sides of the road near the thickets and ravines of the Albis, leaning against a beech or an ash tree, and looking with dispirited eyes to the summit of the mountain covered with thick pines.

They resumed their march, however; the horsemen and the most intrepid of the foot-soldiers hastened onwards, and having reached the “Beech Tree,” on the top of the mountain, halted to take counsel.

What a prospect then extended before their eyes! Zurich, the lake and its smiling shores—those orchards, those fertile fields, those vine-clad hills, almost the whole of the canton. Alas! soon, perhaps, to be devastated by the forest-bands.

Scarcely had these noble-minded men begun to deliberate, when fresh messengers from Cappel appeared before them, exclaiming, “Hasten forwards!” At these words many of the Zurichers prepared to gallop towards the enemy. Toning, the captain of the arquebusiers, stopt them. “My good friends,” cried he to them, “against such great forces what can we do alone? Let us wait here until our people are assembled, and then let us fall upon the enemy with the whole army.”—“Yes, if we had an army,” bitterly replied the captain-general, who, in despair of saving the republic, thought only of dying with glory; “but we have only a banner and no soldiers.”—“How can we stay calmly upon these heights,” said Zwingle, “while we hear the shots that are fired at our fellow-citizens? In the name of God I will march towards my brother warriors, prepared to die in order to save them.”2—“And I too,” added the aged banneret Schweitzer. “As for you,” continued he, turning with a contemptuous look towards Toning, “wait till you are a little recovered.”—“I am quite as much refreshed as you,” replied Toning, the colour mantling on his face, “and you shall soon see whether I cannot fight.” All hastened their steps towards the field of battle. The descent was rapid; they plunged into the woods, passed through the village of Husen, and at length arrived near the Granges. It was three o’clock when the banner crossed the narrow bridge that led thither: and there were so few soldiers round it that every one trembled as he beheld this venerated standard thus exposed to the attacks of so formidable an enemy. The army of the Cantons was at that moment deploying before the eyes of the new-comers. Zwingle gazed upon this terrible spectacle. Behold, then, these phalanxes of soldiers!—a few minutes more, and the labours of eleven years will be destroyed perhaps for ever!…. A citizen of Zurich, one Leonard Bourkhard, who was ill-disposed towards the reformer, said to him in a harsh tone, “Well, Master Ulrich, what do you say about this business? Are the radishes salt enough?… who will eat them now?” “I,” replied Zwingle, “and many a brave man who is here in the hands of God; for we are his in life and in death.”—“And I too—I will help to eat them,” resumed Bourkhard immediately ashamed of his brutality,—“I will risk my life for them.” And he did so, and many others with him, adds the chronicle.

It was four o’clock; the sun was sinking rapidly; the Waldstettes did not advance, and the Zurichers began to think that the attack would be put off till the morrow. In fact, the chiefs of the Five Cantons seeing the great banner of Zurich arrive, the night near at hand, and the impossibility of crossing under the fire of the Zurichers the marsh and the ditch that separated the combatants, were looking for a place in which their troops might pass the night. “If at this moment any mediators had appeared,” says Bullinger, “their proposals would have been accepted.” The soldiers, observing the hesitation of their chiefs, began to murmur loudly. “The big ones abandon us,” said one. “The captains fear to bite the fox’s tail,” said another. “Not to attack them, cried they all, “is to ruin our cause.” During this time a daring man was preparing the skilful manœuvre that was to decide the fate of the day. A warrior of Uri, John Jauch, formerly bailiff of Sargans, a good marksman and experienced soldier, having taken a few men with him, moved towards the right of

the army of the Five Cantons, crept into the midst of the clump of beech trees that, by forming a semicircle to the east, unite the hill of Ifelsberg to that of the Granges, found the wood empty, arrived to within a few paces of the Zurichers, and there, hidden behind the trees, remarked unperceived the smallness of their numbers, and their want of caution. Then, stealthily retiring, he went to the chiefs at the very moment the discontent was on the point of bursting out. “Now is the time to attack the enemy,” cried he. “Dear gossip,” replied Troguer, captain-in-chief of Uri, “you do not mean to say that we should set to work at so late an hour; besides, the men are preparing their quarters, and everybody knows what it cost our fathers at Naples and Marignan for having commenced the attack a little before night. And then it is Innocent’s day, and our ancestors have never given battle on a feast-day.”—“Don’t think about the Innocens of the calendar,” replied Jauch, “but let us rather remember the innocents that we have left in our cottages.” Gaspard Gödli of Zurich, brother of the commander of the Granges, added his entreaties to those of the warrior of Uri. “We must either beat the Zurichers to-night,” said he, “or be beaten by them to-morrow. Take your choice.”

All was unavailing; the chiefs were inflexible, and the army prepared to take up its quarters. Upon this the warrior of Uri, understanding like his fellow-countryman Tell that great evils require great remedies, drew his sword and cried: “Let all true confederates follow me.” Then hastily leaping to his saddle, he spurred his horse into the forest;3 and immediately arquebusiers, soldiers from the Adige, and many other warriors of the Five Cantons, especially from Unterwalden—in all about 300 men, rushed into the wood after him. At this sight Jauch no longer doubted of the victory of the Waldstettes. He dismounted and fell upon his knees, “for,” says Tschudi, “he was a man who feared God.” All his followers did the same, and together invoked the aid of God, of his holy mother, and of all the heavenly host. They then advanced; but soon the warrior of Uri, wishing to expose no one but himself, halted his troops, and glided from tree to tree to the verge of the wood. Observing that the enemy was as incautious as ever, he rejoined his arquebusiers, led them stealthily forward, and posted them silently behind the trees of the forest, enjoining them to take their aim so as not to miss their men. During this time the chiefs of the Five Cantons, foreseeing that this rash man was about to bring on the action, decided against their will, and collected their soldiers around the banners.

CHAPTER VIII

Unforeseen Change—The whole Army advances—Universal Disorder—The Banneret’s Death—The Banner in Danger—The Banner saved—Terrible Slaughter—Slaughter of the Pastors—Zwingle’s last Words—Barbarity of the Victors—The Furnace of Trial—Zwingle’s dying Moments—Day after the Battle—Homage and Outrage. The Zurichers, fearing that the enemy would seize upon the road that led to their capital, were then directing part of their troops and their guns to a low hill by which it was commanded. At the very moment that the invisible arquebusiers stationed among the beech-trees were taking their aim, this detachment passed near the little wood. The deepest silence prevailed in this solitude: each one posted there picked out the man he desired to bring down, and Jauch exclaimed: “In the name of the holy Trinity—of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—of the Holy Mother of God, and of all the heavenly host—fire!” At the word the deadly balls issued from the wood, and a murderous carnage in the ranks of Zurich followed this terrible discharge. The battle, which had begun four hours ago, and which had never appeared to be a serious attack, now underwent an unforeseen change. The sword was not again

to be returned to the scabbard until it had been bathed in torrents of blood. Those of the Zurichers who had not fallen at this first discharge, lay flat on the ground, so that the balls passed over their heads; but they soon sprang up, saying: “Shall we allow ourselves to be butchered? No! let us rather attack the enemy!” Lavater seized a lance, and rushing into the foremost rank exclaimed: “Soldiers, uphold the honour of God and of our lords, and behave like brave men!” Zwingle, silent and collected, like nature before the bursting of the tempest, was there also halberd in hand. “Master Ulrich,” said Bernard Sprungli, “speak to the people and encourage them. “Warriors!” said Zwingle, “fear nothing. If we are this day to be defeated, still our cause is good. Commend yourselves to God!” The Zurichers quickly turned the artillery they were dragging to another quarter, and pointed it against the wood; but their bullets, instead of striking the enemy, only reached the top of the trees, and tore off a few branches that fell upon the skirmishers.

Rychmuth, the landamman of Schwytz, came up at a gallop to recall the volunteers; but seeing the battle begun, he ordered the whole army to advance. Immediately the five banners moved forward. But already Jauch’s skirmishers, rushing from among the trees, had fallen impetuously upon the Zurichers, charging with their long and pointed halberds. “Heretics!” sacrilegists!” cried they, “we have you at last!”—“Man-sellers, idolaters, impious papists!” replied the Zurichers, “is it really you?” At first a shower of stones fell from both parties and wounded several; immediately they came to close quarters. The resistance of the Zurichers was terrible. Each struck with the sword or with the halberd: at last the soldiers of the Five Cantons were driven back in disorder. The Zurichers advanced, but in so doing lost the advantage of their position, and got entangled in the marsh. Some Roman-catholic historians pretend that this flight of their troops was a stratagem to draw the Zurichers into the snare.2 In the mean time the army of the Five Cantons hastened through the wood. Burning with courage and with anger, they eagerly quickened their steps; from the midst of the beech-trees there resounded a confused and savage noise—a frightful murmur; the ground shook; one might have imagined that the forest was uttering a horrible roar, or that witches were holding their nocturnal revels in its dark recesses. In vain did the bravest of the Zurichers offer an intrepid resistance: the Waldstettes had the advantage in every quarter. “They are surrounding us,” cried some. “Our men are fleeing,” said others. A man from the canton of Zug, mingling with the Zurichers, and pretending to be of their party, exclaimed: “Fly, fly, brave Zurichers, you are betrayed!” Thus everything is against Zurich. Even the hand of Him who is the disposer of battles turned against this people. Thus was it also in times of old that God frequently chastised his own people of Israel by the Assyrian sword. A panic-terror seized upon the bravest, and the disorder spread everywhere with frightful rapidity. In the mean while the aged Schweitzer had raised the great banner with a firm hand, and all the picked men of Zurich were drawn up around it; but soon their ranks were thinned. John Kammli, charged with the defence of the standard, having observed the small number of combatants that remained upon the field of battle, said to the banneret: “Let us lower the banner, my lord, and save it, for our people are flying shamefully.”—“Warriors, remain firm,” replied the aged banneret, whom no danger had ever shaken. The disorder augmented—the number of fugitives increased every minute; the old man stood fast, amazed and immovable as an aged oak beaten by a frightful hurricane. He received unflinchingly the blows that fell upon him, and alone resisted the terrible storm. Kammli seized him by the arm: “My lord,” said he again, “lower the banner, or else we shall lose it: there is no more glory to be reaped here!” The banneret, who was already mortally wounded, exclaimed: “Alas must the city of Zurich be so punished!” Then, dragged off by Kammli, who held him by the arm he

retreated as far as the ditch. The weight of years, and the wounds with which he was covered, did not permit him to cross it. He fell in the mire at the bottom, still holding the glorious standard, whose folds dropped on the other bank. The enemy ran up with loud shouts, being attracted by the colours of Zurich, as the bull by the gladiator's flag. Kammli seeing this, unhesitatingly leapt to the bottom of the ditch, and laid hold of the stiff and dying hands of his chief, in order to preserve the precious ensign, which they tightly grasped. But it was in vain: the hands of the aged Schweitzer would not lose the standard. "My lord banneret!" cried this faithful servant, "it is no longer in your power to defend it." The hands of the banneret, already stiffened in death, still refused; upon which Kammli violently tore away the sacred standard, leapt upon the other bank, and rushed with his treasure far from the steps of the enemy. The last Zurichers at this moment reached the ditch; they fell one after another upon the expiring banneret, and thus hastened his death.

Kammli, however, having received a wound from a gun-shot, his march was retarded, and soon the Waldstettes surrounded him with their swords. The Zuricher, holding the banner in one hand, and his sword in the other, defended himself bravely. One of the Waldstettes caught hold of the staff—another seized the flag itself and tore it. Kammli with one blow of his sword cut down the former, and striking around him, called out: "To the rescue, brave Zurichers! save the honour and the banner of our lords." The assailants increased in number, and the warrior was about to fall, when Adam Næff of Wollenwyd rushed up sword in hand, and the head of the Waldesette who had torn the colours rolled upon the plain, and his blood gushed out upon the flag of Zurich. Dumysen, member of the Smaller Council, supported Næff with his halberd, and both dealt such lusty blows, that they succeeded in disengaging the standard-bearer. He, although dangerously wounded, sprang forward, holding the blood-stained folds of the banner in one hand, which he carried off hastily, dragging the staff behind him. With fierce look and fiery eye, he thus passed, sword in hand, through the midst of friends and enemies: he crossed plains, woods, and marshes, everywhere leaving traces of his blood, which flowed from numerous wounds. Two of his enemies, one from Schwytz, the other from Zug—were particularly eager in his pursuit. "Heretic! villain!" cried they, "surrender and give us the banner."—"You shall have my life first," replied the Zuricher. Then the two hostile soldiers, who were embarrassed by their cuirasses, stopped a moment to take them off. Kammli took advantage of this to get in advance: he ran; Huber, Dumysen, and Dantzler, of Naenikon were at his side. They all four thus arrived near Husen, half-way up the Albis. They had still to climb the steepest part of the mountain. Huber fell covered with wounds. Dumysen, the colonel-general, who had fought as a private soldier, almost reached the church of Husen, and there he dropt lifeless: and two of his sons, in the flower of youth, soon lay stretched on the battle-field that had drunk their father's blood. Kammli took a few steps farther; but halted erelong, exhausted and panting, near a hedge that he would have to clear, and discovered his two enemies and other Waldstettes running from all sides, like birds of prey, towards the wavering standard of Zurich. The strength of Kammli was sinking rapidly, his eyes grew dim, thick darkness surrounded him: a hand of lead fastened him to the ground. Then, mustering all his expiring strength, he flung the standard on the other side of the hedge, exclaiming: "Is there any brave Zuricher near me? Let him preserve the banner and the honour of our lords! As for me, I can do no more!" Then casting a last look to heaven, he added: "May God be my helper!" He fell exhausted by this last effort. Dantzler, who came up, flung away his sword, sprung over the hedge, seized the banner, and cried, "With the aid of God, I will carry it off." He then rapidly climbed the Albis, and at last placed the ancient standard of Zurich in safety. God, on whom these warriors fixed all their

hopes, had heard their prayers, but the noblest blood of the republic had been spilt. The enemy were victorious at all points. The soldiers of the Five Cantons, and particularly those of Unterwalden, long hardened in the wars of the Milanese, showed themselves more merciless towards their confederates than they had ever boen towards foreigners. At the beginning of the battle, Gödli had taken flight, and soon after he quitted Zurich for ever. Lavater, the captain-general, after having fought valiantly, had fallen into the ditch. He was dragged out by a soldier and escaped. The most distinguished men of Zurich fell one after another under the blows of the Waldstettes. Rudi Gallman found the glorious tomb he had wished for, and his two brothers stretched beside him left their father's house desolate. Toning, captain of the arquebusiers, died for his country as he had foretold. All the pride of the population of Zurich, seven members of the Smaller Council, nineteen members of the Two Hundred, sixty-five citizens of the town, four hundred and seventeen from the rural districts: the father in the midst of his children,—the son surrounded by his brothers,—lay on the field.

Gerold Meyer of Knonau, son of Anna Zwingle, at that time twenty-two years of age, and already a member of the council of Two Hundred,—a husband and a father,—had rushed into the foremost ranks with all the impetuosity of youth. "Surrender, and your life shall be spared," cried some of the warriors of the Five Cantons, who desired to save him. "It is better for me to die with honour than to yield with disgrace," replied the son of Anna, and immediately struck by a mortal law, he fell and expired not far from the castle of his ancestors. The ministers were those who paid proportionally the greatest tribute on this bloody day. The sword that was at work on the heights of Cappel thirsted for their blood: twenty-five of them fell beneath its stroke. The Waldstettes trembled with rage whenever they discovered one of these heretical preachers, and sacrificed him with enthusiasm, as a chosen victim to the Virgin and the saints. There has, perhaps, never been any battle in which so many men of the Word of God have bitten the dust. Almost everywhere the pastors had marched at the head of their flocks. One might have said that Cappel was an assembly of Christian churches rather than an army of Swiss companies. The Abbot Joner, receiving a mortal wound near the ditch, expired in sight of his own monastery. The people of Zug, in pursuit of the enemy, uttered a cry of anguish as they passed his body, remembering all the good he had done them." Schmidt of Kussnacht, stationed on the field of battle in the midst of his parishioners, fell surrounded by forty of their bodies.2 Geroldsek, John Haller, and many other pastors, at the head of their flocks, suddenly, met in a terrible and unforeseen manner the Lord whom they had preached. But the death of one individual far surpassed all others. Zwingle was at the post of danger, the helmet on his head, the sword hanging at his side, the battle-axe in his hand. Scarcely had the action begun, when, stooping to console a dying man, says J. J. Hottinger, a stone hurled by the vigorous arm of a Waldstette struck him on the head and closed his lips. Yet Zwingle arose, when two other blows which hit him successively on the leg,4 threw him down again. Twice more he stands up; but a fourth time he receives a thrust from a lance, he staggers, and sinking beneath so many wounds, falls on his knees. Does not the darkness that is spreading around him announce a still thicker darkness that is about to cover the Church? Zwingle turns away from such sad thoughts; once more he uplifts that head which had been so bold, and gazing with calm eye upon the trickling blood, exclaims: "What matters this misfortune? They may indeed kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul!" These were his last words.

He had scarcely uttered them ere he fell backwards. There, under a tree (Zwingle's Pear-tree), in a meadow, he remained lying on his back, with clasped hand, and eyes upturned to heaven.

While the bravest were pursuing the scattered soldiers of Zurich, the stragglers of the Five Cantons had pounced like hungry ravens on the field of battle. Torch in hand, these wretches prowled among the dead, casting looks of irritation around them, and lighting up the features of their expiring victims by the dull glimmering of these funereal torches. They turned over the bodies of the wounded and the dead; they tortured and stripped them. If they found any who were still sensible, they cried out, "Call upon the saints and confess to our priests!" If the Zurichers, faithful to their creed, rejected these cruel invitations, these men, who were as cowardly as they were fanatical, pierced them with their lances, or dashed out their brains with the but-ends of their arquebuses. The Roman-catholic historian, Salat of Lucerne, makes a boast of this. "They were left to die like infidel dogs, or were slain with the sword or the spear, that they might go so much the quicker to the devil, with whose help they had fought so desperately."2 If any of the soldiers of the Five Cantons recognised a Zuricher against whom they had any grudge, with dry eyes, disdainful mouth, and features changed by anger, they drew near the unhappy creature, writhing in the agonies of death, and said: "Well! has your heretical faith preserved you? Ah ha! it was pretty clearly seen to-day who had the true faith.… To-day we have dragged your Gospel in the mud, and you too, even you are covered with your own blood. God, the Virgin, and the saints have punished you." Scarcely had they uttered these words before they plunged their swords into their enemy's bosom. "Mass or death!" was their watchword.

Thus triumphed the Waldstettes; but the pious Zurichers who expired on the field of battle called to mind that they had for God one who has said: "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"—"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." It is in the furnace of trial that the God of the Gospel conceals the pure gold of his most precious blessings. This punishment was necessary to turn aside the Church of Zurich from the "broad ways" of the world, and lead it back to the "narrow ways" of the Spirit and the life. In a political history, a defeat like that of Cappel would be styled a great misfortune; but in a history of the Church of Jesus Christ, such a blow, inflicted by the hand of the Father himself, ought rather to be called a great blessing.

Meanwhile Zwingle lay extended under the tree, near the road by which the mass of the people was passing. The shouts of the victors, the groans of the dying, those flickering torches borne from corpse to corpse, Zurich humbled, the cause of Reform lost,—all cried aloud to him that God punishes his servants when they have recourse to the arm of man. If the German reformer had been able to approach Zwingle at this solemn moment, and pronounce those oft-repeated words: "Christians fight not with sword and arquebuse, but with sufferings and with the cross," Zwingle would have stretched out his dying hand, and said, "Amen!"

Two of the soldiers who were prowling over the field of battle, having come near the reformer without recognising him, "Do you wish for a priest to confess yourself?" asked they. Zwingle, without speaking (for he had not strength), made signs in the negative. "If you cannot speak," replied the soldiers, "at least think in thy heart of the Mother of God, and call upon the saints!" Zwingle again shook his head, and kept his eyes still fixed on heaven. Upon this the irritated soldiers began to curse him. "No doubt," said they, "you are one of the heretics of the city!" One of

them, being curious to know who he was, stooped down and turned Zwingle's head in the direction of a fire that had been lighted near the spot.3 The soldier immediately let him fall to the ground. "I think," said he, surprised and amazed, "I think it is Zwingle!" At this moment Captain Fockinger of Unterwalden, a veteran and a pensioner, drew near: he had heard the last words of the soldier. "Zwingle!" exclaimed he; "that vile heretic Zwingle! that rascal, that traitor!" Then raising his sword, so long sold to the stranger, he struck the dying Christian on the throat, exclaiming in a violent passion, "Die, obstinate heretic!" Yielding under this last blow, the reformer gave up the ghost: he was doomed to perish by the sword of a mercenary. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." The soldiers ran to other victims. All did not show the same barbarity. The night was cold; a thick hoar-frost covered the fields and the bodies of the dying. The protestant historian, Bullinger, informs us that some Waldstettes gently raised the wounded in their arms, bound up their wounds, and carried them to the fires lighted on the field of battle. "Ah!" cried they, "why have the Swiss thus slaughtered one another!" The main body of the array had remained on the field of battle near the standards. The soldiers conversed around the fires, interrupted from time to time by the cries of the dying. During this time the chiefs assembled in the convent, sent messengers to carry the news of their signal victory to the confederate cantons, and to the Roman-catholic powers of Germany. At length the day appeared. The Waldstettes spread over the field of battle, running here and there, stopping, contemplating, struck with surprise at the sight of their most formidable enemies stretched lifeless on the plain; but sometimes also shedding tears as they gazed on corpses which reminded them of old and sacred ties of friendship. At length they reached the pear-tree under which Zwingle lay dead, and an immense crowd collected around it. His countenance still beamed with expression and with life. "He has the look," said Bartholomew Stocker of Zug, who had loved him, "he has the look of a living rather than of a dead man. Such was he when he kindled the people by the fire of his eloquence." All eyes were fixed upon the corpse. John Schönbrunner, formerly canon of Zurich, who had retired to Zug at the epoch of the Reformation, could not restrain his tears: "Whatever may have been thy creed," said he, "I know, Zwingle, that thou hast been a loyal confederate! May thy soul rest with God!" But the pensioners of the foreigner, on whom Zwingle had never ceased to make war, required that the body of the heretic should be dismembered, and a portion sent to each of the Five Cantons. "Peace be to the dead! and God alone be their judge!" exclaimed the avoyer Golder and the landamman Thoss of Zug. Cries of fury answered their appeal, and compelled them to retire. Immediately the drums beat to muster; the dead body was tried, and it was decreed that it should be quartered for treason against the confederation, and then burnt for heresy. The executioner of Lucerne carried out the sentence. Flames consumed Zwingle's disjointed members; the ashes of swine were mingled with his; and a lawless multitude rushing upon his remains flung them to the four winds of heaven.

Zwingle was dead. A great light had been extinguished in the Church of God. Mighty by the Word as were the other reformers, he had been more so than they in action; but this very power had been his weakness, and he had fallen under the weight of his own strength. Zwingle was not forty-eight years old when he died. If the might of God always accompanied the might of man, what would he not have done for the Reformation in Switzerland, and even in the empire! But he had wielded an arm that God had forbidden; the helmet had covered his head, and he had grasped the halberd. His more devoted friends were themselves astonished, and exclaimed: "We know not what to say!… a bishop in arms!" The bolt had furrowed the cloud, the blow had reached the reformer, and his body was no more than a handful of dust in the palm of a soldier.

CHAPTER IX

Consternation in Zurich—Violence of the Populace—Grief and Distress—Zwingle is dead!—Funeral Oration—Army of Zurich—Another Reverse on the Goubel—Inactivity of the Bernese—Hopes and Plan of Charles V.—End of the War—Treaty of Peace.

Frightful darkness hung over Zurich during the night that followed the afflicting day of Cappel. It was seven in the evening when the first news of the disaster arrived…. Vague but alarming reports spread at first with the rapidity of lightning. It was known that a terrible blow had been inflicted, but not of what kind; soon a few wounded men, who arrived from the field of battle, cleared up the frightful mystery. “Then,” said Bullinger, whom we shall allow to speak, “there arose suddenly a loud and horrible cry of lamentation and tears, bewailing and groaning.” The consternation was so much the greater because no one had expected such a disaster. “There is not enough for a breakfast,” had said some haughty worldly men; “With one blow we shall be masters of the Five Chalets,” had said another; and an old soldier added with disdainful sneer, “We shall soon have scattered these five dunghills.” The Christian portion, convinced that Zurich was fighting in a good cause had not doubted that victory would be on the side of truth…. Thus their first stupefaction was succeeded by a violent outburst of rage. With blind fury the mob accused all their chiefs, and loaded with insults even those who had defended their country at the price of their blood. An immense crowd—agitated, pale, and bewildered, filled all the streets of the city. They met, they questioned, and replied; they questioned again, and the answer could not be heard, for the shouts of the people interrupted or drowned the voice of the speakers. The councillors who had remained in Zurich repaired in haste to the town-hall. The people, who had already assembled there in crowds, looked on with threatening eyes. Accusations of treason burst from every mouth, and the patricians were pointed out to the general indignation. They must have victims. “Before going to fight against the enemy on the frontiers,” said the mob, “we should defend ourselves against those who are within our walls.” Sorrow and fear excited the minds of all. That savage instinct of the populace, which in great calamities leads them, like a wild beast, to thirst for blood, was violently aroused. A hand from the midst of the crowd points out the council-hall, and a harsh and piercing voice exclaims: “Let us chop off the heads of some of the men who sit in these halls, and let their blood ascend to heaven, to beg for mercy in behalf of those whom they have slain.” But this fury is nothing in comparison with that which broke out against the ministers, against Zwingle, and all those Christians who were the cause (say they) of the ruin of the country. Fortunately the sword of the Waldstettes had withdrawn them from the rage of their fellow-citizens; nevertheless, there still remained some who could pay for the others. Leo Juda, whom Zwingle’s death was about to raise to the head of religious affairs, had scarcely recovered from a serious illness; it was on him they rushed. They threatened, they pursued him; a few worthy citizens carried him off and hid him in their houses. The rage of these madmen was not appeased: they continued shouting that atonement must be made for the slaughter at Cappel, by a still more frightful slaughter within the very walls of the city. But God placed a curb in the mouths of these infuriate beasts of prey, and subdued them. On a sudden, grief succeeded to rage, and sobs choked the utterance of the most furious. All those whose relatives had marched to Cappel, imagined that they were among the number of the victims. Old men, women, and children, went forth in the darkness by the glimmering light of torches, with haggard eyes and hurried steps; and as soon as some wounded man arrived, they questioned him with trembling voice about those whom they were seeking.

Some replied: “I saw him fall close by my side.”—“He was surrounded by so many enemies,” said others, “that there was no chance of safety for him.” At these words the distracted family dropt their torches, and filled the air with shrieks and groans.

Anna Zwingle had heard from her house the repeated discharges of artillery. As wife and mother, she had passed in expectation many long hours of anguish, offered fervent prayers to heaven. At length the most terrible accounts, one after another, burst upon her. In the midst of those whose cries of despair re-echoed along the road to Cappel, was Oswald Myconius, who inquired with anxiety what had become of his friend. Soon he heard one of the unfortunate wretches who had escaped from the massacre, relating to those around him that Zwingle had fallen!…, Zwingle is no more! Zwingle is dead! The cry was repeated: it ran through Zurich with the rapidity of lightning, and at length reached the unhappy widow. Anna fell on her knees. But the loss of her husband was not enough: God had inflicted other blows. Messengers following each other at short intervals announced to her the death of her son Gerold of Knonau, of her brother the bailiff of Reinhard, of her son-in-law Antony Wirz, of John Lutschi the husband of her dear sister, as well as of all her most intimate friends. This woman remained alone—alone with her God; alone with her young children, who, as they saw her tears, wept also, and threw themselves disconsolate into their mother’s arms. On a sudden the alarm-bell rang. The council, distracted by the most contrary opinions, had at last resolved to summon all the citizens towards the Albis. But the sound of the tocsin re-echoing through the darkness, the lamentable stories of the wounded, and the distressful groans of bereaved families, still further increased the tumult. A numerous and disorderly troop of citizens rushed along the road to Cappel. Among them was the Valaisan, Thomas Plater. Here he met with a man that had but one hand,—there were others who supported their wounded and bleeding heads with both hands;—further still was a soldier whose bowels protruded from his body. In front of these unhappy creatures peasants were walking with lighted torches, for the night was very dark. Plater wished to return; but he could not, for sentinels placed on the bridge over the Sihl allowed persons to quit Zurich, but permitted no one to re-enter. On the morrow the news of the disgraceful treatment of Zwingle’s corpse aroused all the anger of Zurich; and his friends, uplifting their tear-bedimmed eyes, exclaimed, “These men may fall upon his body; they may kindle their piles, and brand his innocent life … but he lives—this invincible hero lives in eternity, and leaves behind him an immortal monument of glory that no flames can destroy. God, for whose honour he has laboured, even at the price of his blood, will make his memory eternal.” “And I,” adds Leo Juda, “I, upon whom he has heaped so many blessings, will endeavour, after so many others, to defend his renown and to extol his virtues.” Thus Zurich consecrated to Zwingle a funeral oration of tears and sighs, of gratitude and cries of anguish. Never was there a funeral speech more eloquent!

Zurich rallied her forces. John Steiner had collected on the Albis some scattered fragments of the army for the defence of the pass: they bivouacked around their fires on the summit of the mountain, and all were in disorder. Plater, benumbed with cold (it is himself who gives us the account), had drawn off his boots to warm his feet at the watchfire. On a sudden an alarm was given, the troop was hastily drawn up, and, while Plater was getting ready, a trumpeter, who had escaped from the battle, seized his halberd. Plater took it back, and stationed himself in the ranks; before him stood the trumpeter, without hat or shoes, and armed with a long pole. Such was the army of Zurich. The chief captain Lavater rejoined the army at daybreak. Gradually the allies came

up; 1500 Grisons, under the orders of the captain-general Frey of Zurich, 1500 Thurgovians, 600 Tockenburgers, and other auxiliaries besides, soon formed an army of 12,000 men. All, even children, ran to arms. The council gave orders that these young folks should be sent back to share in the domestic duties with the women.

Another reverse erelong augmented the desolation of the Reformed party. While the troops of Berne, Zurich, Basle, and Bienne, amounting to 24,000 men, were assembling at Bremgarten, the Five Cantons intrenched themselves at Baar, near Zug. But Zwingle was wanting to the Reformed army, and he would have been the only man capable of inspiring them with courage. A gust of wind having thrown down a few firtrees in the forests where the Zurichers were encamped, and caused the death of some of their soldiers, they failed not to see in this the signal of fresh reverses.

Nevertheless, Frey called loudly for battle; but the Bernese commandant Diesbach refused. Upon this the Zurich captain set off in the night of the 23d October at the head of 4000 men of Zurich, Schaffhausen, Basle, and St. Gall; and, while the Bernese were sleeping quietly, he turned the Waldstettes, drove their outposts beyond the Sihl, and took his station on the heights that overlook the Goubel. His imprudent soldiers, believing victory to be certain, proudly waved their banners, and then sunk into a heavy sleep. The Waldstettes had observed all. On the 24th October, at two in the morning, by a bright moonlight, they quitted their camp in profound silence, leaving their fires burning, and wearing white shirts over their dresses that they might recognise one another in the obscurity. Their watchword was “Mary, the mother of God.” They glided stealthily into a pine forest, near which the Reformed troops were encamped. The men stationed at the advanced guard of the Zurichers having perceived the enemy, ran up to the fires to arouse their friends, but they had scarcely reached the third fire before the Waldstettes appeared, uttering a frightful shout. “Har … Har … Har … Har!… Where are these impious heretics?… Har … Har … Har … Har!” The army of the cities at first made a vigorous resistance, and many of the white shirts fell covered with blood; but this did not continue long. The bravest, with the valiant Frey at their head, having bitten the dust, the rout became general, and 800 men were left on the field of battle. In the midst of these afflictions the Bernese remained stubborn and motionless. Francis Kolb, who, notwithstanding his advanced age, had accompanied the Bernese contingent as chaplain, reproached in a sermon the negligence and cowardice of his party. “Your ancestors,” said he, “would have swum across the Rhine, and you—this little stream stops you! They went to battle for a word, and you, even the Gospel cannot move. For us it only remains to commit our cause to God.” Many voices were raised against the imprudent old man, but others took up his defence; and the captain, James May, being as indignant as the aged chaplain at the delays of his fellow-citizens, drew his sword, and thrusting it into the folds of the Bernese banner, pricked the bear that was represented on it, and cried out in the presence of the whole army, “You knave, will you not show your claws?” But the bear remained motionless. The whole of the Reformation was comprised. Scarcely had Ferdinand received intelligence of the death of the arch-heretic Zwingle, and of the defeat at Cappel, than with an exclamation of joy, he forwarded these good news to his brother the Emperor Charles the Fifth, saying, “this is the first of the victories destined to restore the faith.” After the defeat at the Goubel, he wrote again, saying that if the emperor were not so near at hand, he would not hesitate, however weak he might be, to rush forward in person, sword in hand, to terminate so righteous an enterprise. “Remember,” said he, “that you are the first prince in

Christendom, and that you will never have a better opportunity of covering yourself with glory. Assist the cantons with your troops; the German sects will perish, when they are no longer supported by heretical Switzerland."—"The more I reflect," replied Charles, "the more I am pleased with your advice. The imperial dignity with which I am invested, the protection that I owe to Christendom and to public order, in a word, the safety of the house of Austria,—everything appeals to me!"

Already about two thousand Italian soldiers, sent by the pope and commanded by the Genoese De l'sola, had unfolded their seven standards, and united near Zug with the army of the Five Cantons. Auxiliary troops, diplomatic negotiations, and even missionaries to convert the heretics, were not spared. The Bishop of Veroli arrived in Switzerland in order to bring back the Lutherans to the Roman faith by means of his friends and of his money. The Roman politicians hailed the victory at Cappel as the signal of the restoration of the papal authority, not only in Switzerland, but throughout the whole of Christendom.3 At last this presumptuous Reformation was about to be repressed. Instead of the great deliverance of which Zwingle had dreamt, the imperial eagle let loose by the Papacy was about to pounce on all Europe, and strangle it in its talons. The cause of liberty had perished on the Albis. But the hopes of the Papists were vain: the cause of the Gospel, although humbled at this moment, was destined finally to gain a glorious victory. A cloud may hide the sun for a time; but the cloud passes and the sun reappears. Jesus Christ is always the same, and the gates of hell may triumph on the battle-field, but cannot prevail against his Church.

Nevertheless everything seemed advancing towards a grand catastrophe. The Tockenburgers made peace and retired. The Thurgovians followed them; and next the people of Gaster. The evangelical army was thus gradually disbanded. The severity of the season was joined to these dissensions. Continual storms of wind and rain drove the soldiers to their homes.

Upon this the Five Cantons with the undisciplined bands of the Italian general Isola threw themselves on the left bank of the Lake of Zurich. The alarm-bell was rung on every side; the peasants retired in crowds into the city, with their weeping wives, their frightened children, and their cattle that filled the air with sullen lowings. A report too was circulated that the enemy intended laying siege to Zurich. The country-people in alarm declared that if the city refused to make terms, they would treat on their own account. The peace party prevailed in the council; deputies were elected to negotiate. "Above all things preserve the Gospel, and then our honour, as far as may be possible!" Such were their instructions. On the 16th November, the deputies from Zurich arrived in a meadow situated near the frontier, on the banks of the Sihl, in which the representatives of the Five Cantons awaited them. They proceeded to the deliberations. "In the name of the most honourable, holy, and divine Trinity," began the treaty. "Firstly, we the people of Zurich bind ourselves and agree to leave our trusty and well-beloved confederates of the Five Cantons, their well-beloved co-burghers of the Valais, and all their adherents, lay and ecclesiastic, in their true and indubitable christian faith, renouncing all evil intention, wiles, and stratagems. And, on our side, we of the Five Cantons, agree to leave our confederates of Zurich and their allies in possession of their faith."2 At the same time, Rapperschwyl, Gaster, Wesen, Bremgarten, Mellingen, and the common bailiwicks, were abandoned to the Five Cantons.

Zurich had preserved its faith; and that was all. The treaty having been read and approved of, the plenipotentiaries got off their horses, fell upon their knees, and called upon the name of God. Then

the new captain-general of the Zurichers, Escher, a hasty and eloquent old man, rising up, said as he turned towards the Waldstettes: “God be praised that I can again call you my well-beloved confederates!” and approaching them, he shook hands successively with Golder, Hug, Troguer, Rychmuth, Marquart, Zellger, and Thoss, the terrible victors at Cappel. All eyes were filled with tears. Each took with trembling hand the bottle suspended at his side, and offered a draught to one of the chiefs of the opposite party. Shortly after a similar treaty was concluded with Berne.

CHAPTER X

Restoration of Popery at Bremgarten and Rapperschwyl—Priests and Monks everywhere—Sorrow of Œcolampadius—A tranquil Scene—Peaceful death of Œcolampadius—Henry Bullinger at Zurich—Contrition and Exultation—The great lesson—Conclusion. The restoration of Popery immediately commenced in Switzerland, and Rome showed herself everywhere proud, exacting, and ambitious.

After the battle of Cappel, the Romish minority at Glaris had resumed the upperhand. It marched with Schwytz against Wesen and the district of the Gaster. On the eve of the invasion, at midnight, twelve deputies came and threw themselves at the feet of the Schwytzer chiefs, who were satisfied with confiscating the national banners of these two districts, with suppressing their tribunals, annulling their ancient liberties, and condemning some to banishment, and others to pay a heavy fine. Next the mass, the altars, and images were everywhere re-established, and exist until the present day. Such was the pardon of Schwytz!

It was especially on Bremgarten, Mellingen, and the free bailiwicks that the cantons proposed to inflict a terrible vengeance. Berne having recalled its army, Mutschli, the avoyer of Bremgarten, followed Diesbach as far as Arau. In vain did the former remind the Bernese that it was only according to the orders of Berne and Zurich that Bremgarten had blockaded the Five Cantons. “Bend to circumstances,” replied the general. On this the wretched Mutschli, turning away from the pitiless Bernese, exclaimed, “The prophet Jeremiah has well said,—Cursed be he that trusteth in man!” The Swiss and Italian bands entered furiously into these flourishing districts brandishing their weapons, inflicting heavy fines on all the inhabitants, compelling the Gospel ministers to flee, and restoring everywhere at the point of the sword, mass, idols, and altars. On the other side of the lake the misfortune was still greater. On the 18th November, while the Reformed of Rapperschwyl were sleeping peacefully in reliance on the treaties, an army from Schwytz silently passed the wooden bridge nearly 2000 feet long which crosses the lake, and was admitted into the city by the Romish party. On a sudden the Reformed awoke at the loud pealing of the bells, and the tumultuous voices of the Catholics: the greater part quitted the city. One of them, however, by name Michael Wohlgemuth, barricaded his house, placed arquebuses at every window, and repelled the attack. The exasperated enemy brought up some heavy pieces of artillery, besieged this extemporaneous citadel in regular form, and Wohlgemuth was soon taken and put to death in the midst of horrible tortures.

Nowhere had the struggle been more violent than at Soleure; the two parties were drawn up in battle-array on each side of the Aar, and the Romanists had already discharged one ball against the opposite bank, another was about to follow, when the avoyer Wenge, throwing himself on the mouth of the cannon, cried out earnestly: “Fellow-citizens, let there be no bloodshed, or else let me be your first victim!” The astonished multitude dropped their arms; but seventy evangelical

families were obliged to emigrate, and Soleure returned under the papal yoke. The deserted cells of St. Gall, Muri, Einsidlen, Wettingen, Rheinau, St. Catherine, Hermetschwyl, and Guadenthall witnessed the triumphant return of Benedictines, Franciscans, Dominicans, and all the Romish militia; priests and monks, intoxicated with their victory, overran country and town, and prepared for new conquests. The wind of adversity was blowing with fury: the evangelical churches fell one after another, like the pines in the forest whose fall before the battle of the Goubel had raised such gloomy presentiments. The Five Cantons, full of gratitude to the Virgin, made a solemn pilgrimage to her temple at Einsidlen. The chaplains celebrated anew their mysteries in this desolated sanctuary; the abbot, who had no monks, sent a number of youths into Swabia, to be trained up in the rules of the order, and this famous chapel, which Zwingle's voice had converted into a sanctuary for the Word, became for Switzerland, what it has remained until this day, the centre of the power and of the intrigues of the Papacy. But this was not enough. At the very time that these flourishing churches were falling to the ground, the Reform witnessed the extinction of its brightest lights. A. blow from a stone had slain the energetic Zwingle on the field of battle, and the rebound reached the pacific Œcolampadius at Basle, in the midst of a life that was wholly evangelical. The death of his friend, the severe judgments with which they pursued his memory, the terror that had suddenly taken the place of the hopes he had entertained of the future—all these sorrows rent the heart of Œcolampadius, and soon his head and his life inclined sadly to the tomb. "Alas!" cried he, "that Zwingle, whom I have so long regarded as my right arm, has fallen under the blows of cruel enemies!" He recovered, however, sufficient energy to defend the memory of his brother. "It was not," said he, "on the heads of the most guilty that the wrath of Pilate and the tower of Siloam fell. The judgment began in the house of God; our presumption has been punished; let our trust be placed now on the Lord alone, and this will be an inestimable gain." Œcolampadius declined the call of Zurich to take the place of Zwingle. "My post is here," said he, as he looked upon Basle.

He was not destined to hold it long. Illness fell upon him in addition to so many afflictions; the plague was in the city, a violent inflammation attacked him, and erelong a tranquil scene succeeded the tumult of Cappel. A peaceful death calmed the agitated hearts of the faithful, and replaced by sweet and heavenly emotions the terror and distress with which a horrible disaster had filled them. On hearing of the danger of Œcolampadius, all the city was plunged into mourning; a crowd of men of every age and of every rank rushed to his house. "Rejoice," said the reformer with a meek look, "I am going to a place of everlasting joy." He then commemorated the death of our Lord, with his wife, his relations, and domestics, who shed floods of tears. "This supper," said the dying man, "is a sign of my real faith in Jesus Christ my Redeemer." On the morrow he sent for his colleagues: "My brethren," said he, "the Lord is there; he calls me away. Oh! my brethren, what a black cloud is appearing on the horizon—what a tempest is approaching! Be steadfast: the Lord will preserve his own." He then held out his hand, and all these faithful ministers clasped it with veneration. On the 23d November, he called his children around him, the eldest of whom was barely three years old. "Eusebius, Irene, Alethea, said he to them, as he took their little hands, "love God who is your Father." Their mother having promised for them, the children retired with the blessing of the dying servant of the Lord. The night that followed this scene was his last. All the pastors were around his bed: "What is the news?" asked Œcolampadius of a friend who came in. "Nothing" was the reply. "Well," said the faithful disciple of Jesus, "I will tell you something new." His friends awaited in astonishment. "In a short time I shall be with the Lord Jesus." One of his friends now asking him if he was incommoded by the light, he replied, putting

his hand on his heart: “There is light enough here.” The day began to break; he repeated in a feeble voice the 51st Psalm: Have mercy upon me, O Lord, according to thy loving kindness. Then remaining silent, as if he wished to recover strength, he said, “Lord Jesus, help me!” The ten pastors fell on their knees around his bed with uplifted hands; at this moment the sun rose, and darted his earliest rays on a scene of sorrow so great and so afflicting with which the Church of God was again stricken. The death of this servant of the Lord was like his life, full of light and peace. Œcolampadius was in an especial degree the Christian spiritualist and biblical divine. The importance he attached to the study of the books of the Old Testament imprinted one of its most essential characters on the reformed theology. Considered as a man of action, his moderation and meekness placed him in the second rank. Had he been able to exert more of this peaceful spirit over Zwingle, great misfortunes might perhaps have been avoided. But like all men of meek disposition, his peaceful character yielded too much to the energetic will of the minister of Zurich; and he thus renounced, in part at least, the legitimate influence that he might have exercised over the Reformer of Switzerland and of the Church.

Zwingle and Œcolampadius had fallen. There was a great void and great sorrow in the Church of Christ. Dissensions vanished before these two graves, and nothing could be seen but tears. Luther himself was moved. On receiving the news of these two deaths, he called to mind the days he had passed with Zwingle and Œcolampadius at Marburg; and the blow inflicted on him by their sudden decease was such, that many years after he said to Bullinger: “Their death filled me with such intense sorrow, that I was near dying myself.” The youthful Henry Bullinger, threatened with the scaffold, had been compelled to flee from Bremgarten, his native town, with his aged father, his colleagues, and sixty of the principal inhabitants, who abandoned their houses to be pillaged by the Waldstettes. Three days after this, he was preaching in the cathedral of Zurich: “No! Zwingle is not dead!” exclaimed Myconius; “or, like the phœnix, he has risen again from his ashes.” Bullinger was unanimously chosen to succeed the great Reformer. He adopted Zwingle’s orphan children, Wilhelm, Regula, and Ulrich, and endeavoured to supply the place of their father. This young man, scarcely twenty-eight years of age, and who presided forty years with wisdom and blessing over this church, was everywhere greeted as the apostle of Switzerland.3

Yet as the sea roars long after the violent tempest has subsided, so the people of Zurich were still in commotion. Many were agitated from on high. They came to themselves; they acknowledged their error; the weapons of their warfare had been carnal; they were now of a contrite and humble spirit; they arose and went to their Father and confessed their sin. In those days there was great mourning in Zurich. Some, however, stood up with pride, protested by the mouth of their ministers against the work of the diplomatists, and boldly stigmatized the shameful compact. “If the shepherds sleep, the dogs must bark,” exclaimed Leo Juda in the cathedral of Zurich. “My duty is to give warning of the evil they are about to do to my Master’s house.”

Nothing could equal the sorrow of this city, except the exultation of the Waldstettes. The noise of drums and fifes, the firing of guns, the ringing of bells, had long resounded on the banks of their lakes, and even to their highest valleys. Now the noise was less, but the effect greater. The Five Cantons, in close alliance with Friburg and Soleure, formed a perpetual league for the defence of the ancient Christian faith with the Bishop of Sion and the tithings of the Valais; and henceforward carried their measures in the federal affairs with boldness. But a deep conviction was formed at that period in the hearts of the Swiss Reformed. “Faith comes from God,” said they; “its success

does not depend on the life or death of a man. Let our adversaries boast of our ruin, we will boast only in the Cross."—"God reigns," wrote Berne to Zurich, "and he will not permit the bark to founder." This conviction was of more avail than the victory of Cappel.

Thus the Reformation, that had deviated from the right path, was driven back by the very violence of the assault into its primitive course, having no other power than the Word of God. An inconceivable infatuation had taken possession of the friends of the Bible. They had forgotten that our warfare is not carnal; and had appealed to arms and to battle. But God reigns; he punishes the churches and the people who turn aside from his ways. We have taken a few stones, and piled them as a monument on the battle-field of Cappel, in order to remind the Church of the great lesson which this terrible catastrophe teaches. As we bid farewell to this sad scene, we inscribe on these monumental stones, on the one side, these words from God's Book: "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen and stand upright." And on the other, this declaration of the Head of the Church: "My kingdom is not of this world." If, from the ashes of the martyrs at Cappel, a voice could he heard, it would be in these very words of the Bible that these noble confessors would address, after three centuries, the Christians of our days. That the Church has no other king than Jesus Christ; that she ought not to meddle with the policy of the world, derive from it her inspiration, and call for its swords, its prisons, its treasures; that she will conquer by the spiritual powers which God has deposited in her bosom, and, above all, by the reign of her adorable Head; that she must not expect upon earth thrones and mortal triumphs; but that her march resembles that of her King, from the manger to the cross, and from the cross to the crown:—such is the lesson to be read on the blood-stained page that has crept into our simple and evangelical narrative. But if God teaches his people great lessons, he also gives them great deliverances. The bolt had fallen from heaven. The Reformation seemed to be little better than a lifeless body cumbering the ground, and whose dissevered limbs were about to be reduced to ashes. But God raises up the dead. New and more glorious destinies were awaiting the Gospel of Jesus Christ at the foot of the Alps. At the south-west extremity of Switzerland, in a great valley which the white giant of the mountains points out from afar; on the banks of the Leman lake, at the spot where the Rhone, clear and blue as the sky above it, rolls its majestic waters; on a small hill that the foot of Cæsar had once trod, and on which the steps of another conqueror, of a Gaul, of a Pieardine, were destined erelong to leave their ineffaceable and glorious traces, stood an ancient city, as yet covered with the dense shadows of Popery; but which God was about to raise to be a beacon to the Church, and a bulwark to Christendom.

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VOLUME 5 PREFACE TO VOLUME FIFTH In the four previous volumes the author has described the origin and essential development of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century on the Continent; he has now to relate the history of the Reformation in England. The notes will direct the reader to the principal sources whence the author has derived his information. Most of them are well known; others, however, had not been previously explored, among which are the later volumes of the State Papers published by order of Government, by a Commission of which the illustrious Sir Robert Peel was the first president. Three successive Home Secretaries, Sir James Graham, Sir George Grey, and the Honourable Mr. S. H. Walpole, have presented the author with copies of the several volumes of this great and important collection: in some instances they were communicated to him as soon as printed, which was the case in particular with the seventh volume, of which he has made much use. He takes this opportunity of expressing his sincere gratitude to these noble friends of literature. The History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century was received with cordiality on the Continent; but it has had a far greater number of readers in the British dominions and in the United States. The author looks upon the relations which this work has established betewen him and many distant Christians, as a precious reward for his labours. Will the present volume be received in those countries as favourably as the others? A foreigner relating to the Anglo-Saxon race the history of their Reformation is at a certain disadvantage; and although the author would rather have referred his readers to works, whether of old or recent date, by native writers, all of them more competent for the task than himself, he did not think it becoming him to shrink from the undertaking. At no period is it possible to omit the history of the Reformation in England from a general history of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century; at the present crisis it is less possible than ever. In the first place, the English Reformation has been, and still is, calumniated by writers of different parties, who look upon it as nothing more than an external political transformation, and who thus ignore its spiritual nature. History has taught the author that it was essentially a religious transformation, and that we must seek for it in men of faith, and not, as is usually done, solely in the caprices of the prince, the ambition of the nobility, and the servility of the prelates. A faithful recital of this great renovation will perhaps show us that beyond and without the measures of Henry VIII there was something—everything, so to speak—for therein was the essence of the Reformation, that which makes it a divine and imperishable work. A second motive forced the author to acknowledge the necessity of a true History of the English Reformation. An active party in the Episcopalian Church is reviving with zeal, perseverance, and talent, the principles of Roman-catholicism, and striving to impose them on the Reformed Church of England, and incessantly attacking the foundations of evangelical Christianity. A number of young men in the universities, seduced by that deceitful mirage which some of their teachers have placed before their eyes, are launching out into clerical and superstitious theories, and running the risk of falling, sooner or later, as so many have done already, into the ever-yawning gulf of Popery. We must therefore call to mind the reforming principles which were proclaimed from the very commencement of this great transformation. The new position which the Romish court is taking in England, and its insolent aggressions, are a third

consideration which seems to demonstrate to us the present importance of this history. It is good to call to mind that the primitive Christianity of Great Britain perseveringly repelled the invasion of the popedom, and that after the definitive victory of this foreign power, the noblest voices among kings, lords, priests, and people, boldly protested against it. It is good to show that, while the word of God recovered its inalienable rights in Britain in the sixteenth century, the popedom, agitated by wholly political interests, broke of itself the chain with which it had so long bound England.—We shall see in this volume the English government fortifying itself, for instance under Edward III, against the invasions of Rome. It has been pretended in our days, and by others besides ultra-montanists, that the papacy is a purely spiritual power, and ought to be opposed by spiritual arms only. If the first part of this argument were true, no one would be readier than ourselves to adopt the conclusion. God forbid that any protestant state should ever refuse the completest liberty to the Roman-catholic doctrines. We certainly wish for reciprocity; we desire that ultra-montanism should no longer throw into prison the humble believers who seek consolation for themselves, and for their friends, in Holy Scripture. But though a deplorable fanaticism should still continue to imitate in the nineteenth century the mournful tragedies of the Middle Ages, we should persist in demanding the fullest liberty, not only of conscience, but of worship, for Roman-catholics in protestant states. We should ask it in the name of justice, whose immutable laws the injustice of our adversaries can never make us forget; we should ask it on behalf of the final triumph of truth; for if our demands proved unavailing, perhaps with God's help it might be otherwise with our example. When two worlds meet face to face, in one of which light abounds, and in the other darkness, it is the darkness that should disappear before the light, and not the light fly from before the darkness. We might go even farther than this: far from constraining the English catholics in anything, we would rather desire to help them to be freer than they are, and to aid them in recovering the rights of which the Roman bishops robbed them in tunes posterior to the establishment of the papacy; for instance, the election of bishops and pastors, which belongs to the clergy and the people. Indeed, Cyprian, writing to a bishop of Rome (Cornelius), demanded three elements to secure the legitimacy of episcopal election: "The call of God, the voice of the people, and the consent of the co-bishops." And the council of Rome, in 1080, said: "Let the clergy and the people, with the consent of the apostolic see or of their metropolitan, elect their bishop." In our days,—days distinguished by great liberty,—shall the church be less free than it was in the Middle Ages? But if we do not fear to claim for Roman-catholics the rights of the church of the first ages, and a greater liberty than what they now possess, even in the very seat of the popedom, are we therefore to say that the state, whether under Edward III or in later times, should oppose no barrier against Romish aggressions? If it is the very life and soul of popery to pass beyond the boundaries of religion, and enter into the domain of policy, why should it be thought strange for the state to defend itself, when attacked upon its own ground? Can the state have no need of precautions against a power which has pretended to be paramount over England, which gave its crown to a French monarch, which obtained an oath of vassalage from an English king, and which lays down as its first dogma its infallibility and immutability? And it was not only under Edward III and throughout the Middle Ages that Rome encroached on royalty; it has happened in modern times also. M. Mignet has recently brought to light some remarkable facts. On the 28th of June 1570, a letter from Saint Pius V was presented to the catholic king Philip II by an agent just arrived from Rome. "Our dear son, Robert Ridolfi," says the writer, "will explain (God willing) to your certain matters which concern not a little the honour of Almighty God.… We conjure your majesty

to take into your serious consideration the matter which he will lay before you, and to furnish him with all the means your majesty may judge most proper for its execution." The pope's "dear son," accordingly, explained to the duke of Feria, who was commissioned by Philip to receive his communication, "that it was proposed to kill Queen Elizabeth; that the attempt would not be made in London, because it was the seat of heresy, but during one of her journeys; and that a certain James G——would undertake it." The same day the council met and deliberated on Elizabeth's assassination. Philip declared his willingness to undertake the foul deed recommended by his holiness; but as it would be an expensive business, his minister hinted to the nuncio that the pope ought to furnish the money. This horrible but instructive recital will be found with all its details in the Histoire de Marie Stuart, by M. Mignet, vol. ii, p. 159, etc. It is true that these things took place in the sixteenth century; but the Romish church has canonized the priestly murderer,—an honour conferred on a very small number of popes,—and the canonization took place in the eighteenth century. This is no very distant date. And these theories, so calculated to trouble nations, are still to be met with in the nineteenth century. At this very moment there are writers asserting principles under cover of which the pope may interfere in affairs of state. The kings of Europe, terrified by the deplorable outbreaks of 1848, appear almost everywhere ready to support the court of Rome by arms; and ultra-montanism is taking advantage of this to proclaim once more, "that the popedom is above the monarchy; that it is the duty of the inferior (the king) to obey the superior; that it is the duty of the superior (the pope) to depose the sovereigns who abuse their power, and to condemn the subjects who resist it; and, finally, that this public law of Christian Europe, abolished by the ambition of sovereigns or the insubordination of peoples, should be revived." Such are the theories now professed not only by priests but by influential laymen. To this opinion belong, at the present hour, all the zeal and enthusiasm of Romanism, and this alone we are bound to acknowledge is consistent with the principles of popery. And accordingly it is to be feared that this party will triumph, unless we oppose it with the united forces of the human understanding, of religious and political liberty, and above all of the word of God. The most distinguished organ of public opinion in France, alarmed by the progress of these ultramontane doctrines, said not long ago of this party: "In its eyes there exists but one real authority in the world, that of the pope. All questions, not only religious but moral and political, are amenable to one tribunal, supreme and infalible, the pope's. The pope has the right to absolve subjects of their oath of fidelity; subjects have the right to take up arms against their prince when he rebels against the decisions of the holy see. This is the social and political theory of the Middle Ages."2

Since the popedom asserts claims both spiritual and temporal, the church and the state ought to resist it, each in his own sphere, and with its peculiar arms: the church (by which I mean the believers), solely with Holy Scripture; the state with such institutions as are calculated to secure its independence. What! the church is bound to defend what belongs to the church, and the state is not to defend what belongs to the state? If a band of robbers should endeavour to plunder two houses, would it be just and charitable for one neighbour to say to the other, "I must defend my house, but you must let yours be stripped?" If the pope desires to have the immaculate conception of the Virgin, or any other religious doctrine, preached, let the fullest liberty be granted him, and let him build as many churches as he pleases for that purpose: we claim this in the plainest language. But if the pope, like Saint Pius, desires to kill the queen of England, or at least (for no pope in our days, were he even Saint enough to be canonized, would conceive such an idea), if the pope desires to infringe in any way on the rights of the state, then let the state resist him with tried

wisdom and unskaken firmness. Let us beware of an ultra-spiritualism which forgets the lessons of history, and overlooks the rights of kings and peoples. When it is found among theologians, it is an error; in statesmen, it is a danger.

Finally, and this consideration revives our hopes, there is a fourth motive which gives at this time a particular importance to the history we are about to relate. The Reformation is now entering upon a new phasis. The movement of the sixteenth century had died away during the seventeenth and eighteenth, and it was often to churches which had lost every spark of life that the historian had then to recount the narrative of this great revival. This is the case no longer. After three centuries, a new and a greater movement is succeeding that which we describe in these volumes. The principles of the religious regeneration, which God accomplished three hundred years ago, are now carried to the end of the world with the greatest energy. The task of the sixteenth century lives again in the nineteeth, but more emancipated from the temporal power, more spiritual, more general; and it is the Anglo-Saxon race that God chiefly employs for the accomplishment of this universal work. The English Reformation acquires therefore, in our days, a special importance. If the Reformation of Germany was the foundation of the building, that of England was its crowning stone. The work begun in the age of the apostles, and renewed in the times of the reformers, should be resumed in our days with a holy enthusiasm; and the work is very simple and very beautiful, for it consists in establishing the throne of Jesus Christ in the church and on earth.

Evangelical faith does not place on the throne of the church either human reason or religious conscientiousness, as some would have it; but it sets thereon Jesus Christ, who is both the knowledge taught and the doctor who teaches it; who explains his word by the word, and by the light of his Holy Spirit; who by it bears witness to the truth, that is to say, to his redemption, and teaches the essential laws which should regulate the inner life of his disciples. Evangelical faith appeals to the understanding, to the heart, and to the will of every Christian, only to impose on them the duty to submit to the divine authority of Christ, to listen, believe, love, comprehend, and act, as God requires.

Evangelical faith does not place on the throne of the church the civil power, or the secular magistrate; but it sets thereon Jesus Christ, who has said, I am King; who imparts to his subjects the principle of life; who establishes his kingdom here on earth, and preserves and develops it; and who, directing all mortal events, is now making the progressive conquest of the world, until he shall exercise in person his divine authority in the kingdom of his glory.

Finally, evangelical faith does not place on the throne of the church priests, councils, doctors, or their traditions,—or that vice-God (veri Dei vicem gerit in terris, as the Romish gloss has it), that infallible pontiff, who, reviving the errors of the pagans, ascribes salvation to the forms of worship and to the meritorious works of men. It sets thereon Jesus Christ, the great high-priest of his people, the God-man, who, by an act of his free love, bore in our stead, in his atoning sacrifice, the penalty of sin;—who has taken away the curse from our heads, and thus become the creator of a new race.

Such is the essential work of that Christianity which the apostolic age transmitted to the reformers, and which it now transmits to the Christians of the nineteenth century.

While the thoughts of great numbers are led astray in the midst of ceremonies, priests, human lucubrations, pontifical fables, and philosophic reveries, and are driven to and fro in the dust of this world, evangelical faith rises even to heaven, and falls prostrate before Him who sitteth on the throne. The Reformation is Jesus Christ.

“Lord, to whom shall we go, if not unto thee?” Let others follow the devices of their imaginations, or prostrate themselves before traditional superstitions, or kiss the feet of a sinful man.… O, King of glory, we desire but Thee alone!

Eaux-Vives, Geneva, March 1853.

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THOSE heavenly powers which had lain dormant in the Church since the first ages of Christianity, awoke from their slumber in the sixteenth century, and this awakening called the modern times into existence. The Church was created anew, and from that regeneration have flowed the great developments of literature and science, of morality, liberty, and industry, which at present characterize the nations of Christendom. None of these things would have existed without the Reformation. Whenever society enters upon a new era, it requires the baptism of faith. In the sixteenth century God gave to man this consecration from on high by leading him back from mere outward profession and the mechanism of works to an inward and lively faith. This transformation was not effected without struggles—struggles which presented at first a remarkable unity. On the day of battle one and the same feeling animated every bosom: after the victory they became divided. Unity of faith indeed remained, but the difference of nationalities brought into the Church a diversity of forms. Of this we are about to witness a striking example. The Reformation, which had begun its triumphal march in Germany, Switzerland, France, and several other parts of the continent, was destined to receive new strength by the conversion of a celebrated country, long known as the Isle of Saints. This island was to add its banner to the trophy of Protestantism, but that banner preserved its distinctive colours. When England became reformed, a puissant individualism joined its might to the great unity.

If we search for the characteristics of the British Reformation, we shall find that, beyond any other, they were social, national, and truly human. There is no people among whom the Reformation has produced to the same degree that morality and order, that liberty, public spirit, and activity, which are the very essence of a nation’s greatness. Just as the papacy has degraded the Spanish peninsula, has the Gospel exalted the British islands. Hence the study upon which we are entering possesses an interest peculiar to itself. In order that this study may be useful, it should have a character of universality. To confine the history of a people within the space of a few years, or even of a century, would deprive that history of both truth and life. We might indeed have traditions, chronicles, and legends, but there would be no history. History is a wonderful organization, no part of which can be retrenched. To understand the present, we must know the past. Society, like man himself, has its infancy, youth, maturity, and old age. Ancient or Pagan society, which had spent its infancy in the East in the midst of the antihellenic races, had its youth in the animated epoch of the Greeks, its manhood in the stern period of Roman greatness, and its old age under the decline of the empire. Modern society has passed through analogous stages: at the time of the Reformation it attained that of the full-grown man. We shall now proceed to trace the destinies of the Church in England, from the earliest times of Christianity. These long and distant preparations are one of the distinctive characteristics of its reformation.

Before the sixteenth century this Church had passed through two great phases. The first was that of its formation—the second that of its corruption. In its formation it was oriento-apostolical. In its corruption it was successively national-papistical and royal-papistical.

After these two degrees of decline came the last and great phasis of the Reformation. In the second century of the Christian era vessels were frequently sailing to the savage shores of Britain from the ports of Asia Minor, Greece, Alexandria, or the Greek colonies in Gaul. Among the merchants busied in calculating the profits they could make upon the produce of the East with which their ships were laden, would occasionally be found a few pious men from the banks of the Meander or the Hermus, conversing peacefully with one another about the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, and rejoicing at the prospect of saving by these glad tidings the pagans towards whom they were steering. It would appear that some British prisoners of war, having learnt to know Christ during their captivity, bore also to their fellow-countrymen the knowledge of this Saviour. It may be, too, that some Christian soldiers, the Corneliuses of those imperial armies whose advanced posts reached the southern parts of Scotland, desirous of more lasting conquests, may have read to the people whom they had subdued, the writings of Matthew, John, and Paul. It is of little consequence to know whether one of these first converts was, according to tradition, a prince named Lucius. It is certain that the tidings of the Son of man, crucified and raised again, under Tiberius, spread through these islands more rapidly than the dominion of the emperors, and that before the end of the second century many churches worshipped Christ beyond the walls of Adrian; in those mountains, forests, and western isles, which for centuries past the Druids had filled with their mysteries and their sacrifices, and on which even the Roman eagles had never stooped. These churches were formed after the eastern type: the Britons would have refused to receive the type of that Rome whose yoke they detested. The first thing which the British Christians received from the capital of the empire was persecution. But Diocletian, by striking the disciples of Jesus Christ in Britain only increased their number. Many Christians from the southern part of the island took refuge in Scotland, where they raised their humble roofs, and under the name of Culdees prayed for the salvation of their protectors. When the surrounding pagans saw the holiness of these men of God, they abandoned in great numbers their sacred oaks, their mysterious caverns, and their bloodstained altars, and obeyed the gentle voice of the Gospel. After the death of these pious refugees, their cells were transformed into houses of prayer. In 305, Constantius Chlorus succeeded to the throne of the Cæsars, and put an end to the persecution. The Christianity which was brought to these people by merchants, soldiers, or missionaries, although not the ecclesiastical catholicism already creeping into life in the Roman empire, was not the primitive evangelism of the apostles. The East and the South could only give to the North of what they possessed. The mere human period had succeeded to the creative and miraculous period of the church. After the extraordinary manifestations of the Holy Ghost, which had produced the apostolic age, the church had been left to the inward power of the word and of the Comforter. But Christians did not generally comprehend the spiritual life to which they were called. God had been pleased to give them a divine religion; and this they gradually assimilated more and more to the religions of human origin. Instead of saying, in the spirit of the gospel, the word of God first, and through it the doctrine and the life—the doctrine and the life, and through them the forms; they said, forms first, and salvation by these forms. They ascribed to bishops a power which belongs only to Holy Scripture. Instead of ministers of the word, they desired to have priests; instead of an inward sacrifice, a sacrifice offered on the altar; and costly

temples instead of a living church. They began to seek in men, in ceremonies, and in holy places, what they could find only in the Word and in the lively faith of the children of God. In this manner evangelical religion gave place to catholicism, and by gradual degeneration in after-years catholicism gave birth to popery. This grievous transformation took place more particularly in the East, in Africa, and in Italy. Britain was at first comparatively exempt. At the very time that the savags Picts and Scots, rushing from their heathen homes, were devastating the country, spreading terror on all sides, and reducing the people to slavery, we discover here and there some humble Christian receiving salvation not by a clerical sacramentalism, but by the work of the Holy Ghost in the heart. At the end of the fourth century we meet with an illustrious example of such conversions. On the picturesque banks of the Clyde, not far from Glasgow, in the Christian village of Bonavern, now Kilpatrick, a little boy, of tender heart, lively temperament, and indefatigable activity, passed the earlier days of his life. He was born about the year 372 a. d., of a British family, and was named Succat. His father, Calpurnius, deacon of the church of Bonavern, a simple-hearted pious man, and his mother, Conchessa, sister to the celebrated Martin, archbishop of Tours,2 and a woman superior to the majority of her sex, had endeavoured to instil into his heart the doctrines of Christianity; but Succat did not understand them. He was fond of pleasure, and delighted to be the leader of his youthful companions. In the midst of his frivolities, he committed a serious fault. His parents having then quitted Scotland and settled in Armorica (Bretagne,) a terrible calamity befell them. One day as Succat was playing near the seashore with two of his sisters, some Irish pirates, commanded by O'Neal, carried them all three off to their boats, and sold them in Ireland to the petty chieftain of some pagan clan. Succat was sent into the fields to keep swine. It was while alone in these solitary pastures, without priest and without temple, that the young slave called to mind the Divine lessons which his pious mother had so often read to him. The fault which he had committed pressed heavily night and day upon his soul: he groaned in heart, and wept. He turned repenting towards that meek Saviour of whom. Conchessa had so often spoken; he fell at His knees in that heathen land; and imagined he felt the arms of a father uplifting the prodigal son. Succat was then born from on high, but by an agent so spiritual, so internal, that he knew not "Whence it cometh or whither it goeth." The Gospel was written with the finger of God on the tablets of his heart. "I was sixteen years old," said he, "and knew not the true God; but in that strange land the Lord opened my unbelieving eyes, and, although late, I called my sins to mind, and was converted with my whole heart to the Lord my God, who regarded my low estate, had pity on my youth and ignorance, and consoled me as a father consoles his children."

Such words as these from the lips of a swineherd in the green pastures of Ireland set clearly before us the Christianity which in the fourth and fifth centuries converted many souls in the British isles. In after-years, Rome established the dominion of the priest and salvation by forms, independently of the dispositions of the heart; but the primitive religion of these celebrated islands was that living Christianity whose substance is the grace of Jesus Christ, and whose power is the grace of the Holy Ghost. The herdsman from the banks of the Clyde was then undergoing those experiences which so many evangelical Christians in those countries have subsequently undergone. "The love of God increased more and more in me," said he, "with faith and the fear of His name. The Spirit urged me to such a degree that I poured forth as many as a hundred prayers in one day. And even during the night, in the forests and on the mountains where I kept my flock, the rain, and snow, and frost, and sufferings which I endured, excited me to seek after God. At that time, I felt not the indifference which now I feel: the Spirit fermented in my heart." Evangelical faith

even then existed in the British islands in the person of this slave, and of some few Christians born again, like him, from on high.

Twice a captive, and twice rescued, Succat, after returning to his family, felt an irresistible appeal in his heart. It was his duty to carry the Gospel to those Irish pagans among whom he had found Jesus Christ. His parents and his friends endeavoured in vain to detain him; the same ardent desire pursued him in his dreams. During the silent watches of the night he fancied he heard voices calling to him from the dark forests of Erin: “Come, holy child, and walk once more among us.” He awoke in tears, his breast filled with the keenest emotion. He tore himself from the arms of his parents, and rushed forth—not as heretofore with his playfellows, when he would climb the summit of some lofty hill—but with a heart full of charity in Christ. He departed: “it was not done of my own strength,” said he; “it was God who overcame all.”

Succat, afterwards known as Saint Patrick, and to which name, as to that of St. Peter and other servants of God, many superstitious have been attached, returned to Ireland, but without visiting Rome, as an historian of the twelfth century has asserted. Ever active, prompt, and ingenious, he collected the pagan tribes in the fields by beat of drum, and then narrated to them in their own tongue the history of the Son of God. Erelong his simple recitals exercised a divine power over their rude hearts, and many souls were converted, not by external sacraments or by the worship of images, but by the preaching of the word of God. The son of a chieftain, whom Patrick calls Benignus, learnt from him to proclaim the Gospel, and was destined to succeed him. The court bard, Dubrach Mac Valubair, no longer sang druidical hymns, but canticles addressed to Jesus Christ. Patrick was not entirely free from the errors of the time; perhaps he believed in pious miracles; but generally speaking we meet with nothing but the Gospel in the earlier days of the British Church. The time no doubt will come when Ireland will again feel the power of the Holy Ghost, which had once converted it by the ministrations of a Scotchman.

Shortly before the evangelization of Patrick in Ireland, a Briton named Pelagius, having visited Italy, Africa, and Palestine, began to teach a strange doctrine. Desirous of making head against the moral indifference into which most of the Christians in those countries had fallen, and which would appear to have been in strong contrast with the British austerity, he denied the doctrine of original sin, extolled free-will, and maintained that, if man made use of all the powers of his nature, he would attain perfection. We do not find that he taught these opinions in his own country; but from the continent, where he disseminated them, they soon reached Britain. The British churches refused to receive this “perverse doctrine,” their historian tells us, “and to blaspheme the grace of Jesus Christ.” They do not appear to have held the strict doctrine of Saint Augustine: they believed indeed that man has need of an inward change, and that this the divine power alone can effect; but like the churches of Asia, from which they had sprung, they seem to have conceded something to our natural strength in the work of conversion; and Pelagius, with a good intention it would appear, went still further. However that may be, these churches, strangers to the controversy, were unacquainted with all its subtleties. Two Gaulish bishops, Germanus and Lupus, came to their aid, and those who had been perverted returned into the way of truth.

Shortly after this, events of great importance took place in Great Britain, and the light of faith disappeared in profound night. In 449, Hengist and Horsa, with their Saxon followers, being invited by the wretched inhabitants to aid them against the cruel ravages of the Picts and Scots, soon

turned their swords against the people they had come to assist. Christianity was driven back with the Britons into the mountains of Wales and the wild moors of Northumberland and Cornwall. Many British families remained in the midst of the conquerors, but without exercising any religious influence over them. While the conquering races, settled at Paris, Ravenna, or Toledo, gradually laid aside their paganism and savage manners, the barbarous customs of the Saxons prevailed unmoderated throughout the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, and in every quarter temples to Thor rose above the churches in which Jesus Christ had been worshipped. Gaul and the south of Europe, which still exhibited to the eyes of the barbarians the last vestiges of Roman grandeur, alone had the power of inspiring some degree of respect in the formidable Germans, and of transforming their faith. From this period, the Greeks and Latins, and even the converted Goths, looked at this island with unutterable dread. The soil, said they, is covered with serpents; the air is thick with deadly exhalations: the souls of the departed are transported thither at midnight from the shores of Gaul. Ferrymen, sons of Erebus and Night, admit these invisible shades into their boats, and listen, with a shudder, to their mysterious whisperings. England, whence light was one day to be shed over the habitable globe, was then the trysting-place of the dead. And yet the Christianity of the British isles was not to be annihilated by these barbarian invasions; it possessed a strength which rendered it capable of energetic resistance. In one of the churches formed by Succat's preaching, there arose about two centuries after him a pious man named Columba, son of Feidlimyd, the son of Fergus. Valuing the cross of Christ more highly than the royal blood that flowed in his veins, he resolved to devote himself to the King of heaven. Shall he not repay to the country of Succat what Succat had imparted to his? I will go," said he; "and preach the word of God in Scotland;" for the word of God and not an ecclesiastical hierarchism was then the converting agency. The grandson of Fergus communicated the zeal which animated him to the hearts of several fellow-christians. They repaired to the seashore, and cutting down the pliant branches of the osier, constructed a frail bark, which they covered with the skins of beasts. In this rude boat they embarked in the year 565, and after being driven to and fro on the ocean, the little missionary band reached the waters of the Hebrides. Columba landed near the barren rocks of Mull, to the south of the basaltic caverns of Staffa, and fixed his abode in a small island, afterwards known as Iona or Icolmkill, "the island of Columba's cell." Some Christian Culdees, driven out by the dissensions of the Picts and Scots, had already found a refuge in the same retired spot. Here the missionaries erected a chapel, whose walls, it is said, still exist among the stately ruins of a later age. Some authors have placed Columba in the first rank after the apostles.2 True, we do not find in him the faith of a Paul or a John; but he lived as in the sight of God; he mortified the flesh, and slept on the ground with a stone for his pillow. Amid this solemn scenery, and among customs so rude, the form of the missionary, illumined by a light from heaven, shone with love, and manifested the joy and serenity of his heart. Although subject to the same passions as ourselves, he wrestled against his weakness, and would not have one moment lost for the glory of God. He prayed and read, he wrote and taught, he preached and redeemed the time. With indefatigable activity he went from house to house, and from kingdom to kingdom. The king of the Picts was converted, as were also many of his people; precious manuscripts were conveyed to Iona; a school of theology was founded there, in which the word was studied; and many received through faith the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. Erelong a missionary spirit breathed over this ocean rock, so justly named "the light of the western world." The Judaical sacerdotalism which was beginning to extend in the Christian Church found no support in Iona. They had forms,

but not to them did they look for life. It was the Holy Ghost, Columba maintained, that made a servant of God. When the youth of Caledonia assembled around the elders on these savage shores, or in their humble chapel, these ministers of the Lord would say to them: “The Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith. Throw aside all merit of works, and look for salvation to the grace of God alone.2 Beware of a religion which consists of outward observances: it is better to keep your heart pure before God than to abstain from meats. One alone is your head, Jesus Christ. Bishops and presbyters are equal;4 they should be the husbands of one wife, and have their children in subjection.” The sages of Iona knew nothing of transubstantiation or of the withdrawal of the cup in the Lord’s Supper, or of auricular confession, or of prayers to the dead, or tapers, or incense; they celebrated Easter on a different day from Rome; synodal assemblies regulated the affairs of the church, and the papal supremacy was unknown.7 The sun of the Gospel shone upon these wild and distant shores. In after-years, it was the privilege of Great Britain to recover with a purer lustre the same sun and the same Gospel.

Iona, governed by a simple elder, had become a missionary college. It has been sometimes called a monastery, but the dwelling of the grandson of Fergus in nowise resembled the popish convents. When its youthful inmates desired to spread the knowledge of Jesus Christ, they thought not of going elsewhere in quest of episcopal ordination. Kneeling in the chapel of Icolmkill, they were set apart by the laying on of the hands of the elders: they were called bishops, but remained obedient to the elder or presbyter of Iona. They even consecrated other bishops: thus Finan laid hands upon Diuma, bishop of Middlesex. These British Christians attached great importance to the ministry; but not to one form in preference to another. Presbytery and episcopacy were with them, as with the primitive church, almost identical. Somewhat later we find that neither the venerable Bede, nor Lanfranc, nor Anselm—the two last were archbishops of Canterbury—made any objection to the ordination of British bishops by plain presbyters.2 The religious and moral element that belongs to Christianity still predominated; the sacerdotal element, which characterizes human religions, whether among the Brahmins or elsewhere, was beginning to show itself, but in great Britain at least it held a very subordinate station. Christianity was still a religion and not a caste. They did not require of the servant of God, as a warrant of his capacity, a long list of names succeeding one another like the beads of a rosary; they entertained serious, noble, and holy ideas of the ministry; its authority proceeded wholly from Jesus Christ its head. The missionary fire, which the grandson of Fergus had kindled, in a solitary island, soon spread over Great Britain. Not in Iona alone, but at Bangor and other places, the spirit of evangelization burst out. A fondness for travelling had already become a second nature in this people. Men of God, burning with zeal, resolved to carry the evangelical torch to the continent—to the vast wildernesses sprinkled here and there with barbarous and heathen tribes. They did not set forth as antagonists of Rome, for at that epoch there was no place for such antagonism; but Iona and Bangor, less illustrious than Rome in the history of nations, possessed a more lively faith than the city of the Cæsars; and that faith,—unerring sign of the presence of Jesus Christ,—gave those whom it inspired a right to evangelize the world, which Rome could not gainsay. The missionary bishops of Britain accordingly set forth and traversed the Low Countries, Gaul, Switzerland, Germany, and even Italy. The free church of the Scots and Britons did more for the conversion of central Europe than the half-enslaved church of the Romans. These missionaries were not haughty and insolent like the priests of Italy; but supported themselves by the work of their hands. Columbanus (whom we must not confound with Columba),2 “feeling in his heart the burning of the fire which the Lord had

kindled upon earth," quitted Bangor in 590 with twelve other missionaries, and carried the Gospel to the Burgundians, Franks, and Swiss. He continued to preach it amidst frequent persecutions, left his disciple Gall in Helvetia, and retired to Robbio, where he died, honouring Christian Rome, but placing the church of Jerusalem above it,—exhorting it to beware of corruption, and declaring that the power would remain with it so long only as it retained the true doctrine (recta ratio). Thus was Britain faithful in planting the standard of Christ in the heart of Europe. We might almost imagine this unknown people to be a new Israel, and Icolmkill and Bangor to have inherited the virtues of Zion.

Yet they should have done more: they should have preached—not only to the continental heathens, to those in the north of Scotland and the distant Ireland, but also to the still pagan Saxons of England. It is true that they made several attempts; but while the Britons considered their conquerors as the enemies of God and man, and shuddered while they pronounced their name, the Saxons refused to be converted by the voice of their slaves. By neglecting this field, the Britons left room for other workmen, and thus it was that England yielded to a foreign power, beneath whose heavy yoke it long groaned in vain.

CHAPTER II

Pope Gregory the Great—Desires to reduce Britain—Policy of Gregory and Augustine—Arrival of the Mission—Appreciation—Britain superior to Rome—Dionoth at Bangor—First and Second Romish Aggressions—Anguish of the Britons—Pride of Rome—Rome has recourse to the Sword—Massacre—Saint Peter scourges an Archbishop—Oswald—His Victory—Corman—Mission of Oswald and Aidan—Death of Oswald.

It is matter of fact that the spiritual life had waned in Italian Catholicism; and in proportion as the heavenly spirit had become weak, the lust of dominion had grown strong. The Roman metropolitans and their delegates soon became impatient to mould all Christendom to their peculiar forms.

About the end of the sixth century an eminent man filled the see of Rome. Gregory was born of senatorial family, and already on the high road to honour, when he suddenly renounced the world, and transformed the palace of his fathers into a convent. But his ambition had only changed its object. In his views, the whole church should submit to the ecclessiastical jurisdiction of Rome. True, he rejected the title of universal bishop assumed by the patriarch of Constantinople; but if he desired not the name, he was not the less eager for the substance. On the borders of the West, in the island of Great Britain, was a Christian church independent of Rome: this must be conquered, and a favourable opportunity soon occurred.

Before his elevation to the primacy, and while he was as yet only the monk Gregory, he chanced one day to cross a market in Rome where certain foreign dealers were exposing their wares for sale. Among them he perceived some fair-haired youthful slaves, whose noble bearing attracted his attention. On drawing near them, he learned that the Anglo-Saxon nation to which they belonged had refused to receive the Gospel from the Britons. When he afterwards became bishop of Rome, this crafty and energetic pontiff, "the last of the good and the first of the bad," as he has been called, determined to convert these proud conquerors, and make use of them in subduing the British church to the papacy, as he had already made use of the Frank monarchs to reduce the

Gauls. Rome has often shown herself more eager to bring Christians rather than idolaters to the pope. Was it thus with Gregory? We must leave the question unanswered.

Ethelbert, king of Kent, having married a Christian princess of Frank descent, the Roman bishop thought the conjuncture favourable for his design, and despatched a mission under the direction of one of his friends named Augustine, a. d. 596. At first the missionaries recoiled from the task appointed them; but Gregory was firm. Desirous of gaining the assistance of the Frank kings, Theodoric and Theodebert, he affected to consider them as the lords paramount of England, and commended to them the conversion of their subjects. Nor was this all. He claimed also the support of the powerful Brunchilda, grandmother of these two kings, and equally notorious for her treachery, her irregularities, and her crimes; and did not scruple to extol the good works and godly fear of this modern Jezebel. Under such auspices the Romish mission arrived in England. The pope had made a skilful choice of his delegate. Augustine possessed even to a greater extent than Gregory himself a mixture of ambition and devotedness, of superstition and piety, of cunning and zeal. He thought that faith and holiness were less essential to the church than authority and power; and that its prerogative was not so much to save souls as to collect all the human race under the sceptre of Rome.4 Gregory himself was distressed at Augustine's spiritual pride, and often exhorted him to humility.

Success of that kind which popery desires soon crowned the labours of its servants. The forty-one missionaries having landed in the isle of Thanet, in the year 597, the king of Kent consented to receive them, but in the open air, for fear of magic. They drew up in such a manner as to produce an effect on the rude islanders, The procession was opened by a monk bearing a huge cross on which the figure of Christ was represented: his colleagues followed chanting their Latin hymns, and thus they approached the oak appointed for the place of conference. They inspired sufficient confidence in Ethelbert to gain permission to celebrate their worship in an old ruinous chapel at Durovern (Canterbury), where British Christians had in former times adored the Saviour Christ. The king and thousands of his subjects received not long after, with certain forms, and certain Christian doctrines, the errors of the Roman pontiffs—as purgatory, for instance, which Gregory was advocating with the aid of the most absurd fables. Augustine baptized ten thousand pagans in one day. As yet Rome had only set her foot in Great Britain, she did not fail erelong to establish her kingdom there.

We should be unwilling to undervalue the religious element now placed before the Anglo-Saxons, and we can readily believe that many of the missionaries sent from Italy desired to work a Christian work. We think, too, that the Middle Ages ought to be appreciated with more equitable sentiments than have always been found in the persons who have written on that period. Man's conscience lived, spoke, and groaned during the long dominion of popery; and like a plant growing among thorns, it often succeeded in forcing a passage through the obstacles of traditionalism and hierarchy, to blossom in the quickening sun of God's grace. The Christian element is even strongly marked in some of the most eminent men of theocracy—in Anselm for instance.

Yet as it is our task to relate the history of the struggles which took place between primitive Christianity and Roman-catholicism, we cannot forbear pointing out the superiority of the former in a religious light, while we acknowledge the superiority of the latter in a political point of view. We believe (and we shall presently have a proof of it) that a visit to Iona would have taught the

Anglo-Saxons much more than their frequent pilgrimages to the banks of the Tiber. Doubtless, as has been remarked, these pilgrims contemplated at Rome “the noble monuments of antiquity,” but there existed at that time in the British islands—and it has been too often overlooked—a Christianity which, if not perfectly pure, was at least better than that of popery, The British church, which at the beginning of the seventh century carried faith and civilization into Burgundy, the Vosges mountains, and Switzerland, might well have spread them both over Britain. The influence of the arts, whose civilizing influence we are far from depreciating, would have come later. But so far was the Christianity of the Britons from converting the Saxon heptarchy, that it was, alas! the Romanism of the heptarchy which was destined to conquer Britain. These struggles between the Roman and British churches, which fill all the seventh century, are of the highest importance to the English church, for they establish clearly its primitive liberty. They possess also great interest for the other churches of the West, as showing in the most striking characters the usurping acts by which the papacy eventually reduced them beneath its yoke.

Augustine, appointed archbishop not only of the Saxons, but of the free Britons, was settled by papal ordinance, first at London and afterwards at Canterbury. Being at the head of a hierarchy composed of twelve bishops, he soon attempted to bring all the Christians of Britain under the Roman jurisdiction. At that time there existed at Bangor, in North Wales, a large Christian society, amounting to nearly three thousand individuals, collected together to work with their own hands,2 to study, and to pray, and from whose bosom numerous missionaries (Columbanus was among the number) had from time to time gone forth. The president of this church was Dionoth, a faithful teacher, ready to serve all men in charity, yet firmly convinced that no one should have supremacy in the Lord’s vineyard. Although one of the most influential men in the British church, he was somewhat timid and hesitating; he would yield to a certain point for the love of peace; but would never flinch from his duty. He was another apostle John, full of mildness, and yet condemning the Diotrephes, who love to have pre-eminence among the brethren. Augustine thus addressed him: “Acknowledge the authority of the Bishop of Rome.” These are the first words of the papacy to the ancient Christians of Britain. “We desire to love all men,” meekly replied the venerable Briton; “and what we do for you, we will do for him also whom you call the pope. But he is not entitled to call himself the father of fathers, and the only submission we can render him is that which we owe to every Christian.” This was not what Augustine asked.

He was not discouraged by this first check. Proud of the pallium which Rome had sent him, and relying on the swords of the Anglo-Saxons, he convoked in 601 a general assembly of British and Saxon bishops. The meeting took place in the open air, beneath a venerable oak near Wigornia (Worcester or Hereford), and here occurred the second Romish aggression. Dionoth resisted with firmness the extravagant pretensions of Augustine, who again summoned him to recognize the authority of Rome. Another Briton protested against the presumption of the Romans, who ascribed to their consecration a virtue which they refused to that of Iona or of the Asiatic churches.2 “The Britons,” exclaimed a third, “cannot submit either to the haughtiness of the Romans or the tyranny of the Saxons” To no purpose did the archbishop lavish his arguments, prayers, censures, and miracles even; the Britons were firm. Some of them who had eaten with the Saxons while they were as yet heathens, refused to do so now that they had submitted to the pope.4 The Scotch were particularly inflexible; for one of their number, by name Dagam, would not only take no food at the same table with the Romans, but not even under the same roof. Thus did Augustine fail a

second time, and the independence of Britain appeared secure. And yet the formidable power of the popes, aided by the sword of the conquerors, alarmed the Britons. They imagined they saw a mysterious decree once more yoking the nations of the earth to the triumphal car of Rome, and many left Wigornia uneasy and sad at heart. How is it possible to save a cause, when even its defenders begin to despair? It was not long before they were summoned to a new council. “What is to be done?” they exclaimed with sorrowful forebodings. Popery was not yet thoroughly known: it was hardly formed. The half-enlightened consciences of these believers were a prey to the most violent agitation. They asked themselves whether, in rejecting this new power, they might not be rejecting God himself. A pious Christian, who led a solitary life, had acquired a great reputation in the surrounding district. Some of the Britons visited him, and inquired whether they should resist Augustine or follow him. “If he is a man of God, follow him,” replied the hermit.—“And how shall we know that?”—“If he is meek and humble of heart, he bears Christ’s yoke; but if he is violent and proud, he is not of God.”—“What sign shall we have of his humility?”—“If he rises from his seat when you enter the room.” Thus spoke the oracle of Britain: it would have been better to have consulted the Holy Scriptures. But humility is not a virtue that flourishes among Romish pontiffs and legates: they love to remain seated while others court and worship them. The British bishops entered the council-hall, and the archbishop, desirous of indicating his superiority, proudly kept his seat. Astonished at this sight, the Britons would hear no more of the authority of Rome. For the third time they said No—they knew no other master but Christ. Augustine, who expected to see these bishops prostrate their churches at his feet, was surprised and indignant. He had reckoned on the immediate submission of Britain, and the pope had now to learn that his missionary had deceived him.… Animated by that insolent spirit which is found too often in the ministers of the Romish church, Augustine exclaimed: “If you will not receive brethren who bring you peace, you shall receive enemies who will bring you war. “If you will not unite with us in showing the Saxons the way of life, you shall receive from them the stroke of death.” Having thus spoken, the haughty archbishop withdrew, and occupied his last days in preparing the accomplishment of his ill-omened prophecy.3 Argument had failed: now for the sword!

Shortly after the death of Augustine, Edelfrid, one of the Anglo-Saxon kings, and who was still a heathen, collected a numerous army, and advanced towards Bangor, the centre of British Christianity. Alarm spread through those feeble churches. They wept and prayed. The sword of Edelfrid drew nearer. To whom can they apply, or where shall they find help? The magnitude of the danger seemed to recall the Britons to their pristine piety: not to men, but to the Lord himself will they turn their thoughts. Twelve hundred and fifty servants of the living God, calling to mind what are the arms of Christian warfare, after preparing themselves by fasting, met together in a retired spot to send up their prayers to God. A British chief, named Brocmail, moved by tender compassion, stationed himself near them with a few soldiers; but the cruel Edelfrid, observing from a distance this band of kneeling Christians, demanded: “Who are these people, and what are they doing?” On being informed, he added: “They are fighting then against us, although unarmed;” and immediately he ordered his soldiers to fall upon the prostrate crowd. Twelve hundred of them were slain.2 They prayed and they died. The Saxons forthwith proceeded to Bangor, the chief seat of Christian learning, and razed it to the ground. Romanism was triumphant in England. The news of these massacres filled the country with weeping and great mourning; but the priests of Romish consecration (and the venerable Bede shared their sentiments) beheld in this cruel slaughter the accomplishment of the prophecy of the holy pontiff Augustine; and a national tradition among the

Welsh for many ages pointed to him as the instigator of this cowardly butchery. Thus did Rome loose the savage Pagan against the primitive church of Britain, and fastened it all dripping with blood to her triumphal car. A great mystery of iniquity was accomplishing. But while the Saxon sword appeared to have swept every thing from before the papacy, the ground trembled under its feet, and seemed about to swallow it up. The hierarchical rather than Christian conversions effected by the priests of Rome were so unreal that a vast number of neophytes suddenly returned to the worship of their idols. Eadbald, king of Kent, was himself among the number of apostates. Such reversions to paganism are not unfrequent in the history of the Romish missions. The bishops fled into Gaul: Mellitus and Justus had already reached the continent in safety, and Lawrence, Augustine's successor, was about to follow them. While lying in the church where he had desired to pass the night before leaving England, he groaned in spirit as he saw the work founded by Augustine perishing in his hands. He saved it by a miracle. The next morning he presented himself before the king with his clothes all disordered and his body covered with wounds. "Saint Peter," he said, "appeared to me during the night and scourged me severely because I was about to forsake his flock." The scourge was a means of moral persuasion which Peter had forgotten in his epistles. Did Lawrence cause these blows to be inflicted by others—or did he inflict them himself—or is the whole account an idle dream? We should prefer adopting the latter hypothesis. The superstitious prince, excited at the news of this supernatural intervention, eagerly acknowledged the authority of the pope, the vicar of an apostle who so mercilessly scourged those who had the misfortune to displease him. If the dominion of Rome had then disappeared from England, it is probable that the Britons, regaining their courage, and favoured in other respects by the wants which would have been felt by the Saxons, would have recovered from their defeat, and would have imparted their free Christianity to their conquerors. But now the Roman bishop seemed to remain master of England, and the faith of the Britons to be crushed for ever. But it was not so. A young man, sprung from the energetic race of the conquerors, was about to become the champion of truth and liberty, and almost the whole island to be freed from the Roman yoke.

Oswald, an Anglo-Saxon prince, son of the heathen and cruel Edelfrid, had been compelled by family reverses to take refuge in Scotland, when very young, accompanied by his brother Oswy and several other youthful chiefs. He had acquired the language of the country, been instructed in the truths of Holy Writ, converted by the grace of God, and baptized into the Scottish church. He loved to sit at the feet of the elders of Iona and listen to their words. They showed him Jesus Christ going from place to place doing good, and he desired to do so likewise; they told him that Christ was the only head of the church, and he promised never to acknowledge any other. Being a single-hearted generous man, he was especially animated with tender compassion towards the poor, and would take off his own cloak to cover the nakedness of one of his brethren. Often, while mingling in the quiet assemblies of the Scottish Christians, he had desired to go as a missionary to the Anglo-Saxons. It was not long before he conceived the bold design of leading the people of Northumberland to the Saviour; but being a prince as well as a Christian, he determined to begin by reconquering the throne of his fathers. There was in this young Englishman the love of a disciple and the courage of a hero. At the head of an army, small indeed, but strong by faith in Christ, he entered Northumberland, knelt with his troops in prayer on the field of battle, and gained a signal victory over a powerful enemy, 634 a. d. To recover the kingdom of his ancestors was only a part of his task. Oswald desired to give his people the benefits of the true faith. The

Christianity taught in 625 to King Edwin and the Northumbrians by Pendin of York had disappeared amidst the ravages of the pagan armies. Oswald requested a missionary from the Scots who had given him an asylum, and they accordingly sent one of the brethren named Corman, a pious but uncultivated and austere man. He soon returned dispirited to Iona: “The people to whom you sent me,” he told the elders of that island, “are so obstinate that we must renounce all idea of changing their manners.” As Aidan, one of their number, listened to this report, he said to himself: “If thy love had been offered to this people, oh, my Saviour, many hearts would have been touched!… I will go and make Thee known—Thee who breaketh not the bruised reed!” Then, turning to the missionary with a look of mild reproach, he added: “Brother, you have been too severe towards hearers so dull of heart. You should have given them spiritual milk to drink until they were able to receive more solid food.” All eyes were fixed on the man who spoke so wisely. “Aidan is worthy of the episcopate,” exclaimed the brethren of Iona: and, like Timothy, he was consecrated by the laying on of the hands of the company of elders.

Oswald received Aidan as an angel from heaven, and as the missionary was ignorant of the Saxon language, the king accompanied him every where, standing by his side, and interpreting his gentle discourses. The people crowded joyfully around Oswald, Aidan, and other missionaries from Scotland and Ireland, listening eagerly to the Word of God. The king preached by his works still more than by his words. One day during Easter, as he was about to take his seat at table, he was informed that a crowd of his subjects, driven by hunger, had collected before his palace gates. Instantly he ordered the food prepared for himself to be carried out and distributed among them; and taking the silver vessels which stood before him, he broke them in pieces and commanded his servants to divide them among the poor. He also introduced the knowledge of the Saviour to the people of Wessex, whither he had gone to marry the king’s daughter; and after a reign of nine years, he died at the head of his army while repelling an invasion of the idolatrous Mercians, headed by the cruel Penda (5th August, 642 a. d.) As he fell he exclaimed: “Lord, have mercy on the souls of my people!” This youthful prince has left a name dear to the churches of Great Britain. His death did not interrupt the labours of the missionaries. Their meekness and the recollection of Oswald endeared them to all. As soon as the villagers caught sight of one on the high-road, they would throng round him, begging him to teach them the Word of life. The faith which the terrible Edelfrid thought he had washed away in the blood of the worshippers of God, was re-appearing in every direction; and Rome, which once already in the days of Honorius had been forced to leave Britain, might be perhaps a second time compelled to flee to its snips from before the face of a people who asserted their liberty.

CHAPTER III

Character of Oswy—Death of Aidan—Wilfrid at Rome—At Oswald’s Court—Finan and Colman—Independence of the Church attacked—Oswy’s Conquests and Troubles—Synodus Pharensis—Cedda—Degeneration—The Disputation—Peter, the Gatekeeper—Triumph of Rome—Grief of the Britons—Popedom organized in England—Papal Exultation—Archbishop Theodore—Cedda re-ordained—Discord in the Church—Disgrace and Treachery of Wilfrid—His end—Scotland attacked—Adamnan—Iona resists—A King converted by Architects—The Monk Egbert at Iona—His History—Monkish Visions—Fall of Iona.

Then up rose the papacy. If victory remained with the Britons, their church, becoming entirely free, might even in these early times head a strong opposition against the papal monarchy. If, on the contrary, the last champions of liberty are defeated, centuries of slavery awaited the Christian church. We shall have to witness the struggle that took place erelong in the very palace of the Northumbrian kings.

Oswald was succeeded by his brother Oswy, a prince instructed in the free doctrine of the Britons, but whose religion was all external. His heart overflowed with ambition, and he shrank from no crime that might increase his power. The throne of Deira was filled by his relative Oswin, an amiable king, much beloved by his people. Oswy, conceiving a deadly jealousy towards him, marched against him at the head of an army, and Oswin, desirous of avoiding bloodshed, took shelter with a chief whom he had loaded with favours. But the latter offered to lead Oswy's soldiers to his hiding-place; and at dead of night the fugitive king was basely assassinated, one only of his servants fighting in his defence. The gentle Aidan died of sorrow at his cruel fate. Such was the first exploit of that monarch who surrendered England to the papacy. Various circumstances tended to draw Oswy nearer Rome. He looked upon the Christian religion as a means of combining the Christian princes against the heathen Penda, and such a religion, in which expediency predominated, was not very unlike popery. And further, Oswy's wife, the proud Eanfeld, was of the Romish communion. The private chaplain of this bigoted princess was a priest named Romanus, a man worthy of the name. He zealously maintained the rites of the Latin church, and accordingly the festival of Easter was celebrated at court twice in the year; for while the king, following the eastern rule, was joyfully commemorating the resurrection of our Lord, the queen, who adopted the Roman ritual, was keeping Palm Sunday with fasting and humiliation. Eanfeld and Romanus would often converse together on the means of winning over Northumberland to the papacy. But the first step was to increase the number of its partizans, and the opportunity soon occurred. A young Northumbrian, named Wilfrid, was one day admitted to an audience of the queen. He was a comely man, of extensive knowledge, keen wit, and enterprising character, of indefatigible activity, and insatiable ambition. In this interview he remarked to Eanfeld: "The way which the Scotch teach us is not perfect; I will go to Rome and learn in the very temples of the apostles." She approved of his project, and with her assistance and directions he set out for Italy. Alas! he was destined at no very distant day to chain the whole British church to the Roman see. After a short stay at Lyons, where the bishop, delighted at his talents, would have desired to keep him, he arrived at Rome, and immediately became on the most friendly footing with archdeacon Boniface, the pope's favourite councillor. He soon discovered that the priests of France and Italy possessed more power both in ecclesiastical and secular matters than the humble missionaries of Iona; and his thirst for honours was inflamed at the court of the pontiffs. If he should succeed in making England submit to the papacy, there was no dignity to which he might not aspire. Henceforward this was his only thought, and he had hardly returned to Northumberland before Eanfeld eagerly summoned him to court. A fanatical queen, from whom he might hope every thing—a king with no religious convictions, and enslaved by political interests—a pious and zealous prince, Alfred, the king's son, who was desirous of imitating his noble uncle Oswald, and converting the pagans, but who had neither the discernment nor the piety of the illustrious disciple of Iona: such were the materials Wilfrid had to work upon. He saw clearly that if Rome had gained her first victory by the sword of Edelfrid, she could only expect to gain a second "by craft and management. He came to an understanding on the subject with the queen and

Romanus, and having been placed about the person of the young prince, by adroit flattery he soon gained over Alfred's mind. Then finding himself secure of two members of the royal family, he turned all his attention to Oswy. The elders of Iona could not shut their eyes to the dangers which threatened Northumberland. They had sent Finan to supply Aidan's place, and this bishop, consecrated by the presbyters of Iona, had witnessed the progress of popery at the court; at first humble and inoffensive, and then increasing year by year in ambition and audacity. He had openly opposed the pontiff's agents, and his frequent contests had confirmed him in the truth. He was dead, and the presbyters of the Western Isles, seeing more clearly than ever the wants of Northumbria, had sent thither bishop Colman, a simple-minded, but stouthearted man,—one determined to oppose a front of adamant to the wiles of the seducers.

Yet Eanfeld, Wilfrid, and Romanus were skilfully digging the mine that was to destroy the apostolic church of Britain. At first Wilfrid prepared his attack by adroit insinuations; and next declared himself openly in the king's presence. If Oswy withdrew into his domestic circle, he there found the bigoted Eanfeld, who zealously continued the work of the Roman missionary. No opportunities were neglected: in the midst of the diversions of the court, at table, and even during the chase, discussions were perpetually raised on the controverted doctrines. Men's minds became excited: the Romanists already assumed the air of conquerors; and the Britons often withdrew full of anxiety and fear. The king, placed between his wife and his faith, and wearied by these disputes, inclined first to one side, and then to the other, as if he would soon fall altogether. The papacy had more powerful motives than ever for coveting Northumberland. Oswy had not only usurped the throne of Deira, but alter the death of the cruel Penda, who fell in battle in 654, he had conquered his states with the exception of a portion governed by his son-in-law Peada, the son of Penda. But Peada himself having fallen in a conspiracy said to have been get up by his wife, the daughter of Oswy, the latter completed the conquest of Mercia, and thus united the greatest part of England under his sceptre. Kent alone at that time acknowledged the jurisdiction of Rome: in every other province, free ministers, protected by the kings of Northumberland, preached the Gospel. This wonderfully simplified the question. If Rome gained over Oswy, she would gain England: if she failed, she must sooner or later leave that island altogether. This was not all. The blood of Oswyn, the premature death of Aidan, and other things besides, troubled the king's breast. He desired to appease the Deity he had offended, and not knowing that Christ is the door, as holy Scripture tells us, he sought among men for a doorkeeper who would open to him the kingdom of heaven. He was far from being the last of those kings whom the necessity of expiating their crimes impelled towards Romish practices. The crafty Wilfrid, keeping alive both the hopes and fears of the prince, often spoke to him of Rome, and of the grace to be found there. He thought that the fruit was ripe, and that now he had only to shake the tree. "We must have a public disputation, in which the question may be settled once for all," said the queen and her advisers; "but Rome must take her part in it with as much pomp as her adversaries. Let us oppose bishop to bishop." A Saxon bishop named Agilbert, a friend of Wilfrid's, who had won the affection of the young prince Alfred, was invited by Eanfeld to the conference, and he arrived in Northumberland attended by a priest named Agathon. Alas! poor British church, the earthen vessel is about to be dashed against the vase of iron. Britain must yield before the invading march of Rome. On the coast of Yorkshire, at the farther extremity of a quiet bay, was situated the monastery of Strenæshalh, or Whitby, of which Hilda, the pious daughter of king Edwin, was abbess. She, too, was desirous of seeing a termination of the violent disputes which had agitated the church since Wilfrid's return. On the

shores of the North Sea the struggle was to be decided between Britain and Rome, between the East and the West, or, as they said then, between Saint John and Saint Peter. It was not a mere question about Easter, or certain rules of discipline, but of the great doctrine of the freedom of the church under Jesus Christ, or its enslavement under the papacy. Rome, ever domineering, desired for the second time to hold England in its grasp, not by means of the sword, but by her dogmas. With her usual cunning she concealed her enormous pretensions under secondary questions, and many superficial thinkers were deceived by this manœuvre. The meeting took place in the convent of Whitby. The king and his son entered first; then, on the one side, Colman, with the bishops and elders of the Britons; and on the other bishop Agilbert, Agathon, Wilfrid, Romanus, a deacon named James, and several other priests of the Latin confession. Last of all came Hilda with her attendants, among whom was an English bishop named Cedda, one of the most active missionaries of the age. He had at first preached the Gospel in the midland districts, whence he turned his footsteps towards the Anglo-Saxons of the East, and after converting a great number of these pagans, he had returned to Finan, and, although an Englishman, had received Episcopal consecration from a bishop, who had been himself ordained by the elders of Iona. Then proceeding westwards, the indefatigable evangelist founded churches, and appointed elders and deacons wherever he went.2 By birth an Englishman, by ordination a Scotchman, everywhere treated with respect and consideration, he appeared to be set apart as mediator in this solemn conference. His intervention could not however, retard the victory of Rome. Alas! the primitive evangelism had gradually given way to an ecclesiasticism, coarse and rude in one place, subtle and insinuating in another. Whenever the priests were called upon to justify certain doctrines or ceremonies, instead of referring solely to the word of God, that fountain of all light, they maintained that thus St. James did at Jerusalem, St. Mark at Alexandria, St. John at Ephesus, or St. Peter at Rome. They gave the name of apostolical canons, to rules which the apostles had never known. They even went further than this: at Rome and in the East, ecclesiasticism represented itself to be a law of God, and from a state of weakness, it thus became a state of sin. Some marks of this error were already beginning to appear in the Christianity of the Britons.

King Oswy was the first to speak: “As servants of one and the same God, we hope all to enjoy the same inheritance in heaven; why then should we not have the same rule of life here below? Let us inquire which is the true one, and follow it.” … “Those who sent me hither as bishop,” said Colman, “and who gave me the rule which I observe, are the beloved of God. Let us beware how we despise their teaching, for it is the teaching of Columba, of the blessed evangelist John, and of the churches over which that apostle presided.”

“As for us,” boldly rejoined Wilfrid, for to him as to the most skilful had bishop Agilbert intrusted the defence of their cause, “our custom is that of Rome, where the holy apostles Peter and Paul taught; we found it in Italy and Gaul, nay, it is spread over every nation. Shall the Picts and Britons, cast on these two islands, on the very confines of the ocean, dare to contend against the whole world? However holy your Columba may have been, will you prefer him to the prince of the apostles, to whom Christ said, Thou art Peter, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven?”

Wilfrid spoke with animation, and his words being skilfully adapted to his audience, began to make them waver. He had artfully substituted Columba for the apostle John, from whom the British church claimed descent, and opposed to Saint Peter a plain elder of Iona. Oswy, whose idol was

power, could not hesitate between paltry bishops and that pope of Rome who commanded the whole world. Already imagining he saw Peter at the gates of paradise, with the keys in his hand, he exclaimed with emotion: “Is it true, Colman, that these words were addressed by our Lora to Saint Peter?” “It is true.” “Can you prove that similar powers were given to your Columba?” The bishop replied “We cannot;” but he might have told the king: “John, whose doctrine we follow, and indeed every disciple, has received in the same sense as St. Peter the power to remit sins, to bind and to loose on earth and in heaven.” But the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures was fading away in Iona, and the unsuspecting Colman had not observed Wilfrid’s stratagem in substituting Columba for Saint John. Upon this Oswy, delighted to yield to the continual solicitations of the queen, and above all, to find some one who would admit him into the kingdom of heaven, exclaimed: “Peter is the doorkeeper, I will obey him, lest when I appear at the gate there should be no one to open it to me.”4 The spectators, carried away by this royal confession, hastened to give in their submission to the vicar of St. Peter.

Thus did Rome Triumph at the Whitby conference. Osway forgot that the Lord had said: I am he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth. It was by ascribing to Peter the servant, what belongs to Jesus Christ the master, that the papacy reduced Britain. Oswy stretched out his hands, Rome riveted the chains, and the liberty which Oswald had given his church seemed at the last gasp.

Colman saw with grief and consternation Osway and his subjects bending their knees before the foreign priests. He did not, however, despair of the ultimate triumph of the truth. The apostolic faith could still find shelter in the old sanctuaries of the British church in Scotland and Ireland. Immovable in the doctrine he had received, and resolute to uphold Christian liberty, Colman withdrew with those who would not bend beneath the yoke of Rome, and returned to Scotland. Thirty Anglo-Saxons, and a great number of Britons, shook off the dust of their feet against the tents of the Romish priests. The hatred of popery became more intense day by day among the remainder of the Britons. Determined to repel its erroneous dogmas and its illegitimate dominion, they maintained their communion with the Eastern Church, which was more ancient than that of Rome. They shuddered as they saw the red dragon of the Celts gradually retiring towards the western sea from before the white dragon of the Saxons. They ascribed their misfortunes to a horrible conspiracy planned by the iniquitous ambition of the foreign monks, and the bards in their chants cursed the negligent ministers who defended not the flock of the Lord against the wolves of Rome. But vain were the lamentations! The Romish priests, aided by the queen, lost no time. Wilfrid, whom Oswy desired to reward for his triumph, was named bishop of Northumberland, and he immediately visited Paris to receive episcopal consecration in due form. He soon returned, and proceeded with singular activity to establish the Romish doctrine in all the churches. Bishop of a diocese extending from Edinburgh to Northampton, enriched with the goods which had belonged to divers monasteries, surrounded by a numerous train, served upon gold and silver plate, Wilfrid congratulated himself on having espoused the cause of the papacy; he offended every one who approached him by his insolence, and taught England how wide was the difference between the humble ministers of Iona and a Romish priest. At the same time Oswy, coming to an understanding with the king of Kent, sent another priest named Wighard to Rome to learn the pope’s intentions respecting the church in England, and to receive consecration as archbishop of Canterbury. There was no episcopal ordination in England worthy of a priest! In the meanwhile

Oswy, with all the zeal of a new convert, ceased not to repeat that “the Roman Church was the Catholic and apostolic church,” and thought night and day on the means of converting his subjects, hoping thus (says a pope) to redeem his own soul. The arrival of this news at Rome created a great sensation. Vitalian, who then filled the episcopal chair, and was as insolent to his bishops as he was fawning and servile to the emperor, exclaimed with transport: “Who would not be overjoyed! a king converted to the true apostolic faith, a people that believes at last in Christ the Almighty God!” For many long years this people had believed in Christ, but they were now beginning to believe in the pope, and the pope will soon make them forget Jesus the Saviour. Vitalian wrote to Oswy, and sent him—not copies of the Holy Scriptures (which were already becoming scarce at Rome), but—relics of the Saints Peter, John, Lawrence, Gregory, and Pancratius; and being in an especial manner desirous of rewarding Queen Eanfeld, to whom with Wilfrid belonged the glory of this work, he offered her a cross, made, as he assured her, out of the chains of St. Peter and St. Paul.3 “Delay not,” said the pope in conclusion, “to reduce all your island under Jesus Christ,” or in other words, under the bishop of Rome. The essential thing, however, was to send an archbishop from. Rome to Britain; but Wighard was dead, and no one seemed willing to undertake so long a journey.

There was not much zeal in the city of the pontiffs: and the pope was compelled to look out for a stranger. There happened at that time to be in Rome a man of great reputation for learning, who had come from the east, and adopted the rites and doctrines of the Latins in exchange for the knowledge he had brought them. He was pointed out to Vitalian as well qualified to be the metropolitan of England. Theodore, for such was his name, belonging by birth to the churches of Asia Minor, would be listened to by the Britons in preference to any other, when he solicited them to abandon their oriental customs. The Roman pontiff, however, fearful perhaps that he might yet entertain some leaven of his former Greek doctrines, gave him as companion, or rather as overseer, a zealous African monk named Adrian.

Theodore began the great crusade against British Christianity, and endeavouring to show the sincerity of his conversion by his zeal, he traversed all England in company with Adrian, every where imposing on the people that ecclesiastical supremacy to which Rome is indebted for her political supremacy. The superiority of character which distinguished Saint Peter, Theodore transformed into a superiority of office. For the jurisdiction of Christ and his word, he substituted that of the bishop of Rome and of his decrees. He insisted on the necessity of ordination by bishops who, in an unbroken chain, could trace back their authority to the apostles themselves. The British still maintained the validity of their consecration; but the number was small of those who understood that pretended successors of the apostles, who sometimes carry Satan in their hearts, are not true ministers of Christ; that the one thing needful for the church is, that the apostles themselves (and not their successors only) should dwell in its bosom by their word, by their teaching, and by the Divine Comforter who shall be with it for ever and ever. The grand defection now began: the best were sometimes the first to yield. When Theodore met Cedda, who had been consecrated by a bishop who had himself received ordination from the elders of Iona, he said to him: “You have not been regularly ordained.” Cedda, instead of standing up boldly for the truth, gave way to a carnal modesty, and replied: “I never thought myself worthy of the episcopate, and am ready to lay it down.”—“No,” said Theodore, “you shall remain a bishop, but I will consecrate you anew according to the catholic ritual.” The British minister submitted. Rome

triumphant felt herself strong enough to deny the imposition of hands of the elders of Iona, which she had hitherto recognised. The most stedfast believers took refuge in Scotland. In this manner a church in some respects deficient, but still a church in which the religious element held the foremost place, was succeeded by another in which the clerical element predominated. This was soon apparent: questions of authority and precedence, hitherto unknown among the British Christians, were now of daily occurrence. Wilfrid, who had fixed his residence at York, thought that no one deserved better than he to be primate of all England; and Theodore on his part was irritated at the haughty tone assumed by this bishop. During the life of Oswy, peace was maintained, for Wilfrid was his favourite; but ere long that prince fell ill; and, terrified by the near approach of death, he vowed that if he recovered he would make a pilgrimage to Rome and there end his days. “If you will be my guide to the city of the apostles,” he said to Wilfrid, “I will give you a large sum of money.” But his vow was of no avail: Oswy died in the spring of the year 670 a. d. The Witan set aside Prince Alfred, and raised his youngest brother Egfrid to the throne. The new monarch, who had often been offended by Wilfrid’s insolence, denounced this haughty prelate to the archbishop. Nothing could be more agreeable to Theodore. He assembled a council at Hertford, before which the chief of his converts were first summoned, and presenting to them, not the holy scripture but the canons of the Romish church, he received their solemn oaths: such was the religion then taught in England. But this was not all. “The diocese of our brother Wilfrid is so extensive,” said the primate, “that there is room in it for four bishops.” They were appointed accordingly. Wilfrid indignantly appealed from the primate and the king to the pope. “Who converted England, who, if not I?… and it is thus I am rewarded!” … Not allowing himself to be checked by the difficulties of the journey, he set out for Rome, attended by a few monks, and Pope Agathon assembling a council (679), the Englishman presented his complaint, and the pontiff declared the destitution to be illegal. Wilfrid immediately returned to England, and haughtily presented the pope’s decree to the king. But Egfrid, who was not of a disposition to tolerate these transalpine manners, far from restoring the see, cast the prelate into prison, and did not release him until the end of the year, and then only on condition that he would immediately quit Northumbria.

Wilfrid—for we must follow even to the end of his life that remarkable man, who exercised so great an influence over the destinies of the English church—Wilfrid was determined to be a bishop at any cost. The kingdom of Sussex was still pagan; and the deposed prelate, whose indefatigable activity we cannot but acknowledge, formed the resolution of winning a bishopric, as other men plan the conquest of a kingdom. He arrived in Sussex during a period of famine, and having brought with him a number of nets, he taught the people the art of fishing, and thus gained their affections. Their king Edilwalch had been baptized, his subjects now followed his example, and Wilfrid was placed at the head of the church. But he soon manifested the disposition by which he was animated: he furnished supplies of men and money to Ceadwalla, king of Wessex, and this cruel chieftain made a fierce inroad into Sussex, laying it waste, and putting to death Edilwalch, the prelate’s benefactor. The career of the turbulent bishop was not ended. King Egfrid died, and was succeeded by his brother Alfred, whom Wilfrid had brought up, a prince fond of learning and religion, and emulous of the glory of his uncle Oswald. The ambitious Wilfrid hastened to claim his see of York, by acquiescing in the partition; it was restored to him, and he forthwith began to plunder others to enrich himself. A council begged him to submit to the decrees of the church of England; he refused, and having lost the esteem of the king, his former pupil, he undertook,

notwithstanding his advanced years, a third journey to Rome. Knowing how popes are won, he threw himself at the pontiff's feet, exclaiming that "the suppliant bishop Wilfrid, the humble slave of the servant of God, implored the favour of our most blessed lord, the pope universal." The bishop could not restore his creature to his see, and the short remainder of Wilfrid's life was spent in the midst of the riches his cupidity had so unworthily accumulated.

Yet he had accomplished the task of his life: all England was subservient to the papacy. The names of Oswy and of Wilfrid should be inscribed in letters of mourning in the annals of Great Britain. Posterity has erred in permitting them to sink into oblivion; for they were two of the most influential and energetic men that ever flourished in England. Still this very forgetfulness is not wanting in generosity. The grave in which the liberty of the church lay buried for nine centuries is the only monument—a mournful one indeed—that should perpetuate their memory. But Scotland was still free, and to secure the definitive triumph of Rome, it was necessary to invade that virgin soil, over which the standard of the faith had floated for so many years.

Adamnan was then at the head of the church of Iona, the first elder of that religious house. He was virtuous and learned, but weak and somewhat vain, and his religion had little spirituality. To gain him was in the eyes of Rome to gain Scotland. A singular circumstance favoured the plans of those who desired to draw him into the papal communion. One day during a violent tempest, a ship coming from the Holy Land, and on board of which was a Gaulish bishop named Arculf, was wrecked in the neighbourhood of Iona. Arculf eagerly sought an asylum among the pious inhabitants of that island. Adamnan never grew tired of hearing the stranger's descriptions of Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and Golgotha, of the sun-burnt plains over which our Lord had wandered, and the cleft stone which still lay before the door of the sepulchre.2 The elder of Iona, who prided himself on his learning, noted down Arculf's conversation, and from it composed a description of the Holy Land. As soon as his book was completed, the desire of making these wondrous things more widely known, combined with a little vanity, and perhaps other motives, urged him to visit the court of Northumberland, where he presented his work to the pious King Alfred, who, being fond of learning and of the Christian traditions, caused a number of copies of it to be made. Nor was this all: the Romish clergy perceived the advantage they might derive from this imprudent journey. They crowded round the elder; they showed him all the pomp of their worship, and said to him: "Will you and your friends, who live at the very extremity of the world, set yourselves in opposition to the observances of the universal church?" The nobles of the court flattered the author's self-love, and invited him to their festivities, while the king loaded him with presents. The free presbyter of Britain became a priest of Rome, and Adamnan returned to Iona to betray his church to his new masters. But it was all to no purpose: Iona would not give way. He then went to hide his shame in Ireland, where having brought a few individuals to the Romish uniformity, he took courage and revisited Scotland. But that country, still inflexible, repelled him with indignation.2 When Rome found herself unable to conquer by the priest, she had recourse to the prince, and her eyes were turned to Naitam, king of the Picts. "How much more glorious it would be for you," urged the Latin priests, "to belong to the powerful church of the universal pontiff of Rome, than to a congregation superintended by miserable elders! The Romish church is a monarchy, and ought to be the church of every monarch. The Roman ceremonial accords with the pomp of royalty, and its temples are palaces." The prince was convinced by the last argument. He despatched messengers to Ceolfrid, the abbot of an English convent, begging him to send him architects

capable of building a church after the Roman pattern—of stone and not of wood. Architects, majestic porches, lofty columns, vaulted roofs, gilded altars, have often proved the most influential of Rome's missionaries. The builder's art, though in its earliest and simplest days, was more powerful than the Bible. Naitam, who, by submitting to the pope thought himself the equal of Clovis and Clotaire, assembled the nobles of his court and the pastors of his church, and thus addressed them: "I recommend all the clergy of my kingdom to receive the tonsure of Saint Peter."4 Then without delay (as Bede informs us) this important revolution was accomplished by royal authority. He sent agents and letters into every province, and caused all the ministers and monks to receive the circular tonsure according to the Roman fashion.6 It was the mark that popery stamped, not on the forehead, but on the crown. A royal proclamation and a few clips of the scissors placed the Scotch, like a flock of sheep, beneath the crook of the shepherd of the Tiber.

Iona still held out. The orders of the Pietish king, the example of his subjects, the sight of that Italian power which was devouring the earth, had shaken some few minds; but the Church still resisted the innovation. Iona was the last citadel of liberty in the western world, and popery was filled with anger at that miserable band which in its remote corner refused to bend before it. Human means appeared insufficient to conquer this rock: something more was needed, visions and miracles for example; and these Rome always finds when she wants them. One day towards the end of the seventh century, an English monk, named Egbert, arriving from Ireland, appeared before the elders of Iona, who received him with their accustomed hospitality. He was a man in whom enthusiastic devotion was combined with great gentleness of heart, and he soon won upon the minds of these simple believers. He spoke to them of an external unity, urging that a universality manifested under different forms was unsuited to the church of Christ. He advocated the special form of Rome, and for the truly catholic element which the Christians of Iona had thus far possessed, substituted a sectarian element. He attacked the traditions of the British church, and lavishly distributing the rich presents confided to him by the lords of Ireland and of England,2 he soon had reason to acknowledge the truth of the saying of the wise man: A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth it prospereth.

Some pious souls, however, still held out in Iona. The enthusiast Egbert—for such he appears to have been rather than an impostor—had recourse to other means. He represented himself to be a messenger from heaven: the saints themselves, said he, have commissioned me to convert Iona; and then he told the following history to the elders who stood round him. "About thirty years ago I entered the monastery of Rathmelfig in Ireland, when a terrible pestilence fell upon it, and of all the brethren the monk Edelhun and myself were left alone. Attacked by the plague, and fearing my last hour was come, I rose from my bed and crept into the chapel. There my whole body trembled at the recollection of my sins, and my face was bathed with tears. 'O God,' I exclaimed, 'suffer me not to die until I have redeemed my debt to thee by an abundance of good works.4 I returned staggering to the infirmary, got into bed, and fell asleep. When I awoke, I saw Edelhun with his eyes fixed on mine. 'Brother Egbert,' said he, 'it has been revealed to me in a vision that thou shalt receive what thou hast asked.' On the following night Edelhun died and I recovered.

"Many years passed away: my repentance and my vigils did not satisfy me, and wishing to pay my debt, I resolved to go with a company of monks and preach the blessings of the gospel to the heathens of Germany. But during the night a blessed saint from heaven appeared to one of the brethren and said: "Tell Egbert that he must go to the monasteries of Columba, for their ploughs

do not plough straight, and he must put them into the right furrow.' I forbade this brother to speak of his vision, and went on board a ship bound for Germany. We were waiting for a favourable wind, when, of a sudden, in the middle of the night, a frightful tempest burst upon the vessel, and drove us on the shoals. 'For my sake this tempest is upon us,' I exclaimed in terror; 'God speaks to me as He did to Jonah:' and I ran to take refuge in my cell. At last I determined to obey the command which the holy man had brought me. I left Ireland, and came among you, in order to pay my debt by converting you. And now," continued Egbert, "make answer to the voice of heaven, and submit to Rome." A ship thrown on shore by a storm was a frequent occurrence on those coasts, and the dream of a monk, absorbed in the plans of his brother, was nothing very unnatural. But in those times of darkness, everything appeared miraculous; phantoms and apparitions had more weight than the word of God. Instead of detecting the emptiness of these visions by the falseness of the religion they were brought to support, the elders of Iona listened seriously to Egbert's narrative. The primitive faith planted on the rock of Icolmkill was now like a pine-tree tossed by the winds: but one gust, and it would be uprooted and blown into the sea. Egbert, perceiving the elders to be shaken, redoubled his prayers, and even had recourse to threats. "All the west," said he, "bends the knee to Rome: alone against all, what can you do?" The Scotch still resisted: obscure and unknown, the last British Christians contended in behalf of expiring liberty. At length bewildered—they stumbled and fell. The scissors were brought; they received the Latin tonsure—they were the pope's.

Thus fell Scotland. Yet there still remained some sparks of grace, and the mountains of Caledonia long concealed the hidden fire which after many ages burst forth with such power and might. Here and there a few independent spirits were to be found who testified against the tyranny of Rome. In the time of Bede they might be seen "halting in their paths," (to use the words of the Romish historian,) refusing to join in the holidays of the pontifical adherents, and pushing away the hands that were eager to shave their crowns. But the leaders of the state and of the church had laid down their arms. The contest was over, after lasting more than a century. British Christianity had in some degree prepared its own fall, by substituting too often the form for the faith. The foreign superstition took advantage of this weakness, and triumphed in these islands by means of royal decrees, church ornaments, monkish phantoms, and conventual apparitions. At the beginning of the eighth century the British Church became the serf of Rome; but an internal struggle was commencing, which did not cease until the period of the Reformation.

CHAPTER IV

Clement—Struggle between a Scotchman and an Englishman—Word of God only—Clement's Success—His condemnation—Virgil and the Antipodes—John Scotus and Philosophical Religion—Alfred and the Bible—Darkness and Popery—William the Conqueror—Wulston at Edward's Tomb—Struggle between William and Hildebrand—The Pope yields—Cæsaropapia. The independent Christians of Scotland, who subordinated the authority of man to that of God, were filled with sorrow as they beheld these back-slidings: and it was this no doubt which induced many to leave their homes and fight in the very heart of Europe in behalf of that Christian liberty which had just expired among themselves. At the commencement of the eighth century a great idea took possession of a pious doctor of the Scottish church named Clement. The work of God is the very essence of Christianity, thought he, and this work must be defended against all the encroachments of man. To human traditionalism he opposed the sole authority of the word of God;

to clerical materialism, a church which is the assembly of the saints; and to Pelagianism, the sovereignty of grace. He was a man of decided character and firm faith, but without fanaticism; his heart was open to the holiest emotions of our nature; he was a husband and a father. He quitted Scotland and travelled among the Franks, every where scattering the seeds of the faith. It happened unfortunately that a man of kindred energy, Winifrid or Boniface of Wessex, was planting the pontifical Christianity in the same regions. This great missionary, who possessed in an essential degree the faculty of organization, aimed at external unity above all things, and when he had taken the oath of fidelity to Gregory II., he had received from that pope a collection of the Roman laws. Boniface, henceforth a docile disciple or rather a fanatical champion of Rome, supported on the one hand by the pontiff, and on the other by Charles Martel, had preached to the people of Germany, among some undoubted Christian truths,—the doctrine of tithes and of papal supremacy. The Englishman and the Scotchman, representatives of two great systems, were about to engage in deadly combat in the heart of Europe—in a combat whose consequences might be incalculable.

Alarmed at the progress made by Clement's evangelical doctrines, Boniface, archbishop of the German churches, undertook to oppose them. At first he confronted the Scotchman with the laws of the Roman church; but the latter denied the authority of these ecclesiastical canons, and refuted their contents. Boniface then put forward the decisions of various councils; but Clement replied that if the decisions of the councils are contrary to holy Scripture, they have no authority over Christians.3 The archbishop, astonished at such audacity, next had recourse to the writings of the most illustrious fathers of the Latin church, quoting Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory; but the Scotchman told him, that instead of submitting to the word of men, he would obey the word of God alone. Boniface with indignation now introduced the Catholic church which, by its priests and bishops, all united to the pope, forms an invincible unity; but to his great surprise his opponent maintained that there only, where the Holy Spirit dwells, can be found the spouse of Jesus Christ. Vainly did the archbishop express his horror; Clement was not to be turned aside from his great idea, either by the clamours of the followers of Rome, or by the imprudent attacks made on the papacy by other Christian ministers. Rome had, indeed, other adversaries. A Gallic bishop named Adalbert, with whom Boniface affected to associate Clement, one day saw the archbishop complacently exhibiting to the people some relics of St. Peter which he had brought from Rome; and being desirous of showing the ridiculous character of these Romish practices, he distributed among the bystanders his own hair and nails, praying them to pay these the same honours as Boniface claimed for the relics of the papacy. Clement smiled, like many others, at Adalbert's singular argument; but it was not with such arms that he was wont to fight. Gifted with profound discernment, he had remarked that the authority of man substituted for the authority of God was the source of all the errors of Romanism. At the same time he maintained on predestination what the archbishop called "horrible doctrines, contrary to the Catholic faith."2 Clement's character inclines us to believe that he was favourable to the doctrine of predestination. A century later the pious Gottschalk was persecuted by one of Boniface's successors for holding this very doctrine of Augustine's. Thus then did a Scotchman, the representative of the ancient, faith of his country, withstand almost unaided in the centre of Europe the invasion of the Romans. But he was not long alone: the great especially, more enlightened than the common people, thronged around him. If Clement had succeeded, a Christian church would have been founded on the continent independent of the papacy.

Boniface was confounded. He wished to do in central Europe what his fellow-countryman Wilfrid had done in England; and at the very moment he fancied he was advancing from triumph to triumph, victory escaped from his hands. He turned against this new enemy, and applying to Charles Martel's sons, Pepin and Carloman, he obtained their consent to the assembling of a council before which he summoned Clement to appear. The bishops, counts, and other notabilities having met at Soissons on the 2nd March 744, Boniface accused the Scotchman of despising the laws of Rome, the councils, and the fathers; attacked his marriage, which he called an adulterous union, and called in question some secondary points of doctrine. Clement was accordingly excommunicated by Boniface, at once his adversary, accuser, and judge, and thrown into prison, with the approbation of the pope and the king of the Franks. The Scotchman's cause was every where taken up; accusations were brought against the German primate, his persecuting spirit was severely condemned, and his exertions for the triumph of the papacy were resisted. Carloman yielded to this unanimous movement. The prison doors were opened, and Clement had hardly crossed the threshold before he began to protest boldly against human authority in matters of faith: the word of God is the only rule. Upon this Boniface applied to Rome for the heretic's condemnation, and accompanied his request by a silver cup and a garment of delicate texture.3 The pope decided in synod that if Clement did not retract his errors, he should be delivered up to everlasting damnation, and then requested Boniface to send him to Rome under a sure guard. We here lose all traces of the Scotchman, but it is easy to conjecture what must have been his fate.

Clement was not the only Briton who became distinguished in this contest. Two fellow-countrymen, Sampson and Virgil, who preached in central Europe, were in like manner persecuted by the Church of Rome. Virgil, anticipating Galileo, dared maintain that there were other men and another world beneath our feet. He was denounced by Boniface for this heresy, and condemned by the pope, as were other Britons for the apostolical simplicity of their lives. In 813, certain Scotchmen who called themselves bishops, says a canon, having appeared before a council of the Roman church at Châlons, were rejected by the French prelates, because, like St. Paul, they worked with their own hands. Those enlightened and faithful men were superior to their time: Boniface and his ecclesiastical materialism were better fitted for an age in which clerical forms were regarded as the substance of religion.

Even Great Britain, although its light was not so pure, was not altogether plunged in darkness. The Anglo-Saxons imprinted on their church certain characteristics which distinguished it from that of Rome; several books of the Bible were translated into their tongue, and daring spirits on the one hand, with some pious souls on the other, laboured in a direction hostile to popery. At first we see the dawning of that philosophic rationalism, which gives out a certain degree of brightness, but which can neither conquer error nor still less establish truth. In the ninth century there was a learned scholar in Ireland, who afterwards settled at the court of Charles the Bald. He was a strange mysterious man, of profound thought, and as much raised above the doctors of his age by the boldness of his ideas, as Charlemagne above the princes of his day by the force of his will. John Scot Erigena—that is, a native of Ireland and not of Ayr, as some have supposed—was a meteor in the theological heavens. With a great philosophic genius he combined a cheerful jesting disposition. One day, while seated at table opposite to Charles the Bald, the latter archly inquired of him: "What is the distance between a Scot and a Sot?" "The width of the table," was his ready answer, which drew a smile from the king. While the doctrine of Bede, Boniface, and even Alcuin

was traditional, servile, and, in one word, Romanist, that of Scot was mystical, philosophic, free, and daring. He sought for the truth not in the word or in the Church, but in himself:—"The knowledge of ourselves is the true source of religious wisdom. Every creature is a theophany—a manifestation of God; since revelation presupposes the existence of truth, it is this truth, which is above revelation, with which man must set himself in immediate relation, leaving him at liberty to show afterwards its harmony with scripture, and the other theophanies. We must first employ reason, and then authority. Authority proceeds from reason, and not reason from authority." Yet this bold thinker, when on his knees, could give way to aspirations full of piety: "O Lord Jesus," exclaimed he, "I ask no other happiness of Thee, but to understand, unmixed with deceitful theories, the word that Thou hast inspired by thy Holy Spirit! Show thyself to those who ask for Thee alone!" But while Scot rejected on the one hand certain traditional errors, and in particular the doctrine of transubstantiation which was creeping into the church, he was near falling as regards God and the world into other errors savouring of pantheism.2 The philosophic rationalism of the contemporary of Charles the Bald—the strange product of one of the obscurest periods of history (850)—was destined after the lapse of many centuries to be taught once more in Great Britain as a modern invention of the most enlightened age.

While Scot was thus plumping the depths of philosophy, others were examining their Bibles; and if thick darkness had not spread over these first glimpses of the dawn, perhaps the Church of Great Britain might even then have begun to labour for the regeneration of Christendom. A youthful prince, thirsting for intellectual enjoyments, for domestic happiness, and for the word of God, and who sought, by frequent prayer, for deliverance from the bondage of sin, had ascended the throne of Wessex, in the year 871. Alfred being convinced that Christianity alone could rightly mould a nation, assembled round him the most learned men from all parts of Europe, and was anxious that the English, like the Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins, should possess the holy scripture in their own language. He is the real patron of the biblical work,—a title far more glorious than that of founder of the university of Oxford. After having fought more than fifty battles by land and sea, he died while translating the Psalms of David for his subjects.

After this gleam of light thick darkness once more settled upon Great Britain. Nine Anglo-Saxon kings ended their days in monasteries; there was a seminary in Rome from which every year fresh scholars bore to England the new forms of popery; the celibacy of priests, that cement of the Romish hierarchy, was established by a bull about the close of the tenth century; convents were multiplied, considerable possessions were bestowed on the Church, and the tax of Peter's pence, laid at the pontiff's feet, proclaimed the triumph of the papal system. But a reaction soon took place: England collected her forces for a war against the papacy, a war at one time secular and at another spiritual. William of Normandy, Edward III., Wickliffe, and the Reformation, are the four ascending steps of protestantism in England. A proud, enterprising, and far-sighted prince, the illegitimate son of a peasant girl of Falaise and Robert the Devil, duke of Normandy, began a contest with the papacy which lasted until the Reformation. William the Conqueror, having defeated the Saxons at Hastings in 1066 a. d., took possession of England, under the benediction of the Roman pontiff. But the conquered country was destined to conquer its master. William, who had invaded England in the pope's name, had no sooner touched the soil of his new kingdom, than he learned to resist Rome, as if the ancient liberty of the British Church had revived in him. Being firmly resolved to allow no foreign prince or prelate to possess in his dominions a jurisdiction

independent of his own, he made preparations for a conquest far more difficult than that of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom. The papacy itself furnished him with weapons. The Roman legates prevailed on the king to dispossess the English episcopacy in a mass, and this was exactly what he wished. To resist the papacy, William desired to be sure of the submission of the priests of England. Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, was removed, and Lanfranc of Pavia, who had been summoned from Bee in Normandy to fill his place, was commissioned by the Conqueror to bend the clergy to obedience. This prelate, who was regular in his life, abundant in almsgiving, a learned disputant, a prudent politician, and a skilful mediator, finding that he had to choose between his master King William and his friend the pontiff Hildebrand, gave the prince the preference. He refused to go to Rome, notwithstanding the threats of the pope, and applied himself resolutely to the work the king had intrusted to him. The Saxons sometimes resisted the Normans, as the Britons had resisted the Saxons; but the second struggle was less glorious than the first. A synod at which the king was present having met in the abbey of Westminster, William commanded Wulston, bishop of Worcester, to give up his crosier to him. The old man rose, animated with holy fervour: “O king,” he said, “from a better man than you I received it, and to him only will I return it.” Unhappily this “better man” was not Jesus Christ. Then approaching the tomb of Edward the Confessor, he continued: “O my master, it was you who compelled me to assume this office; but now behold a new king and a new primate who promulgate new laws. Not unto them, O master, but unto you, do I resign my crosier and the care of my flock.” With these words Wulston laid his pastoral staff on Edward’s tomb. On the sepulchre of the confessor perished the liberty of the Anglo-Saxon hierarchy. The deprived Saxon bishops were consigned to fortresses or shut up in convents. The Conqueror being thus assured of the obedience of the bishops, put forward the supremacy of the sword in opposition to that of the pope. He nominated directly to all vacant ecclesiastical offices, filled his treasury with the riches of the churches, required that all priests should make oath to him, forbade them to excommunicate his officers without his consent, not even for incest, and declared that all synodal decisions must be countersigned by him. “I claim,” said he to the archbishop one day, raising his arms towards heaven, “I claim to hold in this hand all the pastoral staffs in my kingdom.” Lanfranc was astonished at this daring speech, but prudently kept silent,2 for a time at least. Episcopacy connived at the royal pretensions. Will Hildebrand, the most inflexible of popes, bend before William? The king was earnest in his desire to enslave the Church to the State; the pope to enslave the State to the Church: the collision of these two mighty champions threatened to be terrible. But the haughtiest of pontiffs was seen to yield as soon as he felt the mail-clad hand of the Conqueror, and to shrink unresistingly before it. The pope filled all Christendom with confusion, that he might deprive princes of the right of investiture to ecclesiastical dignities: William would not permit him to interfere with that question in England, and Hildebrand submitted. The king went even farther: the pope, wishing to enslave the clergy, deprived the priests of their lawful wives; William got a decree passed by the counsel of Winchester in 1076 to the effect that the married priests living in castles and towns should not be compelled to put away their wives. This was too much: Hildebrand summoned Lanfranc to Rome, but William forbade him to go. “Never did king, not even a pagan,” exclaimed Gregory, “attempt against the holy see what this man does not tear to carry out!”4 … To console himself, he demanded payment of the Peter’s pence, and an oath of fidelity. William sent the money, but refused the homage; and when Hildebrand saw the tribute which the king had paid, he said bitterly: “What value can I set on money which is contributed with so little honour!” William forbade

his clergy to recognise the pope, or to publish a bull without the royal approbation, which did not prevent Hildebrand from styling him “the pearl of princes.” “It is true,” said he to his legate, “that the English king does not behave in certain matters so religiously as we could desire.… Yet beware of exasperating him.… We shall win him over to God and St. Peter more surely by mildness and reason than by strictness or severity.”2 In this manner the pope acted like the archbishop—siluit: he was silent. It is for feeble governments that Rome reserves her energies. The Norman kings, desirous of strengthening their work, constructed Gothic cathedrals in the room of wooden churches, in which they installed their soldier-bishops, as if they were strong fortresses. Instead of the moral power and the humble crook of the shepherd, they gave them secular power and a staff. The religious episcopate was succeeded by a political one. William Rufus went even to greater lengths than his father. Taking advantage of the schism which divided the papacy, he did without a pope for ten years, leaving abbeys, bishoprics, and even Canterbury vacant, and scandalously squandering their revenues. Cæsaropapia (which transforms a king into a pope) having thus attained its greatest excess, a sacerdotal reaction could not fail to take place. The papacy is about to rise up again in England, and royalty to decline—two movements which are always found combined in Great Britain.

CHAPTER V

Anselm’s Firmness—Becket’s Austerity—The King scourged—John becomes the Pope’s Vassal—Collision between Popery and Liberty—The Vassal King ravages his Kingdom—Religion of the Senses and Superstition.

We are now entering upon a new phase of history. Romanism is on the point of triumphing by the exertions of learned men, energetic prelates, and princes in whom extreme imprudence was joined with extreme servility. This is the era of the dominion of popery, and we shall see it unscrupulously employing the despotism by which it is characterized. A malady having occasioned some degree of remorse in the king, he consented to fill up the vacancy in the archiepiscopal see. And now Anselm first appears in England. He was born in an Alpine valley, at the town of Aosta in Piedmont. Imbibing the instructions of his pious mother Ermenberga, and believing that God’s throne was placed on the summit of the gigantic mountains he saw rising around him, the child Anselm climbed them in his dreams, and received the bread of heaven from the hands of the Lord. Unhappily in after-years he recognised another throne in the church of Christ, and bowed his head before the chair of St. Peter. This was the man whom William II. summoned in 1093 to fill the primacy of Canterbury. Anselm, who was then sixty years old, and engaged in teaching at Bee, refused at first: the character of Rufus terrified him. “The church of England,” said he, “is a plough that ought to be drawn by two oxen of equal strength. How can you yoke together an old and timid sheep like me and that wild bull?” At length he accepted, and concealing a mind of great power under an appearance of humility, he had hardly arrived in England before he recognised Pope Urban II., demanded the estates of his see which the treasury had seized upon, refused to pay the king the sums he demanded, contested the right of investiture against Henry I., forbade all ecclesiastics to take the feudal oath, and determined that the priests should forthwith put away their wives. Scholasticism, of which Anselm was the first representative, freed the church from the yoke of royalty, but only to chain it to the papal chair. The fetters were about to be riveted by a still more energetic hand; and what this great theologian had begun, a great worldling was to carry on. At the hunting parties of Henry II. a man attracted the attention of his sovereign by his air of

frankness, agreeable manners, witty conversation, and exuberant vivacity. This was Thomas Becket, the son of an Anglo-Saxon and a Syrian woman. Being both priest and soldier, he was appointed at the same time by the king prebend of Hastings and governor of the Tower. When nominated chancellor of England, he showed himself no less expert than Wilfrid in misappropriating the wealth of the minors in his charge, and of the abbeys and bishoprics, and indulged in the most extravagant luxury. Henry, the first of the Plantagenets, a man of undecided character, having noticed Becket's zeal in upholding the prerogatives of the crown, appointed him archbishop of Canterbury. "Now, sire," remarked the primate, with a smile, "when I shall have to choose between God's favour and yours, remember it is yours that I shall sacrifice."

Becket, who, as keeper of the seals, had been the most magnificent of courtiers, affected as archbishop to be the most venerable of saints. He sent back the seals to the king, assumed the robe of a monk, wore sackcloth filled with vermin, lived on the plainest food, every day knelt down to wash the feet of the poor, paced the cloisters of his cathedral with tearful eyes, and spent hours in prayer before the altar. As champion of the priests, even in their crimes, he took under his protection one who to the crime of seduction had added the murder of his victim's father. The judges having represented to Henry that during the first eight years of his reign a hundred murders had been committed by ecclesiastics, the king in 1164 summoned a council at Clarendon, in which certain regulations or constitutions were drawn up, with the object of preventing the encroachments of the hierarchy. Becket at first refused to sign them, but at length consented, and then withdrew into solitary retirement to mourn over his fault. Pope Alexander III released him from his oath; and then began a fierce and long struggle between the king and the primate. Four knights of the court, catching up a hasty expression of their master's, barbarously murdered the archbishop at the foot of the altar in his own cathedral church (a. d. 1170). The people looked upon Becket as a saint: immense crowds came to pray at his tomb, at which many miracles were worked. "Even from his grave," said Becket's partizans, "he renders his testimony in behalf of the papacy."

Henry now passed from one extreme to the other. He entered Canterbury barefooted, and prostrated himself before the martyr's tomb: the bishops, priests, and monks, to the number of eighty, passed before him, each bearing a scourge, and struck three or five blows according to their rank on the naked shoulders of the king. In former ages, so the priestly fable ran, Saint Peter had scourged an archbishop of Canterbury: now Rome in sober reality scourges the back of royalty, and nothing can henceforward check her victorious career. A Plantagenet surrendered England to the pope, and the pope gave him authority to subdue Ireland.

Rome, who had set her foot on the neck of a king, was destined under one of the sons of Henry II to set it on the neck of England. John being unwilling to acknowledge an archbishop of Canterbury illegally nominated by Pope Innocent III, the latter, more daring than Hildebrand, laid the kingdom under an interdict. Upon this John ordered all the prelates and abbots to leave England, and sent a monk to Spain as ambassador to Mahomet-el-Nasir, offering to turn Mahometan and to become his vassal. But as Philip Augustus was preparing to dethrone him, John made up his mind to become a vassal of Innocent, and not of Mahomet—which was about the same thing to him. On the 15th May 1213, he laid his crown at the legate's feet, declared that he surrendered his kingdom of England to the pope, and made oath to him as to his lord paramount. A national protest then boldly claimed the ancient liberties of the people. Forty-five barons armed in complete

mail, and mounted on their noble war-horses, surrounded by their knights and servants and about two thousand soldiers, met at Brackley during the festival of Easter in 1215, and sent a deputation to Oxford, where the court then resided. “Here,” said they to the king, “is the charter which consecrates the liberties confirmed by Henry II, and which you also have solemnly sworn to observe.” … “Why do they not demand my crown also?” said the king in a furious passion, and then with an oath, he added: “I will not grant them liberties which will make me a slave.” This is the usual language of weak and absolute kings. Neither would the nation submit to be enslaved. The barons occupied London, and on the 15th June 1215, the king signed the famous Magna Charta at Runnymede. The political protestantism of the thirteenth century would have done but little, however, for the greatness of the nation, without the religious protestantism of the sixteenth. This was the first time that the papacy came into collision with modem liberty. It shuddered in alarm, and the shock was violent. Innocent swore (as was his custom), and then declared the Great Charter null and void, forbade the king under pain of anathema to respect the liberties which he had confirmed, ascribed the conduct of the barons to the instigation of Satan, and ordered them to make apology to the king, and to send a deputation to Rome to learn from the mouth of the pope himself what should be the government of England. This was the way in which the papacy welcomed the first manifestations of liberty among the nations, and made known the model system under which it claimed to govern the whole world. The priests of England supported the anathemas pronounced by their chief. They indulged in a thousand jeers and sarcasms against John about the charter he had accepted:—“This is the twenty-fifth king of England—not a king, not even a kingling—but the disgrace of kings—a king without a kingdom—the fifth wheel of a waggon—the last of kings, and the disgrace of his people!—I would not give a straw for him.… Fuisti rex, nunc fex (once a king, but now a clown).” John, unable to support his disgrace, groaned and gnashed his teeth and rolled his eyes, tore sticks from the hedges and gnawed them like a maniac, or dashed them into fragments on the ground. The barons, unmoved alike by the insolence of the pope and the despair of the king, replied that they would maintain the charter. Innocent excommunicated them. “Is it the pope’s business to regulate temporal matters?” asked they. “By what right do vile usurers and foul simoniacs domineer over our country and excommunicate the whole world?” The pope soon triumphed throughout England. His vassal John having hired some bands of adventurers from the continent, traversed at their head the whole country from the Channel to the Forth. These mercenaries carried desolation in their track: they extorted money, made prisoners, burnt the barons’ castles, laid waste their parks, and dishonoured their wives and daughters. The king would sleep in a house, and the next morning set fire to it. Blood stained assassins scoured the country during the night, the sword in one hand and the torch in the other, marking their progress by murder and conflagration.4 Such was the enthronization of popery in England. At this sight the barons, overcome by emotion, denounced both the king and the pope: “Alas! poor country!” they exclaimed. “Wretched England!… And thou, O pope, a curse light upon thee!” The curse was not long delayed. As the king was returning from some more than usually successful foray, and as the royal waggons were crossing the sands of the Wash, the tide rose and all sank in the abyss. This accident filled John with terror: it seemed to him that the earth was about to open and swallow him up; he fled to a convent, where he drank copiously of cider, and died of drunkenness and fright.3

Such was the end of the pope’s vassal—of his armed missionary in Great Britain. Never had so vile a prince been the involuntary occasion to his people of such great benefits. From his reign

England may date her enthusiasm for liberty and her dread of popery.

During this time a great transformation had been accomplished. Magnificent churches and the marvels of religious art, with ceremonies and a multitude of prayers and chantings dazzled the eyes, charmed the ears, and captivated the senses; but testified also to the absence of every strong moral and Christian disposition, and the predominance of worldliness in the church. At the same time the adoration of images and relics, saints, angels, and Mary the mother of God, the worships of latria, doulia, and hyperdoulia, the real Mediator transported from the throne of mercy to the seat of vengeance, at once indicated and kept up among the people that ignorance of truth and absence of grace which characterize popery. All these errors tended to bring about a reaction: and in fact the march of the Reformation may now be said to begin.

England had been brought low by the papacy: it rose up again by resisting Rome. Grostête, Bradwardine, and Edward III, prepared the way for Wickliffe, and Wickliffe for the Reformation.

CHAPTER VI

Reaction—Grostete—Principles of Reform—Contest with the Pope—Sewal—Progress of the Nation—Opposition to the Papacy—Conversion of Bradwardine—Grace is Supreme—Edward III—Statutes of Provisors and Præmunire. In the reign of Henry III, son of John, while the king was conniving at the usurpations of Rome, and the pope ridiculing the complaints of the barons, a pious and energetic man, of comprehensive understanding, was occupied in the study of the Holy Scriptures in their original languages, and bowing to their sovereign authority. Robert Grostête (Greathead or Capito) was born of poor parents in the county of Lincolnshire, and being raised to the see of Lincoln in 1235, when he was sixty years of age, he boldly undertook to reform his diocese, one of the largest in England. Nor was this all. At the very time when the Roman pontiff, who had hitherto been content to be called the vicar of St. Peter, proclaimed himself the vicar of God, and was ordering the English bishops to find benefices for three hundred Romans, Grostête was declaring that “to follow a pope who rebels against the will of Christ, is to separate from Christ and his body; and if ever the time should come when all men follow an erring pontiff, then will be the great apostasy. Then will true Christians refuse to obey, and Rome will be the cause of an unprecedented schism.”3 Thus did he predict the Reformation. Disgusted at the avarice of the monks and priests, he visited Rome to demand a reform. “Brother,” said Innocent IV to him with some irritation, “Is thine eye evil, because I am good?” The English bishop exclaimed with a sigh: “O money, money! how great is thy power—especially in this court of Rome!” A year had scarcely elapsed before Innocent commanded the bishop to give a canonry in Lincoln cathedral to his infant nephew. Grostête replied: “After the sin of Lucifer there is none more opposed to the Gospel than that which ruins souls by giving them a faithless minister. Bad pastors are the cause of unbelief, heresy, and disorder. Those who introduce them into the church are little better than antichrists, and their culpability is in proportion to their dignity. Although the chief of the angels should order me to commit such a sin, I would refuse. My obedience forbids me to obey; and therefore I rebel.”

Thus spoke a bishop to his pontiff: his obedience to the word of God forbade him to obey the pope. This was the principle of the Reformation. “Who is this old driveller that in his dotage dares to judge of my conduct?” exclaimed Innocent, whose wrath was appeased by the intervention of certain cardinals. Grostête on his dying bed professed still more clearly the principles of the reformers; he declared that a heresy was “an opinion conceived by carnal motives, contrary to

Scripture, openly taught and obstinately defended," thus asserting the authority of Scripture instead of the authority of the church. He died in peace, and the public voice proclaimed him "a searcher of the Scriptures, an adversary of the pope, and despiser of the Romans." Innocent, desiring to take vengeance on his bones, meditated the exhumation of his body, when one night (says Matthew of Paris) the bishop appeared before him. Drawing near the pontiff's bed, he struck him with his crosier, and thus addressed him with terrible voice and threatening look:3 "Wretch! the Lord doth not permit thee to have any power over me. Woe be to thee!" The vision disappeared, and the pope, uttering a cry as if he had been struck by some sharp weapon, lay senseless on his couch. Never after did he pass a quiet night, and pursued by the phantoms of his troubled imagination, he expired while the palace re-echoed with his lamentable groans.

Grostête was not single in his opposition to the pope. Sewal, archbishop of York, did the same, and "the more the pope cursed him, the more the people blessed him."—"Moderate your tyranny," said the archbishop to the pontiff, "for the Lord said to Peter, Feed my sheep, and not shear them, flay them, or devour them." The pope smiled and let the bishop speak, because the king allowed the pope to act. The power of England, which was constantly increasing, was soon able to give more force to these protests. The nation was indeed growing in greatness. The madness of John, which had caused the English people to lose their continental possessions, had given them more unity and power. The Norman kings, being compelled to renounce entirely the country which had been their cradle, had at length made up their minds to look upon England as their home. The two races, so long hostile, had melted one into the other. Free institutions were formed; the laws were studied; and colleges were founded. The language began to assume a regular form, and the ships of England were already formidable at sea. For more than a century the most brilliant victories attended the British armies. A king of France was brought captive to London: an English king was crowned at Paris. Even Spain and Italy felt the valour of these proud islanders. The English people took their station in the foremost rank. Now the character of a nation is never raised by halves. When the mighty ones of the earth were seen to fall before her, England could no longer crawl at the feet of an Italian priest. At no period did her laws attack the papacy with so much energy. At the beginning of the fourteenth century an Englishman having brought to London one of the pope's bulls—a bull of an entirely spiritual character, it was an excommunication—was prosecuted as a traitor to the crown, and would have been hanged, had not the sentence, at the chancellor's intercession, been changed to perpetual banishment. The common law was the weapon the government then opposed to the papal bulls. Shortly afterwards, in 1307, king Edward ordered the sheriffs to resist the arrogant pretensions of the Romish agents. But it is to two great men in the fourteenth century equally illustrious, the one in the state, and the other in the church, that England is indebted for the development of the protestant element in England. In 1346, an English army, 34,000 strong, met face to face at Crecy a French army of 100,000 fighting men. Two individuals of very different characters were in the English host. One of them was King Edward III, a brave and ambitious prince, who, being resolved to recover for the royal authority all its power, and for England all her glory, had undertaken the conquest of France. The other was his chaplain Bradwardine, a man of so humble a character that his meekness was often taken for stupidity. And thus it was that on his receiving the pallium at Avignon from the hands of the pope on his elevation to the see of Canterbury, a jester mounted on an ass rode into the hall and petitioned the pontiff to make him primate instead of that imbecile priest.

Bradwardine was one of the most pious men of the age, and to his prayers his sovereign's victories were ascribed. He was also one of the greatest geniuses of his time, and occupied the first rank among astronomers, philosophers, and mathematicians. The pride of science had at first alienated him from the doctrine of the cross. But one day while in the house of God and listening to the reading of the Holy Scriptures, these words struck his ear: It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. His ungrateful heart, he tells us, at first rejected this humiliating doctrine with aversion. Yet the word of God had laid its powerful hold upon him; he was converted to the truths he had despised, and immediately began to set forth the doctrines of eternal grace at Merton College, Oxford. He had drunk so deep at the fountain of Scripture that the traditions of men concerned him but little, and he was so absorbed in adoration in spirit and in truth, that he remarked not outward superstitions. His lectures were eagerly listened to and circulated through all Europe. The grace of God was their very essence, as it was of the Reformation. With sorrow Bradwardine beheld Pelagianism every where substituting a mere religion of externals for inward Christianity, and on his knees he struggled for the salvation of the church. "As in the times of old four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal strove against a single prophet of God; so now, O Lord," he exclaimed, "the number of those who strive with Pelagius against thy free grace cannot be counted. They pretend not to receive grace freely, but to buy it.3 The will of men (they say) should precede, and thine should follow: theirs is the mistress, and thine the servant. … Alas! nearly the whole world is walking in error in the steps of Pelagius.5 Arise, O Lord, and judge thy cause." And the Lord did arise, but not until after the death of this pious archbishop, in the days of Wickliffe, who, when a youth, listened to the lectures at Merton College, and especially in the days of Luther and of Calvin. His contemporaries gave him the name of the profound doctor.

If Bradwardine walked truthfully in the path of faith, his illustrious patron Edward advanced triumphantly in the field of policy. Pope Clement IV having decreed that the first two vacancies in the Anglican church should be conferred on two of his cardinals: "France is becoming English," said the courtiers to the king; "and by way of compensation, England is becoming Italian." Edward, desirous of guaranteeing the religious liberties of England, passed with the consent of parliament in 1350 the statute of provisors, which made void every ecclesiastical appointment contrary to the rights of the king, the chapters, or the patrons. Thus the privileges of the chapters and the liberty of the English Catholics, as well as the independence of the crown, were protected against the invasion of foreigners; and imprisonment or banishment for life was denounced upon all offenders against the law. This bold step alarmed the pontiff. Accordingly, three years after, the king having nominated one of his secretaries to the see of Durham—a man without any of the qualities becoming a bishop—the pope readily confirmed the appointment. When some one expressed his astonishment at this, the pope made answer: "If the king of England had nominated an ass, I would have accepted him." This may remind us of the ass of Avignon; and it would seem that this humble animal at that time played a significant part in the elections to the papacy. But be that as it may, the pope withdrew his pretensions. "Empires have their term," observes an historian at this place; "when once they have reached it, they halt, they retrograde, they fall." The term seemed to be drawing nearer every day. In the reign of Edward III, between 1343 and 1353, again in 1364, and finally under Richard II, in 1393, those stringent laws were passed which interdicted all appeal to the court of Rome, all bulls from the Roman bishop, all excommunications, etc., in a word, every act infringing on the rights of the crown; and declared that whoever should bring such documents

into England, or receive, publish, or execute them, should be put out of the king's protection, deprived of their property, attached in their persons, and brought before the king in council to undergo their trial according to the terms of the act. Such was the statute of Præmunire.

Great was the indignation of the Romans at the news of this law: "If the statute of mortmain put the pope into a sweat," says Fuller, "this of Præmunire gave him a fit of fever." One pope called it an "execrable statute,"—"a horrible crime." Such are the terms applied by the pontiffs to all that thwarts their ambition. Of the two wars carried on by Edward—the one against the King of France, and the other against popery—the latter was the most righteous and important. The benefits which this prince had hoped to derive from his brilliant victories at Crecy and Poitiers dwindled away almost entirely before his death; while his struggles with the papacy, founded as they were on truth, have exerted even to our own days an indisputable influence on the destinies of Great Britain. Yet the prayers and the conquests of Bradwardine, who proclaimed in that fallen age the doctrine of grace, produced effects still greater, not only for the salvation of many souls, but for the liberty, moral force, and greatness of England.

CHAPTER VII The Mendicant Friars—Their Disorders and Popular Indignation—Wickliffe—His success—Speeches of the Peers against the Papal Tribute—Agreement of Bruges—Courtenay and Lancaster—Wickliffe before the Convocation—Altercation between Lancaster and Courtenay—Riot—Three Briefs against Wickliffe—Wickliffe at Lambeth—Mission of the Poor Priests—Their Preachings and Persecutions—Wickliffe and the Four Regents.

Thus in the first half of the fourteenth century, nearly two hundred years before the Reformation, England appeared weary of the yoke of Rome. Bradwardine was no more; but a man who had been his disciple was about to succeed him, and without attaining to the highest functions, to exhibit in his person the past and future tendencies of the church of Christ in Great Britain. The English Reformation did not begin with Henry VIII: the revival of the sixteenth century is but a link in the chain commencing with the apostles and reaching to us. The resistance of Edward III to the papacy without had not suppressed the papacy within. The mendicant friars, and particularly the Franciscans, those fanatical soldiers of the pope, were endeavouring by pious frauds to monopolize the wealth of the country. "Every year," said they, "Saint Francis descends from heaven to purgatory, and delivers the souls of all those who were buried in the dress of his order." These friars used to kidnap children from their parents and shut them up in monasteries. They affected to be poor, and with a wallet on their back, begged with a piteous air from both high and low; but at the same time they dwelt in palaces, heaped up treasures, dressed in costly garments, and wasted their time in luxurious entertainments. The least of them looked upon themselves as lords, and those who wore the doctor's cap considered themselves kings. While they diverted themselves, eating and drinking at their well-spread tables, they used to send ignorant uneducated persons in their place to preach fables and legends to amuse and plunder the people. If any rich man talked of giving alms to the poor and not to the monks, they exclaimed loudly against such impiety, and declared with threatening voices: "If you do so we will leave the country, and return accompanied by a legion of glittering helmets."3 Public indignation was at its height. "The monks and priests of Rome," was the cry, "are eating us away like a cancer. God must deliver us or the people will perish.… Woe be to them! the cup of wrath will run over. Men of holy church shall be despised as carrion, as dogs shall they be cast out in open places." The arrogance of Rome made the cup run over. Pope Urban. V, heedless of the laurels won by the conqueror at Crecy and

Poitiers, summoned Edward III to recognize him as legitimate sovereign of England, and to pay as feudal tribute the annual rent of one thousand marcs. In case of refusal the king was to appear before him at Rome. For thirty-three years the popes had never mentioned the tribute accorded by John to Innocent III, and which had always been paid very irregularly. The conqueror of the Valois was irritated by this insolence on the part of an Italian bishop, and called on God to avenge England. From Oxford came forth the avenger.

John Wickliffe, born in 1324, in a little village in Yorkshire, was one of the students who attended the lectures of the pious Bradwardine at Merton College. He was in the flower of his age, and produced a great sensation in the university. In 1348, a terrible pestilence, which is said to have carried off half the human race, appeared in England after successively devastating Asia and the continent of Europe. This visitation of the Almighty sounded like the trumpet of the judgment-day in the heart of Wickliffe. Alarmed at the thoughts of eternity, the young man—for he was then only twenty-four years old—passed days and nights in his cell groaning and sighing, and calling upon God to show him the path he ought to follow. He found it in the Holy Scriptures, and resolved to make it known to others. He commenced with prudence; but being elected in 1361 warden of Balliol, and in 1365 warden of Canterbury College also, he began to set forth the doctrine of faith in a more energetic manner. His biblical and philosophical studies, his knowledge of theology, his penetrating mind, the purity of his manners, and his unbending courage, rendered him the object of general admiration. A profound teacher, like his master, and an eloquent preacher, he demonstrated to the learned during the course of the week what he intended to preach, and on Sunday he preached to the people what he had previously demonstrated. His disputations gave strength to his sermons, and his sermons shed light upon his disputations. He accused the clergy of having banished the Holy Scriptures, and required that the authority of the word of God should be re-established in the church. Loud acclamations crowned these discussions, and the crowd of vulgar minds trembled with indignation when they heard these shouts of applause.

Wickliffe was forty years old when the papal arrogance stirred England to its depths. Being at once an able politician and a fervent Christian, he vigorously defended the rights of the crown against the Romish aggression, and by his arguments not only enlightened his fellow-countrymen generally, but stirred up the zeal of several members of both houses of parliament. The parliament assembled, and never perhaps had it been summoned on a question which excited to so high a degree the emotions of England, and indeed of Christendom. The debates in the House of Lords were especially remarkable: all the arguments of Wickliffe were reproduced. “Feudal tribute is due,” said one, “only to him who can grant feudal protection in return. Now how can the pope wage war to protect his fiefs?”—“Is it as vassal of the crown or as feudal superior,” asked another, “that the pope demands part of our property? Urban V will not accept the first of these titles.… Well and good! but the English people will not acknowledge the second.” “Why,” said a third, “was this tribute originally granted? To pay the pope for absolving John.… His demand, then, is mere simony, a kind of clerical swindling, which the lords spiritual and temporal should indignantly oppose.”—“No,” said another speaker, “England belongs not to the pope. The pope is but a man, subject to sin; but Christ is the Lord of lords, and this kingdom is held directly and solely of Christ alone.” Thus spoke the lords inspired by Wickliffe. Parliament decided unanimously that no prince had the right to alienate the sovereignty of the kingdom without the consent of the other two estates, and that if the pontiff should attempt to proceed against the king of England as his vassal,

the nation should rise in a body to maintain the independence of the crown. To no purpose did this generous resolution excite the wrath of the partisans of Rome; to no purpose did they assert that, by the canon law, the king ought to be deprived of his fief, and, that England now belonged to the pope: “No,” replied Wickliffe, “the canon law has no force when it is opposed to the word of God.” Edward III made Wickliffe one of his chaplains, and the papacy has ceased from that hour to lay claim—in explicit terms at least—to the Sovereignty of England. When the pope gave up his temporal he was desirous, at the very least, of keeping up his ecclesiastical pretensions, and to procure the repeal of the statutes of Præmunire and Provisors. It was accordingly resolved to hold a conference at Bruges to treat of this question, and Wickliffe, who had been created doctor of theology two years before, proceeded thither with the other commissioners in April 1374. They came to an arrangement in 1375 that the king should bind himself to repeal the penalties denounced against the pontifical agents, and that the pope should confirm the king’s ecclesiastical presentations. But the nation was not pleased with this compromise. “The clerks sent from Rome,” said the Commons, “are more dangerous for the kingdom than Jews or Saracens: every papal agent resident in England, and every Englishman living at the court of Rome, should be punished with death.” Such was the language of the Good Parliament. In the fourteenth century the English nation called a parliament good which did not yield to the papacy.

Wickliffe, after his return to England, was presented to the rectory of Lutterworth, and from that time a practical activity was added to his academic influence. At Oxford he spoke as a master to the young theologians; in his parish he addressed the people as a preacher and as a pastor. “The Gospel,” said he, “is the only source of religion. The Roman pontiff is a mere cut-purse, and, far from having the right to reprimand the whole world, he may be lawfully reproved by his inferiors, and even by laymen.” The papacy grew alarmed. Courtenay, son of the Earl of Devonshire, an imperious but grave priest, and full of zeal for what he believed to be the truth, had recently been appointed to the see of London. In parliament he had resisted Wickliffe’s patron, John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, third son of Edward III., and head of the house of that name. The bishop, observing that the doctrines of the reformer were spreading among the people, both high and low, charged him with heresy, and summoned him to appear before the convocation assembled in St Paul’s Cathedral. On the 19th February, 1377, an immense crowd, heated with fanaticism, thronged the approaches to the church and filled its aisles, while the citizens favourable to the reform remained concealed in their houses. Wickliffe moved forward, preceded by Lord Percy, marshal of England, and supported by the Duke of Lancaster, who defended him from purely political motives. He was followed by four bachelors of divinity, his counsel, and passed through the hostile multitude who looked upon Lancaster as the enemy of their liberties, and upon himself as the enemy of the church. “Let not the sight of these bishops make you shrink a hair’s-breadth in your profession of faith,” said the prince to the doctor. “They are unlearned; and as for this concourse of people, fear nothing, we are here to defend you.” When the reformer had crossed the threshold of the cathedral, the crowd within appeared like a solid wall; and, notwithstanding the efforts of the earl-marshal, Wickliffe and Lancaster could not advance. The people swayed to and fro, hands were raised in violence, and loud hootings re-echoed through the building. At length Percy made an opening in the dense multitude, and Wickliffe passed on. The haughty Courtenay, who had been commissioned by the archbishop to preside over the assembly, watched these strange movements with anxiety, and beheld with displeasure the learned doctor accompanied by the two most powerful men in England. He said nothing to the Duke of Lancaster, who at that time

administered the kingdom, but turning towards Percy observed sharply: “If I had known, my lord, that you claimed to be master in this church, I would have taken measures to prevent your entrance.” Lancaster coldly rejoined: “He shall keep such mastery here, though you say nay.” Percy now turned to Wickliffe, who had remained standing and said: “Sit down and rest yourself.” At this Courtenay gave way to his anger, and exclaimed in a loud tone: “He must not sit down; criminals stand before their judges.” Lancaster, indignant that a learned doctor of England should be refused a favour to which his age alone entitled him (for he was between fifty and sixty) made answer to the bishop: “My lord, you are very arrogant; take care … or I may bring down your pride, and not yours only, but that of all the prelacy in England.”—“Do me all the harm you can,” was Courtenay’s haughty reply. The prince rejoined with some emotion: “You are insolent, my lord. You think, no doubt, you can trust on your family … but your relations will have trouble enough to protect themselves.” To this the bishop nobly replied: “My confidence is not in my parents nor in any man; but only in God, in whom I trust, and by whose assistance I will be bold to speak the truth.” Lancaster, who saw hypocrisy only in these words, turned to one of his attendants, and whispered in his ear, but so loud as to be heard by the bystanders: “I would rather pluck the bishop by the hair of his head out of his chair, than take this at his hands.” Every impartial reader must confess that the prelate spoke with greater dignity than the prince. Lancaster had hardly uttered these imprudent words before the bishop’s partizans fell upon him and Percy, and even upon Wickliffe, who alone had remained calm.2 The two noblemen resisted, their friends and servants defended them, the uproar became extreme, and there was no hope of restoring tranquillity. The two lords escaped with difficulty, and the assembly broke up in great confusion. On the following day the earl-marshal having called upon parliament to apprehend the disturbers of the public peace, the clerical party uniting with the enemies of Lancaster, filled the streets with their clamour; and while the duke and the earl escaped by the Thames, the mob collected before Percy’s house, broke down the doors, searched every chamber, and thrust their swords into every dark corner. When they found that he had escaped, the rioters, imagining that he was concealed in Lancaster’s palace, rushed to the Savoy, at that time the most magnificent building in the kingdom. They killed a priest who endeavoured to stay them, tore down the ducal arms, and hung them on the gallows like those of a traitor. They would have gone still farther if the bishop had not very opportunely reminded them that they were in Lent. As for Wickliffe, he was dismissed with an injunction against preaching his doctrines. But this decision of the priests was not ratified by the people of England. Public opinion declared in favour of Wickliffe. “If he is guilty,” said they, “why is he not punished? If he is innocent, why is he ordered to be silent? If he is the weakest in power, he is the strongest in truth!” And so indeed he was, and never had he spoken with such energy. He openly attacked the pretended apostolical chair, and declared that the two antipopes who sat at Rome and Avignon together made one antichrist. Being now in opposition to the pope, Wickliffe was soon to confess that Christ alone was king of the church; and that it is not possible for a man to be excommunicated, unless first and principally he be excommunicated by himself.

Rome could not close her ears. Wickliffe’s enemies sent thither nineteen propositions which they ascribed to him, and in the month of June 1377, just as Richard II, son of the Black Prince, a child eleven years old, was ascending the throne, three letters from Gregory XI, addressed to the king, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the university of Oxford, denounced Wickliffe as a heretic, and called upon them to proceed against him as against a common thief. The archbishop issued the citation: the crown and the university were silent. On the appointed day, Wickliffe, unaccompanied

by either Lancaster or Percy, proceeded to the archiepiscopal chapel at Lambeth. “Men expected he should be devoured,” says an historian; “being brought into the lion’s den.” But the burgesses had taken the prince’s place. The assault of Rome had aroused the friends of liberty and truth in England. “The pope’s briefs,” said they, “ought to have no effect in the realm without the king’s consent. Every man is master in his own house.” The archbishop had scarcely opened the sitting, when Sir Louis Clifford entered the chapel, and forbade the court, on the part of the queen-mother, to proceed against the reformer. The bishops were struck with a panic-fear: “they bent their heads,” says a Roman-catholic historian, “like a reed before the wind.” Wickliffe retired after handing in a protest. “In the first place,” said he, “I resolve with my whole heart, and by the grace of God, to be a sincere Christian; and, while my life shall last, to profess and defend the law of Christ so far as I have power.”2 Wickliffe’s enemies attacked this protest, and one of them eagerly maintained that whatever the pope ordered should be looked upon as right. “What!” answered the reformer; “the pope may then exclude from the canon of the scriptures any book that displeases him, and alter the Bible at pleasure?” Wickliffe thought that Rome, unsettling the grounds of infallibility, had transferred it from the Scriptures to the pope, and was desirous of restoring it to its true place, and re-establishing authority in the church on a truly divine foundation. A great change was now taking place in the reformer. Busying himself less about the kingdom of England, he occupied himself more about the kingdom of Christ. In him the political phasis was followed by the religious. To carry the glad tidings of the Gospel into the remotest hamlets, was now the great idea which possessed Wickliffe. If begging friars (said he) stroll over the country, preaching the legends of saints and the history of the Trojan war, we must do for God’s glory what they do to fill their wallets, and form a vast itinerant evangelization to convert souls to Jesus Christ. Turning to the most pious of his disciples, he said to them: “Go and preach, it is the sublimest work; but imitate not the priests whom we see after the sermon sitting in the ale-houses, or at the gaming-table, or wasting their time in hunting. After your sermon is ended, do you visit the sick, the aged, the poor, the blind, and the lame, and succour them according to your ability.” Such was the new practical theology which Wickliffe inaugurated—it was that of Christ himself. The “poor priests,” as they were called, set off barefoot, a staff in their hands, clothed in a coarse robe, living on alms, and satisfied with the plainest food. They stopped in the fields near some village, in the churchyards, in the market-places of the towns, and sometimes in the churches even. The people, among whom they were favourites, thronged around them, as the men of Northumbria had done at Aidan’s preaching. They spoke with a popular eloquence that entirely won over those who listened to them. Of these missionaries none was more beloved than John Ashton. He might be seen wandering over the country in every direction, or seated at some cottage hearth, or alone in some retired crossway, preaching to an attentive crowd. Missions of this kind have constantly revived in England at the great epochs of the church. The “poor priests” were not content with mere polemics: they preached the great mystery of godliness. “An angel could have made no propitiation for man,” one day exclaimed their master Wickliffe; “for the nature which has sinned is not that of the angels. The mediator must needs be a man; but every man being indebted to God for every thing that he is able to do, this man must needs have infinite merit, and be at the same time God.” The clergy became alarmed, and a law was passed commanding every king’s officer to commit the preachers and their followers to prison. In consequence of this, as soon as the humble missionary began to preach, the monks set themselves in motion. They watched him from the windows of their cells, at the street-corners, or from behind a hedge, and then hastened off to

procure assistance. But when the constables approached, a body of stout bold men stood forth, with arms in their hands, who surrounded the preacher, and zealously protected him against the attacks of the clergy. Carnal weapons were thus mingled with the preachings of the word of peace. The poor priests returned to their master: Wickliffe comforted them, advised with them, and then they departed once more. Every day this evangelization reached some new spot, and the light was thus penetrating into every quarter of England, when the reformer was suddenly stopped in his work.

Wickliffe was at Oxford in the year 1379, busied in the discharge of his duties as professor of divinity, when he fell dangerously ill. His was not a strong constitution; and work, age, and above all persecution had weakened him. Great was the joy in the monasteries; but for that joy to be complete, the heretic must recant. Every effort was made to bring this about in his last moments. The four regents, who represented the four religious orders, accompanied by four aldermen, hastened to the bedside of the dying man, hoping to frighten him by threatening him with the vengeance of Heaven. They found him calm and serene. “You have death on your lips,” said they; “be touched by your faults, and retract in our presence all that you have said to our injury.” Wickliffe remained silent, and the monks flattered themselves with an easy victory. But the nearer the reformer approached eternity, the greater was his horror of monkery. The consolation he had found in Jesus Christ had given him fresh energy. He begged his servant to raise him on his couch. Then feeble and pale, and scarcely able to support himself, he turned towards the friars, who were waiting for his recantation, and opening his livid lips, and fixing on them a piercing look, he said with emphasis: “I shall not die but live; and again declare the evil deeds of the friars.” We might almost picture to ourselves the spirit of Elijah threatening the priests of Baal. The regents and their companions looked at each other with astonishment. They left the room in confusion, and the reformer recovered to put the finishing touch to the most important of his works against the monks and against the pope.

CHAPTER VIII The Bible—Wickliffe’s Translation—Effects of its Publication—Opposition of the Clergy—Wickliffe’s Fourth Phasis—Transubstantiation—Excommunication—Wickliffe’s Firmness—Wat Tyler—The Synod—The condemned Propositions—Wickliffe’s Petition—Wickliffe before the Primate at Oxford—Wickliffe summoned to Rome—His Answer—The Trialogue—His Death—And Character—His teaching—His Ecclesiastical Views—A Prophecy.

Wickliffe’s ministry had followed a progressive course. At first he had attacked the papacy; next he preached the gospel to the poor; he could take one more step and put the people in permanent possession of the word of God. This was the third phase of his activity.

Scholasticism had banished the Scriptures into a mysterious obscurity. It is true that Bede had translated the Gospel of St. John; that the learned men at Alfred’s court had translated the four evangelists; that Elfric in the reign of Ethelred had translated some books of the Old Testament; that an Anglo-Norman priest had paraphrased the Gospels and the acts; that Richard Rolle, “the hermit of Hampole,” and some pious clerks in the fourteenth century, had produced a version of the Psalms, the Gospels, and Epistles:—but these rare volumes were hidden, like theological curiosities, in the libraries of a few convents. It was then a maxim that the reading of the Bible was injurious to the laity; and accordingly the priests forbade it, just as the Brahmins forbid the Shasters to the Hindoos. Oral tradition alone preserved among the people the histories of the Holy

Scriptures, mingled with legends of the saints. The time appeared ripe for the publication of a Bible. The increase of population, the attention the English were beginning to devote to their own language, the development which the system of representative government had received, the awakening of the human mind:—all these circumstances favoured the reformer's design.

Wickliffe was ignorant indeed of Greek and Hebrew; but was it nothing to shake off the dust which for ages had covered the Latin Bible, and to translate it into English? He was a good Latin scholar, of sound understanding and great penetration; but above all he loved the Bible, he understood it, and desired to communicate this treasure to others. Let us imagine him in his quiet study: on his table is the Vulgate text, corrected after the best manuscripts; and lying open around him are the commentaries of the doctors of the church, especially those of St. Jerome and Nicholas Lyrensis. Between ten and fifteen years he steadily prosecuted his task; learned men aided him with their advice, and one of them, Nicholas Hereford, appears to have translated a few chapters for him. At last in 1380 it was completed. This was a great event in the religious history of England, who, outstripping the nations on the continent, took her station in the foremost rank in the great work of disseminating the Scriptures. As soon as the translation was finished, the labour of the copyists began, and the Bible was erelong widely circulated either wholly or in portions. The reception of the work surpassed Wickliffe's expectations. The Holy Scriptures exercised a reviving influence over men's hearts; minds were enlightened; souls were converted; the voices of the "poor priests" had done little in comparison with this voice; something new had entered into the world. Citizens, soldiers, and the lower classes welcomed this new era with acclamations; the high-born curiously examined the unknown book; and even Anne of Luxemburg, wife of Richard II, having learnt English, began to read the Gospels diligently. She did more than this: she made them known to Arundel, archbishop of York and chancellor, and afterwards a persecutor, but who now, struck at the sight of a foreign lady—of a queen, humbly devoting her leisure to the study of such virtuous books, commenced reading them himself, and rebuked the prelates who neglected this holy pursuit. "You could not meet two persons on the highway," says a contemporary writer, "but one of them was Wickliffe's disciple."

Yet all in England did not equally rejoice: the lower clergy opposed this enthusiasm with complaints and maledictions. "Master John Wickliffe, by translating the Gospel into English," said the monks, "has rendered it more acceptable and more intelligible to laymen and even to women, than it had hitherto been to learned and intelligent clerks!… The Gospel pearl is every where cast out and trodden under foot of swine." New contests arose for the reformer. Wherever he bent his steps, he was violently attacked. "It is heresy," cried the monks, "to speak of Holy Scripture in English."3—"Since the church has approved of the four Gospels, she would have been just as able to reject them and admit others! The church sanctions and condemns what she pleases.… Learn to believe in the church rather than in the Gospel." These clamours did not alarm Wickliffe. "Many nations have had the Bible in their own language. The Bible is the faith of the church. Though the pope and all his clerks should disappear from the face of the earth," said he, "our faith would not fail, for it is founded on Jesus alone, our Master and our God." But Wickliffe did not stand alone: in the palace as in the cottage, and even in parliament, the rights of Holy Scripture found defenders. A motion having been made in the Upper House (1390) to seize all the copies of the Bible, the Duke of Lancaster exclaimed: "Are we then the very dregs of humanity, that we cannot possess the laws of our religion in our own tongue?"

Having given his fellow-countrymen the Bible, Wickliffe began to reflect on its contents. This was a new step in his onward path. There comes a moment when the Christian, saved by a lively faith, feels the need of giving an account to himself of this faith, and this originates the science of theology. This is a natural movement: if the child, who at first possesses sensations and affections only, feels the want, as he grows up, of reflection and knowledge, why should it not be the same with the Christian? Politics—home missions—Holy Scripture—had engaged Wickliffe in succession; theology had its turn, and this was the fourth phase of his life. Yet he did not penetrate to the same degree as the men of the sixteenth century into the depths of the Christian doctrine; and he attached himself in a more especial manner to those ecclesiastical dogmas which were more closely connected with the presumptuous hierarchy and the simoniacal gains of Rome,—such as transubstantiation. The Anglo-Saxon church had not professed this doctrine. “The host is the body of Christ, not bodily but spiritually,” said Elfric in the tenth century in a letter addressed to the archbishop of York; but Lanfranc, the opponent of Berengarius, had taught England that at the word of a priest God quitted heaven and descended on the altar. Wickliffe undertook to overthrow the pedestal on which the pride of the priesthood was founded. “The eucharist is naturally bread and wine,” he taught at Oxford in 1381; “but by virtue of the sacramental words it contains in every part the real body and blood of Christ.” He did not stop here. “The consecrated wafer which we see on the altar,” said he, “is not Christ, nor any part of him, but his efficient sign.” He oscillated between these two shades of doctrine; but to the first he more habitually attached himself. He denied the sacrifice of the mass offered by the priest, because it was substituted for the sacrifice of the cross offered up by Jesus Christ; and rejected transubstantiation, because it nullified the spiritual and living presence of the Lord. When Wickliffe’s enemies heard these propositions, they appeared horror-stricken, and yet in secret they were delighted at the prospect of destroying him. They met together, examined twelve theses he had published, and pronounced against him suspension from all teaching, imprisonment, and the greater excommunication. At the same time his friends became alarmed, their zeal cooled, and many of them forsook him. The Duke of Lancaster, in particular, could not follow him into this new sphere. That prince had no objection to an ecclesiastical opposition which might aid the political power, and for that purpose he had tried to enlist the reformer’s talents and courage; but he feared a dogmatic opposition that might compromise him. The sky was heavy with clouds; Wickliffe was alone. The storm soon burst upon him. One day, while seated in his doctoral chair in the Augustine school, and calmly explaining the nature of the eucharist, an officer entered the hall, and read the sentence of condemnation. It was the design of his enemies to humble the professor in the eyes of his disciples. Lancaster immediately became alarmed, and hastening to his old friend begged him—ordered him even—to trouble himself no more about this matter. Attacked on every side, Wickliffe for a time remained silent. Shall he sacrifice the truth to save his reputation—his repose—perhaps his life? Shall expediency get the better of faith,—Lancaster prevail over Wickliffe? No: his courage was invincible. “Since the year of our Lord 1000,” said he, “all the doctors have been in error about the sacrament of the altar—except, perhaps, it may be Berengarius. How canst thou, O priest, who art but a man, make thy Maker? What! the thing that groweth in the fields—that ear which thou pluckest to-day, shall be God to-morrow!… As you cannot make the works which he made, how shall ye make Him who made the works? Woe to the adulterous generation that believeth the testimony of Innocent rather than of the Gospel.”2 Wickliffe called upon his adversaries to refute the opinions they had condemned, and finding that

they threatened him with a civil penalty (imprisonment), he appealed to the king. The time was not favourable for such an appeal. A fatal circumstance increased Wickliffe's danger. Wat Tyler and a dissolute priest named Ball, taking advantage of the ill-will excited by the rapacity and brutality of the royal tax-gatherers, had occupied London with 100,000 men. John Ball kept up the spirits of the insurgents, not by expositions of the gospel, like Wickliffe's poor priests, but by fiery comments on the distich they had chosen for their device:— When Adam delved and Eve span, Who was then the gentleman?

There were many who felt no scruple in ascribing these disorders to the reformer, who was quite innocent of them; and Courtenay, bishop of London, having been translated to the see of Canterbury, lost no time in convoking a synod to pronounce on this matter of Wickliffe's. They met in the middle of May, about two o'clock in the afternoon, and were proceeding to pronounce sentence when an earthquake, which shook the city of London and all Britain, so alarmed the members of the council that they unanimously demanded the adjournment of a decision which appeared so manifestly rebuked by God. But the archbishop skilfully turned this strange phenomenon to his own purposes: "Know you not," said he, "that the noxious vapours which catch fire in the bosom of the earth, and give rise to these phenomena which alarm you, loose all their force when they burst forth? Well, in like manner, by rejecting the wicked from our community, we shall put an end to the convulsions of the church." The bishops regained their courage; and one of the primate's officers read ten propositions, said to be Wickliffe's, but ascribing to him certain errors of which he was quite innocent. The following most excited the anger of the priests: "God must obey the devil. After Urban VI we must receive no one as pope, but live according to the manner of the Greeks." The ten propositions were condemned as heretical, and the archbishop enjoined all persons to shun, as they would a venomous serpent, all who should preach the aforesaid errors. "If we permit this heretic to appeal continually to the passions of the people," said the primate to the king, "our destruction is inevitable. We must silence these lollards—these psalm-singers." The king gave authority "to confine in the prisons of the state any who should maintain the condemned propositions."

Day by day the circle contracted around Wickliffe. The prudent Repingdon, the learned Hereford, and even the eloquent Ashton, the firmest of the three, departed from him. The veteran champion of the truth which had once gathered a whole nation round it, had reached the days when "strong men shall bow themselves," and now, when harassed by persecution, he found himself alone. But boldly he uplifted his hoary head and exclaimed: "The doctrine of the gospel shall never perish; and if the earth once quaked, it was because they condemned Jesus Christ."

He did not stop here. In proportion as his physical strength decreased, his moral strength increased. Instead of parrying the blows aimed at him, he resolved on dealing more terrible ones still. He knew that if the king and the nobility were for the priests, the lower house and the citizens were for liberty and truth. He therefore presented a bold petition to the Commons in the month of November 1382. "Since Jesus Christ shed his blood to free his church, I demand its freedom. I demand that every one may leave those gloomy walls [the convents], within which a tyrannical law prevails, and embrace a simple and peaceful life under the open vault of heaven. I demand that the poor inhabitants of our towns and villages be not constrained to furnish a worldly priest, often a vicious man and a heretic, with the means of satisfying his ostentation, his gluttony, and his licentiousness—of buying a showy horse, costly saddles, bridles with tinkling bells, rich garments,

and soft furs, while they see their wives, children, and neighbours, dying of hunger." The House of Commons, recollecting that they had not given their consent to the persecuting statute drawn up by the clergy and approved by the king and the lords, demanded its repeal. Was the Reformation about to begin by the will of the people?

Courtenay, indignant at this intervention of the Commons, and ever stimulated by a zeal for his church, which would have been better directed towards the word of God, visited Oxford in November 1382, and having gathered round him a number of bishops, doctors, priests, students, and laymen, summoned Wickliffe before him. Forty years ago the reformer had come up to the university: Oxford had become his home … and now it was turning against him! Weakened by labours, by trials, by that ardent soul which preyed upon his feeble body, he might have refused to appear. But Wickliffe, who never feared the face of man, came before them with a good conscience. We may conjecture that there were among the crowd some disciples who felt their hearts burn at the sight of their master; but no outward sign indicated their emotion. The solemn silence of a court of justice had succeeded the shouts of enthusiastic youths. Yet Wickliffe did not despair: he raised his venerable head, and turned to Courtenay with that confident look which had made the regents of Oxford shrink away. Growing wroth against the priests of Baal, he reproached them with disseminating error in order to sell their masses. Then he stopped, and uttered these simple and energetic words: "The truth shall prevail!" Having thus spoken he prepared to leave the court: his enemies dared not say a word; and, like his divine master at Nazareth, he passed through the midst of them, and no man ventured to stop him. He then withdrew to his cure at Lutterworth.

He had not yet reached the harbour. He was living peacefully among his books and his parishioners, and the priests seemed inclined to leave him alone, when another blow was aimed at him. A papal brief summoned him to Rome, to appear before that tribunal which had so often shed the blood of its adversaries. His bodily infirmities convinced him that he could not obey this summons. But if Wickliffe refused to hear Urban, Urban could not choose but hear Wickliffe. The church was at that time divided between two chiefs: France, Scotland, Savoy, Lorraine, Castile, and Aragon acknowledged Clement VII; while Italy, England, Germany, Sweden, Poland, and Hungary acknowledged Urban VI. Wickliffe shall tell us who is the true head of the church universal. And while the two popes were excommunicating and abusing each other, and selling heaven and earth for their own gain, the reformer was confessing that incorruptible Word, which establishes real unity in the church. "I believe," said he, "that the Gospel of Christ is the whole body of God's law. I believe that Christ, who gave it to us, is very God and very man, and that this Gospel revelation is, accordingly, superior to all other parts of Holy Scripture. I believe that the bishop of Rome is bound more than all other men to submit to it, for the greatness among Christ's disciples did not consist in worldly dignity or honours, but in the exact following of Christ in his life and manners. No faithful man ought to follow the pope, but in such points as he hath followed Jesus Christ. The pope ought to leave unto the secular power all temporal dominion and rule; and thereunto effectually more and more exhort his whole clergy…. If I could labour according to my desire in mine own person, I would surely present myself before the bishop of Rome, but the Lord hath otherwise visited me to the contrary, and hath taught me rather to obey God than men."2

Urban, who at that moment chanced to be very busied in his contest with Clement, did not think it prudent to begin another with Wickliffe, and so let the matter rest there. From this time the doctor

passed the remainder of his days in peace in the company of three personages, two of whom were his particular friends, and the third his constant adversary: these were Aletheia, Phronesis, and Pseudes. Aletheia (truth) proposed questions; Pseudes (falsehood) urged objections; and Phronesis (understanding) laid down the sound doctrine. These three characters carried on a conversation (trialogue) in which great truths were boldly professed. The opposition between the pope and Christ—between the canons of Romanism and the Bible—was painted in striking colours. This is one of the primary truths which the church must never forget. “The church has fallen,” said one of the interlocutors in the work in question, “because she has abandoned the Gospel, and preferred the laws of the pope. Although there should be a hundred popes in the world at once, and all the friars living should be transformed into cardinals, we must withhold our confidence unless so far as they are founded in Holy Scripture.”

These words were the last flicker of the torch. Wickliffe looked upon his end as near, and entertained no idea that it would come in peace. A dungeon on one of the seven hills, or a burning pile in London, was all he expected. “Why do you talk of seeking the crown of martyrdom afar?” asked he. “Preach the Gospel of Christ to haughty prelates, and martyrdom will not fail you. What! I should live and be silent?… never! Let the blow fall, I await its coming.” The stroke was spared him. The war between two wicked priests, Urban and Clement, left the disciples of our Lord in peace. And besides, was it worth while cutting short a life that was drawing to a close? Wickliffe, therefore, continued tranquilly to preach Jesus Christ; and on the 29th December 1384, as he was in his church at Lutterworth, in the midst of his flock, at the very moment that he stood before the altar, and was elevating the host with trembling hands, he fell upon the pavement struck with paralysis. He was carried to his house by the affectionate friends around him, and after lingering forty-eight hours resigned his soul to God on the last day of the year.

Thus was removed from the church one of the boldest witnesses to the truth. The seriousness of his language, the holiness of his life, and the energy of his faith, had intimidated the popedom. Travellers relate that if a lion is met in the desert. it is sufficient to look steadily at him, and the beast turns away roaring from the eye of man. Wickliffe had fixed the eye of a Christian on the papacy, and the affrighted papacy had left him in peace. Hunted down unceasingly while living, he died in quiet, at the very moment when by faith he was eating the flesh and drinking the blood which give eternal life. A glorious end to a glorious life. The Reformation of England had begun.

Wickliffe is the greatest English Reformer: he was in truth the first reformer of Christendom, and to him, under God, Britain is indebted for the honour of being the foremost in the attack upon the theocratic system of Gregory VII. The work of the Waldenses, excellent as it was, cannot be compared to his. If Luther and Calvin are the fathers of the Reformation, Wickliffe is its grandfather.

Wickliffe, like most great men, possessed qualities which are not generally found together. While his understanding was eminently speculative—his treatise on the Reality of universal Ideas made a sensation in philosophy—he possessed that practical and active mind which characterizes the Anglo-Saxon race. As a divine, he was at once scriptural and spiritual, soundly orthodox, and possessed of an inward and lively faith. With a boldness that impelled him to rush into the midst of danger, he combined a logical and consistent mind, which constantly led him forward in knowledge, and caused him to maintain with perseverance the truths he had once proclaimed.

First of all, as a Christian, he had devoted his strength to the cause of the church; but he was at the same time a citizen, and the realm, his nation, and his king, had also a great share in his unwearied activity. He was a man complete.

If the man is admirable, his teaching is no less so. Scripture, which is the rule of truth, should be (according to his views) the rule of Reformation, and we must reject every doctrine and every precept which does not rest on that foundation. To believe in the power of man in the work of regeneration is the great heresy of Rome, and from that error has come the ruin of the church. Conversion proceeds from the grace of God alone, and the system which ascribes it partly to man and partly to God is worse than Pelagianism.3 Christ is every thing in Christianity; whosoever abandons that fountain which is ever ready to impart life, and turns to muddy and stagnant waters, is a madman. Faith is a gift of God; it puts aside all merit, and should banish all fear from the mind.2 The one thing needful in the Christian life and in the Lord's Supper is not a vain formalism and superstitious rites, but communion with Christ according to the power of the spiritual life. Let Christians submit not to the word of a priest but to the word of God. In the primitive church there were but two orders, the deacon and the priest: the presbyter and the bishop were one.4 The sublimest calling which man can attain on earth is that of preaching the word of God. The true church is the assembly of the righteous for whom Christ shed his blood. So long as Christ is in heaven, in Him the church possesses the best pope. It is possible for a pope to be condemned at the last day because of his sins. Would men compel us to recognise as our head "a devil of hell?" Such were the essential points of Wickliffe's doctrine. It was the echo of the doctrine of the apostles—the prelude to that of the reformers. In many respects Wickliffe is the Luther of England; but the times of revival had not yet come, and the English reformer could not gain such striking victories over Rome as the German reformer. While Luther was surrounded by an ever-increasing number of scholars and princes, who confessed the same faith as himself, Wickliffe shone almost alone in the firmament of the church. The boldness with which he substituted a living spirituality for a superstitious formalism, caused those to shrink back in affright who had gone with him against friars, priests, and popes. Erelong the Roman pontiff ordered him to be thrown into prison, and the monks threatened his life; but God protected him, and he remained calm amidst the machinations of his adversaries. "Antichrist," said he, "can only kill the body." Having one foot in the grave already, he foretold that, from the very bosom of monkery, would some day proceed the regeneration of the church. "If the friars, whom God condescends to teach, shall be converted to the primitive religion of Christ," said he, "we shall see them abandoning their unbelief, returning freely, with or without the permission of Antichrist, to the primitive religion of the Lord and building up the church, as did St. Paul."

Thus did Wickliffe's piercing glance discover, at the distance of nearly a century and a half, the young monk Luther in the Augustine convent at Erfurth, converted by the Epistle to the Romans, and returning to the spirit of St. Paul and the religion of Jesus Christ. Time was hastening on to the fulfilment of this prophecy. "The rising sun of the Reformation," for so has Wickliffe been called, had appeared above the horizon, and its beams were no more to be extinguished. In vain will thick clouds veil it at times; the distant hill-tops of Eastern Europe will soon reflect its rays; and its piercing light, increasing in brightness, will pour over all the world, at the hour of the church's renovation, floods of knowledge and of life.

CHAPTER IX The Wickliffites—Call for Reform—Richard II—The first Martyr—Lord Cobham—Appears before Henry V—Before the Archbishop—His Confession and Death—The Lollards.

Wickliffe's death manifested the power of his teaching. The master being removed, his disciples set their hands to the plough, and England was almost won over to the reformer's doctrines. The Wickliffites recognized a ministry independent of Rome, and deriving authority from the word of God alone. "Every minister," said they, "can administer the sacraments and confer the cure of souls as well as the pope." To the licentious wealth of the clergy they opposed a Christian poverty, and to the degenerate asceticism of the mendicant orders, a spiritual and free life. The townsfolk crowded around these humble preachers; the soldiers listened to them, armed with sword and buckler to defend them; the nobility took down the images from their baronial chapels;4 and even the royal family was partly won over to the Reformation. England was like a tree cut down to the ground, from whose roots fresh buds are shooting out on every side, erelong to cover all the earth beneath their shade. This augmented the courage of Wickliffe's disciples, and in many places the people took the initiative in the reform. The walls of St. Paul's and other cathedrals were hung with placards aimed at the priests and friars, and the abuses of which they were the defenders; and in 1395 the friends of the Gospel petitioned parliament for a general reform. "The essence of the worship which comes from Rome," said they, "consists in signs and ceremonies, and not in the efficacity of the Holy Ghost: and therefore it is not that which Christ has ordained. Temporal things are distinct from spiritual things: a king and a bishop ought not to be one and the same person." And then, from not clearly understanding the principle of the separation of the functions which they proclaimed, they called upon parliament to "abolish celibacy, transubstantiation, prayers for the dead, offerings to images, auricular confession, war, the arts unnecessary to life, the practice of blessing oil, salt, wax, incense, stones, mitres, and pilgrims' staffs. All these pertain to necromancy and not to theology." Emboldened by the absence of the king in Ireland, they fixed their Twelve Conclusions on the gates of St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey. This became the signal for persecution. As soon as Arundel, archbishop of York, and Braybrooke, bishop of London, had read these propositions, they hastily crossed St. George's channel, and conjured the king to return to England. The prince hesitated not to comply, for his wife, the pious Anne of Luxemburg, was dead. Richard, during childhood and youth, had been committed in succession to the charge of several guardians, and like children (says an historian), whose nurses have been often changed, he thrived none the better for it. He did good or evil, according to the influence of those around him, and had no decided inclinations except for ostentation and licentiousness. The clergy were not mistaken in calculating on such a prince. On his return to London he forbade the parliament to take the Wickliffite petition into consideration; and having summoned before him the most distinguished of its supporters, such as Story, Clifford, Latimer, and Montacute, he threatened them with death if they continued to defend their abominable opinions. Thus was the work of the reformer about to be destroyed. But Richard had hardly withdrawn his hand from the Gospel, when God (says the annalist) withdrew his hand from him. His cousin, Henry of Hereford, son of the famous duke of Lancaster, and who had been banished from England, suddenly sailed from the continent, landed in Yorkshire, gathered all the malcontents around him, and was acknowledged king. The unhappy Richard, after being formally deposed, was confined in Pontefract castle, where he soon terminated his earthly career. The son of Wickliffe's old defender was now king: a reform of the church seemed imminent; but the primate Arundel had foreseen the danger. This cunning

priest and skilful politician had observed which way the wind blew, and deserted Richard in good time. Taking Lancaster by the hand, he put the crown on his head, saying to him: “To consolidate your throne, conciliate the clergy, and sacrifice the Lollards.”—“I will be the protector of the church,” replied Henry IV, and from that hour the power of the priests was greater than the power of the nobility. Rome has ever been adroit in profiting by revolutions.

Lancaster, in his eagerness to show his gratitude to the priests, ordered that every incorrigible heretic should be burnt alive, to terrify his companions. Practice followed close upon the theory. A pious priest named William Sawtre had presumed to say: “Instead of adoring the cross on which. Christ suffered, I adore Christ who suffered on it.”3 He was dragged to St. Paul’s; his hair was shaved off; a layman’s cap was placed on his head; and the primate handed him over to the mercy of the earl-marshal of England. This mercy was shown him—he was burnt alive at Smithfield in the beginning of March, 1401. Sawtre was the first martyr to protestantism.

Encouraged by this act of faith—this auto da fé—the clergy drew up the articles known as the “Constitutions of Arundel,” which forbade the reading of the Bible, and styled the pope, “not a mere man, but a true God.” The Lollards’ tower, in the archiepiscopal palace of Lambeth, was soon filled with pretended heretics, many of whom carved on the walls of their dungeons the expression of their sorrow and their hopes: Jesus amor meus, wrote one of them. To crush the lowly was not enough: the Gospel must be driven from the more exalted stations. The priests, who were sincere in their belief, regarded those noblemen as misleaders, who set the word of God above the laws of Rome; and accordingly they girded themselves for the work. A few miles from Rochester stood Cowling Castle, in the midst of the fertile pastures watered by the Medway, The fair Medwaya that with wanton pride Forms silver mazes with her crooked tide. In the beginning of the fifteenth century it was inhabited by Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, a man in high favour with the king. The “poor priests” thronged to Cowling in quest of Wickliffe’s writings, of which Cobham had caused numerous copies to be made, and whence they were circulated through the dioceses of Canterbury, Rochester, London, and Hertford. Cobham attended their preaching, and if any enemies ventured to interrupt them, he threatened them with his sword. “I would sooner risk my life,” said he, “than submit to such unjust decrees as dishonour the everlasting Testament.” The king would not permit the clergy to lay hands on his favourite. But Henry V having succeeded his father in 1413, and passed from the houses of ill-fame he had hitherto frequented, to the foot of the altars and the head of the armies, the archbishop immediately denounced Cobham to him, and he was summoned to appear before the king. Sir John had understood Wickliffe’s doctrine, and experienced in his own person the might of the divine Word. “As touching the pope and his spirituality,” he said to the king, “I owe them neither suit nor service, forasmuch as I know him by the Scriptures to be the great antichrist.” Henry thrust aside Cobham’s hand as he presented his confession of faith: “I will not receive this paper, lay it before your judges.” When he saw his profession refused, Cobham had recourse to the only arm which he knew of out of the Gospel. The differences which we now settle by pamphlets were then very commonly settled by the sword:—“I offer in defence of my faith to fight for life or death with any man living, Christian or pagan, always excepting your majesty.” Cobham was led to the Tower. On the 23rd September, 1413, he was taken before the ecclesiastical tribunal then sitting at St. Paul’s. “We must believe,” said the primate to him, “what the holy church of Rome teaches, without demanding Christ’s authority.”—“Believe!” shouted the priests, “believe!”—“I am willing to believe all that God desires,”

said Sir John; “but that the pope should have authority to teach what is contrary to Scripture—that I can never believe.” He was led back to the Tower. The word of God was to have its martyr. On Monday, 25th September, a crowd of priests, canons, friars, clerks, and indulgence-sellers, thronged the large hall of the Dominican convent, and attacked Lord Cobham with abusive language. These insults, the importance of the moment for the Reformation of England, the catastrophe that must needs close the scene: all agitated his soul to its very depths. When the archbishop called upon him to confess his offence, he fell on his knees, and lifting up his hands to heaven, exclaimed: “I confess to Thee, O God! and acknowledge that in my frail youth I seriously offended Thee by my pride, anger, intemperance, and impurity: for these offences I implore thy mercy!” Then standing up, his face still wet with tears, he said: “I ask not your absolution: it is God’s only that I need.” The clergy did not despair, however, of reducing this high-spirited gentleman: they knew that spiritual strength is not always conjoined with bodily vigour, and they hoped to vanquish by priestly sophisms the man who dared challenge the papal champions to single combat. “Sir John,” said the primate at last, “You have said some very strange things; we have spent much time in endeavours to convince you, but all to no effect. The day passeth away: you must either submit yourself to the ordinance of the most holy church.…” “I will none otherwise believe than what I have told you. Do with me what you will.”—“Well then, we must needs do the law,” the archbishop made answer.

Arundel stood up; all the priests and people rose with him and uncovered their heads. Then holding the sentence of death in his hand, he read it with a loud clear voice. “It is well,” said Sir John; “though you condemn my body, you can do no harm to my soul, by the grace of my eternal God.” He was again led back to the Tower, whence he escaped one night, and took refuge in Wales. He was retaken in December, 1417, carried to London, dragged on a hurdle to Saint Giles’s fields, and there suspended by chains over a slow fire, and cruelly burned to death. Thus died a Christian, illustrious after the fashion of his age—a champion of the Word of God. The London prisons were filled with Wickliffites, and it was decreed that they should be hung on the king’s account, and burnt for God’s. The intimidated Lollards were compelled to hide themselves in the humblest ranks of the people, and to hold their meetings in secret. The work of redemption was proceeding noiselessly among the elect of God. Of these Lollards, there were many who had been redeemed by Jesus Christ; but in general they knew not, to the same extent as the evangelical Christians of the sixteenth century, the quickening and justifying power of faith. They were plain, meek, and often timid folks, attracted by the word of God, affected at the condemnation it pronounces against the errors of Rome, and desirous of living according to its commandments. God had assigned them a part—and an important part too—in the great transformation of Christianity. Their humble piety, their passive resistance, the shameful treatment which they bore with resignation, the penitent’s robes with which they were covered, the tapers they were compelled to hold at the church door—all these things betrayed the pride of the priests, and filled the most generous minds with doubts and vague desires. By a baptism of suffering, God was then preparing the way to a glorious reformation.

CHAPTER X

Learning at Florence—The Tudors—Erasmus visits England—Sir Thomas More—Dean Colet—Erasmus and young Henry—Prince Arthur and Catherine—Marriage and Death—Catherine betrothed to Henry—Accession of Henry VIII—Enthusiasm of the

Learned—Erasmus recalled to England—Cromwell before the Pope—Catherine proposed to Henry—Their Marriage and Court Tournaments—Henry's Danger. This reformation was to be the result of two distinct forces the revival of learning and the resurrection of the word of God. The latter was the principal cause, but the former was necessary as a means. Without it the living waters of the Gospel would probably have traversed the age, like summer streams which soon dry up, such as those which had burst forth here and there during the middle ages; it would not have become that majestic river, which, by its inundations, fertilized all the earth. It was necessary to discover and examine the original fountains, and for this end the study of Greek and Hebrew was indispensable. Lollardism and humanism (the study of the classics) were the two laboratories of the reform. We have seen the preparations of the one, we must now trace the commencement of the other; and as we have discovered the light in the lowly valleys, we shall discern it also on the lofty mountain tops.

About the end of the fifteenth century, several young Englishmen chanced to be at Florence, attracted thither by the literary glory which environed the city of the Medici. Cosmo had collected together a great number of works of antiquity, and his palace was thronged with learned men. William Selling, a young English ecclesiastic, afterwards distinguished at Canterbury by his zeal in collecting valuable manuscripts; his fellow-countrymen, Grocyn, Lilly, and Latimer "more bashful than a maiden;" and, above all, Linacre, whom Erasmus ranked before all the scholars of Italy,—used to meet in the delicious villa of the Medici with Politian, Chalcondyles, and other men of learning; and there, in the calm evenings of summer, under that glorious Tuscan sky, they dreamt romantic visions of the Platonic philosophy. When they returned to England, these learned men laid before the youth of Oxford the marvellous treasures of the Greek language. Some Italians even, attracted by the desire to enlighten the barbarians, and a little, it may be, by the brilliant offers made them, quitted their beloved country for the distant Britain. Cornelius Vitelli taught at Oxford, and Caius Amberino at Cambridge. Caxton imported the art of printing from Germany, and the nation hailed with enthusiasm the brilliant dawn which was breaking at last in their cloudy sky.

While learning was reviving in England, a new dynasty succeeded to the throne, bringing with it that energy of character which of itself is able to effect great revolutions; the Tudors succeeded the Plantagenets. That inflexible intrepidity by which the reformers of Germany, Switzerland, France, and Scotland were distinguished, did not exist so generally in those of England; but it was found in the character of her kings, who often stretched it even to violence. It may be that to this preponderance of energy in its rulers, the church owes the preponderance of the state in its affairs.

Henry Tudor, the Louis XI of England, was a clever prince, of decided but suspicious character, avaricious and narrow-minded. Being descended from a Welsh family, he belonged to that ancient race of Celts, who had so long contended against the papacy. Henry had extinguished faction at home, and taught foreign nations to respect his power. A good genius seemed to exercise a salutary influence over his court as well as over himself: this was his mother, the Countess of Richmond. From her closet, where she consecrated the first five hours of the day to reading, meditation, and prayer, she moved to another part of the palace to dress the wounds of some of the lowest mendicants; thence she passed into the gay saloons, where she would converse with the scholars, whom she encouraged by her munificence. This noble lady's passion for study, of which her son inherited but little, was not without its influence in her family. Arthur and Henry, the

king’s eldest sons, trembled in their father’s presence; but, captivated by the affection of their pious grandmother, they began to find a pleasure in the society of learned men. An important circumstance gave a new impulse to one of them.

Among the countess’s friends was Montjoy, who had known Erasmus at Paris, and heard his cutting sarcasms upon the schoolmen and friars. He invited the illustrious Dutchman to England, and Erasmus, who was fearful of catching the plague, gladly accepted the invitation, and set out for what he believed to be the kingdom of darkness. But he had not been long in England before he discovered unexpected light.

Shortly after his arrival, happening to dine with the lord-mayor, Erasmus noticed on the other side of the table a young man of nineteen, slender, fresh-coloured, with blue eyes, coarse hands, and the right shoulder somewhat higher than the other. His features indicated affability and gaiety, and pleasant jests were continually dropping from his lips. If he could not find a joke in English, he would in French, and even in Latin or Greek. A literary contest soon ensued between Erasmus and the English youth. The former, astonished at meeting with any one that could hold his own against him, exclaimed: “Aut tu es Morus aut nullus! (you are either More or nobody); and his companion, who had not learnt the stranger’s name, quickly replied: Aut tu es Erasmus aut diabolus! (you are either the devil or Erasmus). More flung himself into the arms of Erasmus, and they became inseparable friends. More was continually joking, even with women, teasing the young maidens, and making fun of the dull, though without any tinge of ill-nature in his jests.2 But under this sportive exterior he concealed a deep understanding. He was at that time lecturing on Augustine’s ‘City of God’ before a numerous audience composed of priests and aged men. The thought of eternity had seized him: and being ignorant of that internal discipline of the Holy Ghost, which is the only true discipline, he had recourse to the scourge on every Friday. Thomas More is the ideal of the catholicism of this period. He had, like the Romish system, two poles—worldliness and asceticism; which, although contrary, often meet together. In fact, asceticism makes a sacrifice of self, only to preseve it; just as a traveller attacked by robbers will readily give up a portion of his treasures to save the rest. This was the case with More, if we rightly understand his character. He sacrificed the accessories of his fallen nature to save that same nature. He submitted to fasts and vigils, wore a shirt of hair-cloth, mortified his body by small chains next his skin—in a word, he immolated every thing in order to preserve that self which a real regeneration alone can sacrifice. From London Erasmus went to Oxford, where he met with John Colet, a friend of More’s, but older, and of very dissimilar character. Colet, the scion of an ancient family, was a very portly man, of imposing aspect, great fortune, and elegance of manners, to which Erasmus had not been accustomed. Order, cleanliness, and decorum prevailed in his person and in his house. He kept an excellent table, which was open to all the friends of learning, and at which the Dutchman, no great admirer of the colleges of Paris with their sour wine and stale eggs, was glad to take a seat. He there met also most of the classical scholars of England, especially Grocyn, Linacre, Thomas Wolsey, bursar of Magdalene College, Halsey, and some others. “I cannot tell you how I am delighted with your England,” he wrote to Lord Montjoy from Oxford. “With such men I could willingly live in the farthest coasts of Scythia.”2 But if Erasmus on the banks of the Thames found a Mæcenas in Lord Montjoy, a Labeo and perhaps a Virgil in More, he nowhere found an Augustus. One day as he was expressing his regrets and his fears to More, the latter said: “Come, let us go to Eltham, perhaps we shall find there what you are looking for.” They set out, More jesting all the

way, inwardly resolving to expiate his gaiety by a severe scourging at night. On their arrival they were heartily welcomed by Lord and Lady Montjoy, the governor and governess of the king's children. As the two friends entered the hall, a pleasing and unexpected sight greeted Erasmus. The whole of the family were assembled, and they found themselves surrounded not only by some of the royal household, but by the domestics of Lord Montjoy also. On the right stood the Princess Margaret, a girl of eleven years, whose great-grandson under the name of Stuart was to continue the Tudor line in England; on the left was Mary, a child four years of age; Edmund was in his nurse's arms; and in the middle of the circle, between his two sisters, stood a boy, at that time only nine years old, whose handsome features, royal carriage, intelligent eye, and exquisite courtesy, had an extraordinary charm for Erasmus. That boy was Henry, Duke of York, the king's second son, born on the 28th June 1491. More, advancing towards the young prince, presented to him some piece of his own writing; and from that hour Erasmus kept up a friendly intercourse with Henry, which in all probability exercised a certain influence over the destinies of England. The scholar of Rotterdam was delighted to see the prince excel in all the manly sports of the day. He sat his horse with perfect grace and rare intrepidity, could hurl a javelin farther than any of his companions, and having an excellent taste for music, he was already a performer on several instruments. The king took care that he should receive a learned education, for he destined him to fill the see of Canterbury; and the illustrious Erasmus, noticing his aptitude for every thing he undertook, did his best to cut and polish this English diamond that it might glitter with the greater brilliancy. "He will begin nothing that he will not finish," said the scholar. And it is but too true, that this prince always attained his end, even if it were necessary to tread on the bleeding bodies of those he had loved. Flattered by the attentions of the young Henry, attracted by his winning grace, charmed by his wit, Erasmus on his return to the continent everywhere proclaimed that England at last had found its Octavius. As for Henry VII he thought of everything but Virgil or Augustus. Avarice and ambition were his predominant tastes, which he gratified by the marriage of his eldest son in 1501. Burgundy, Artois, Provence, and Brittany having been recently united to France, the European powers felt the necessity of combining against that encroaching state. It was in consequence of this that Ferdinand of Aragon had given his daughter Joanna to Philip of Austria, and that Henry VII asked the hand of his daughter Catherine, then in her sixteenth year and the richest princess in Europe, for Arthur prince of Wales, a youth about ten months younger. The catholic king made one condition to the marriage of his daughter. Warwick, the last of the Plantagenets and a pretender to the crown, was confined in the Tower. Ferdinand, to secure the certainty that Catherine would really ascend the English throne, required that the unhappy prince should be put to death. Nor did this alone satisfy the king of Spain. Henry VII, who was not a cruel man, might conceal Warwick, and say that he was no more. Ferdinand demanded that the chancellor of Castile should be present at the execution. The blood of Warwick was shed; his head rolled duly on the scaffold; the Castilian chancellor verified and registered the murder, and on the 14th November the marriage was solemnized at St. Paul's. At midnight the prince and princess were conducted with great pomp to the bridal-chamber. These were ill-omened nuptials—fated to set the kings and nations of Christendom in battle against each other, and to serve as a pretext for the external and political discussions of the English Reformation. The marriage of Catherine the Catholic was a marriage of blood. In the early part of 1502 Prince Arthur fell ill, and on the 2nd of April he died. The necessary time was taken to be sure that Catherine had no hope of becoming a mother, after which the friend of Erasmus, the youthful Henry, was declared heir to the crown, to

the great joy of all the learned. This prince did not forsake his studies: he spoke and wrote in French, German, and Spanish with the facility of a native; and England hoped to behold one day the most learned of Christian kings upon the throne of Alfred the Great. A very different question, however, filled the mind of the covetous Henry VII. Must he restore to Spain the two hundred thousand ducats which formed Catherine's dowry? Shall this rich heiress be permitted to marry some rival of England? To prevent so great a misfortune the king conceived the project of uniting Henry to Arthur's widow. The most serious objections were urged against it. "It is not only inconsistent with propriety," said Warham, the primate, "but the will of God himself is against it. It is declared in His law that if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing, (Leviticus 20:21); and in the Gospel John Baptist says to Herod: It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife," (Mark 6:18) Fox, bishop of Winchester, suggested that a dispensation might be procured from the pope, and in December 1503 Julius II granted a bull declaring that for the sake of preserving union between the catholic princes he authorized Catherine's marriage with the brother of her first husband, accedente forsan copula carnali. These four words, it is said, were inserted in the bull at the express desire of the princess. All these details will be of importance in the course of our history. The two parties were betrothed, but not married in consideration of the youth of the prince of Wales. The second marriage projected by Henry VII was ushered in with auspices still less promising than the first. The king having fallen sick and lost his queen, looked upon these visitations as a divine judgment. The nation murmured, and demanded whether it was in the pope's power to permit what God had forbidden.2 The young prince, being informed of his father's scruples and of the people's discontent, declared, just before attaining his majority (27th June 1505), in the presence of the bishop of Winchester and several royal counsellors, that he protested against the engagement entered into during his minority, and that he would never make Catherine his wife. His father's death, which made him free, made him also recall this virtuous decision. In 1509, the hopes of the learned seemed about to be realized. On the 9th of May, a hearse decorated with regal pomp, bearing on a rich pall of cloth of gold the mortal remains of Henry VII with his sceptre and his crown, entered London, followed by a long procession. The great officers of state, assembled round the coffin, broke their staves and cast them into the vault, and the heralds cried with a loud voice: "God send the noble King Henry VIII long life." Such a cry perhaps had never on any previous occasion been so joyfully repeated by the people. The young king gratified the wishes of the nation by ordering the arrest of Empson and Dudley, who were charged with extortion; and he conformed to the enlightened counsels of his grandmother, by choosing the most able ministers, and placing the archbishop of Canterbury as lord-chancellor at their head. Warham was a man of great capacity. The day was not too short for him to hear mass, receive ambassadors, consult with the king in the royal closet, entertain as many as two hundred guests at his table, take his seat on the woolsack, and find time for his private devotions. The joy of the learned surpassed that of the people. The old king wanted none of their praises or congratulations, for fear he should have to pay for them; but now they could give free course to their enthusiasm. Montjoy pronounced the young king "divine;" the Venetian ambassador likened his port to Apollo's, and his noble chest to the torso of Mars; he was lauded both in Greek and Latin; he was hailed as the founder of a new era, and Henry seemed desirous of meriting these eulogiums. Far from permitting himself to be intoxicated by so much adulation, he said to Montjoy: "Ah! how I should like to be a scholar!"—"Sire," replied the courtier, "It is enough that you show your regard for those who possess the learning you desire for yourself."—"How can I do otherwise," he replied with

earnestness; “without them we hardly exist!” Montjoy immediately communicated this to Erasmus.

Erasmus!—Erasmus!—the walls of Eltham, Oxford, and London resounded with the name. The king could not live without the learned; nor the learned without Erasmus. This scholar, who was an enthusiast for the young king, was not long in answering to the call. When Richard Pace, one of the most accomplished men of that age, met the learned Dutchman at Ferrara, the latter took from his pocket a little box which he always carried with him: “You don’t know,” he said, “what a treasure you have in England: I will just show you;” and he took from the box a letter of Henry’s expressing in Latin of considerable purity the tenderest regard for his correspondent. Immediately after the coronation Montjoy wrote to Erasmus: “Our Henry Octavus, or rather Octavius, is on the throne. Come and behold the new star. The heavens smile, the earth leaps for joy, and all is flowing with milk, nectar, and honey.3 Avarice has fled away, liberality has descended, scattering on every side with gracious hand her bounteous largesses. Our king desires not gold or precious stones, but virtue, glory, and immortality.” In such glowing terms was the young king described by a man who had seen him closely. Erasmus could resist no longer: he bade the pope farewell, and hastened to London, where he met with a hearty welcome from Henry. Science and power embraced each other: England was about to have its Medici; and the friends of learning no longer doubted of the regeneration of Britain.

Julius II, who had permitted Erasmus to exchange the white frock of the monks for the black dress of the seculars, allowed him to depart without much regret. This pontiff had little taste for letters, but was fond of war, hunting, and the pleasures of the table. The English sent him a dish to his taste in exchange for the scholar. Sometime after Erasmus had left, as the pope was one day reposing from the fatigues of the chase, he heard voices near him singing a strange song. He asked with surprise what it meant.5 “It is some Englishmen,” was the answer, and three foreigners entered the room, each bearing a closely-covered jar, which the youngest presented on his knees. This was Thomas Cromwell, who appears here for the first time on the historic scene. He was the son of a blacksmith of Putney; but he possessed a mind so penetrating, a judgment so sound, a heart so bold, ability so consummate, such easy elocution, such an accurate memory, such great activity, and so able a pen, that the most brilliant career was foreboded him. At the age of twenty he left England, being desirous to see the world, and began life as a clerk in the English factory at Antwerp. Shortly after this two fellow-countrymen from Boston came to him in their embarrassment. “What do you want?” he asked them. “Our townsmen have sent us to the pope,” they told him, “to get the renewal of the greater and lesser pardons, whose term is nearly run, and which are necessary for the repair of our harbour. But we do not know how to appear before him.” Cromwell, prompt to undertake everything, and knowing a little Italian, replied, “I will go with you.” Then slapping his forehead, he muttered to himself: “What fish can I throw out as a bait to these greedy cormorants?” A friend informed him that the pope was very fond of dainties. Cromwell immediately ordered some exquisite jelly to be prepared, after the English fashion, and set out for Italy with his provisions and his two companions. This was the man who appeared before Julius after his return from the chase. “Kings and princes alone cat of this preserve in England,” said Cromwell to the pope. One cardinal, who was a greedier “cormorant” than his master, eagerly tasted the delicacy. “Try it,” he exclaimed, and the pope, relishing this new confectionary, immediately signed the pardons, on condition however that the receipt for the jelly should be left with him. “And thus were the jelly-pardons obtained,” says the annalist. It was Cromwell’s first

exploit, and the man who began his busy career by presenting jars of confectionary to the pope was also the man destined to separate England from Rome. The court of the pontiff was not the only one in Europe devoted to gaiety. Hunting parties were as common in London as at Rome. The young king and his companions were at that time absorbed in balls, banquets, and the other festivities inseparable from a new reign. He recollected however that he must give a queen to his people: Catherine of Aragon was still in England, and the council recommended her for his wife. He admired her piety without caring to imitate it; he was pleased with her love for literature, and even felt some inclination towards her.2 His advisers represented to him that “Catherine, daughter of the illustrious Isabella of Castile, was the image of her mother. Like her, she possessed that wisdom and greatness of mind which win the respect of nations; and that if she carried to any of his rivals her marriage-portion and the Spanish alliance, the long-contested crown of England would soon fall from his head.… We have the pope’s dispensation: will you be more scrupulous than he is?” The archbishop of Canterbury opposed in vain: Henry gave way, and on the eleventh of June, about seven weeks after his father’s death, the nuptials were privately celebrated. On the twenty-third the king and queen went in state through the city, the bride wearing a white satin dress with her hair hanging down her back nearly to her feet. On the next day they were crowned at Westminster with great magnificence.

Then followed a series of expensive entertainments. The treasures which the nobility had long concealed from fear of the old king, were now brought out; the ladies glittered with gold and diamonds; and the king and queen, whom the people never grew tired of admiring, amused themselves like children with the splendour of their royal robes. Henry VIII was the forerunner of Louis XIV. Naturally inclined to pomp and pleasure, the idol of his people, a devoted admirer of female beauty, and the husband of almost as many wives as Louis had adulterous mistresses, he made the court of England that the son of Anne of Austria made the court of France,—one constant scene of amusements. He thought he could never get to the end of the riches amassed by his prudent father. His youth—for he was only eighteen—the gaiety of his disposition, the grace he displayed in all bodily exercises, the tales of chivalry in which he delighted, and which even the clergy recommended to their high-born hearers, the flattery of his courtiers—all these combined to set his young imagination in a ferment. Wherever he appeared, all were filled with admiration of his handsome countenance and graceful figure: such is the portrait bequeathed to us by his greatest enemy.3 “His brow was made to wear the crown, and his majestic port the kingly mantle,” adds Noryson.

Henry resolved to realize without delay the chivalrous combats and fabulous splendours of the heroes of the Round Table, as if to prepare himself for those more real struggles which he would one day have to maintain against the papacy. At the sound of the trumpet the youthful monarch would enter the lists, clad in costly armour, and wearing a plume that fell gracefully down to the saddle of his vigorous courser; “like an untamed bull,” says an historian, “which breaks away from its yoke and rushes into the arena.” On one occasion, at the celebration of the queen’s churching, Catherine with her ladies was seated in a tent of purple and gold, in the midst of an artificial forest, strewn with rocks and variegated with flowers. On a sudden a monk stepped forward, wearing a long brown robe, and kneeling before her, begged permission to run a course. It was granted, and rising up he threw aside his coarse frock, and appeared gorgeously armed for the tourney. He was Charles Brandon, afterwards Duke of Suffolk, one of the handsomest and strongest men in the

kingdom, and the first after Henry in military exercises. He was followed by a number of others dressed in black velvet, with wide-brimmed hats on their heads, staffs in their hands, and scarfs across their shoulders ornamented with cockle shells, like pilgrims from St. James of Compostella. These also threw off their disguise, and stood forth in complete armour. At their head was Sir Thomas Boleyn, whose daughter was fated to surpass in beauty, greatness, and misfortune, all the women of England. The tournament began. Henry, who has been compared to Amadis in boldness, to the lion hearted Richard in courage, and to Edward III in courtesy, did not always escape danger in these chivalrous contests. One day the king had forgotten to lower his vizor, and Brandon, his opponent, setting off at full gallop, the spectators noticed the oversight, and cried out in alarm. But nothing could stop their horses: the two cavaliers met. Suffolk's lance was shivered against Henry, and the fragments struck him in the face. Every one thought the king was dead, and some were running to arrest Brandon, when Henry, recovering from the blow which had fallen on his helmet, recommenced the combat, and ran six new courses amid the admiring cries of his subjects. This intrepid courage changed as he grew older into unsparing cruelty; and it was this young tiger, whose movements were then so graceful, that at no distant day tore with his bloody fangs the mother of his children.

CHAPTER XI The Pope excites to War—Colet's Sermon at St. Paul's—The Flemish Campaign—Marriage of Louis XII and Princess Mary—Letter from Anne Boleyn—Marriage of Brandon and Mary—Oxford—Sir Thomas More at Court—Attack upon the Monasteries—Colet's Household—He preaches Reform—The Greeks and Trojans. A message from the pope stopped Henry in the midst of these amusements. In Scotland, Spain, France, and Italy, the young king had nothing but friends; a harmony which the papacy was intent on disturbing. One day, immediately after high-mass had been celebrated, the archbishop of Canterbury, on behalf of Julius II laid at his feet a golden rose, which had been blessed by the pope, anointed with holy oil, and perfumed with musk. It was accompanied by a letter saluting him as head of the Italian league. The warlike pontiff having reduced the Venetians, desired to humble France, and to employ Henry as the instrument of his vengeance. Henry, only a short time before, had renewed his alliance with Louis XII; but the pope was not to be baffled by such a trifle as that, and the young king soon began to dream of rivalling the glories of Crecy, Poitiers, and Agincourt. To no purpose did his wisest councillors represent to him that England, in the most favourable times, had never been able to hold her ground in France, and that the sea was the true field open to her conquests. Julius, knowing his vanity, had promised to deprive Louis of the title of Most Christian king, and confer it upon him. "His holiness hopes that your grace will utterly exterminate the king of France," wrote the king's agent.2 Henry saw nothing objectionable in this very unapostolic mission, and decided on substituting the terrible game of war for the gentler sports of peace. In the spring of 1511, after some unsuccessful attempts by his generals, Henry determined to invade France in person. He was in the midst of his preparations when the festival of Easter arrived. Dean Colet had been appointed to preach before Henry on Good Friday, and in the course of his sermon he showed more courage than could have been expected in a scholar, for a spark of the Christian spirit was glowing in his bosom. He chose for the subject of his discourse Christ's victory over death and the grave. "Whoever takes up arms from ambition," said he, "fights not under the standard of Christ, but of Satan. If you desire to contend against your enemies, follow Jesus Christ as your prince and captain, rather than Cæsar or Alexander." His hearers looked at each other with astonishment; the friends of polite literature became alarmed; and the priests, who were getting uneasy at the

uprising of the human mind, hoped to profit by this opportunity of inflicting a deadly blow on their antagonists. There were among them men whose opinions we must condemn, while we cannot forbear respecting the zeal for what they believed to be the truth: of this number were Bricot, Fitzjames, and above all Standish. Their zeal, however, went a little too far on this occasion: they even talked of burning the deau. After the sermon, Colet was informed that the king requested his attendance in the garden of the Franciscan monastery, and immediately the priests and monks crowded round the gate, hoping to see their adversary led forth as a criminal. “Let us be alone,” said Henry; “put on your cap, Mr. Dean, and we will take a walk. Cheer up,” he continued, “you have nothing to fear. You have spoken admirably of Christian charity, and have almost reconciled me to the king of France; yet, as the contest is not one of choice, but of necessity, I must beg of you in some future sermon to explain this to my people. Unless you do so, I fear my soldiers may misunderstand your meaning.” Colet was not a John Baptist, and, affected by the king’s condescension, he gave the required explanation. The king was satisfied, and exclaimed: “Let every man have his doctor as he pleases; this man is my doctor, and I will drink his health!” Henry was then young: very different was the fashion with which in after-years he treated those who opposed him. At heart the king cared little more about the victories of Alexander than of Jesus Christ. Having fitted out his army, he embarked at the end of June, accompanied by his almoner, Wolsey, who was rising into favour, and set out for the war as if for a tournament. Shortly after this, he went, all glittering with jewels, to meet the Emperor Maximilian, who received him in a plain doublet and cloak of black serge. After his victory at the battle of Spurs, Henry, instead of pressing forward to the conquest of France, returned to the siege of Teronenne, wasted his time in jousts and entertainments, conferred on Wolsey the bishopric of Tournay which he had just captured, and then returned to England, delighted at having made so pleasant an excursion.

Louis XII was a widower in his 53rd year, and bowed down by the infimities of a premature old age; but being desirous of preventing, at any cost, the renewal of the war, he sought the hand of Henry’s sister, the Princess Mary, then in her 16th year. Her affections were already fixed on Charles Brandon, and for him she would have sacrificed the splendour of a throne. But reasons of state opposed their union. “The princess,” remarked Wolsey, “will soon return to England a widow with a royal dowry.” This decided the question. The disconsolate Mary, who was an object of universal pity, embarked at Dover with a numerous train, and from Boulogne, where she was received by the duke of Angoulême, she was conducted to the king, elated at the idea of marrying the handsomest princess in Europe.

Among Mary’s attendents was the youthful Anne Boleyn. Her father, Sir Thomas Boleyn, had been charged by Henry, conjointly with the bishop of Ely, with the diplomatic negotiations preliminary to this marriage. Anne had passed her childhood at Hever Castle, surrounded by all that could heat the imagination. Her maternal grandfather, the earl of Surrey, whose eldest son had married the sister of Henry the Seventh’s queen, had filled, as did his sons also, the most important offices of state. At the age probably of fourteen, when summoned by her father to court, she wrote him the following letter in French, which appears to refer to her departure for France:—

“Sir,—I find by your letter that you wish me to appear at court in a manner becoming a respectable female, and likewise that the queen will condescend to enter into conversation with me; at this I rejoice, as I do to think, that conversing with so sensible and elegant a princess will make me even more desirous of continuing to speak and to write good French; the more as it is by your earnest

advice, which (I acquaint you by this present writing) I shall follow to the best of my ability…. As to myself, rest assured that I shall not ungratefully look upon this fatherly office as one that might be dispensed with; nor will it tend to diminish my affection, quest [wish], and deliberation to lead as holy a life as you may please to desire of me; indeed my love for you is founded on so firm a basis that it can never be impaired. I put an end to this my lucubration after having very humbly craved your good will and affection. Written at Hever, by "Your very humble and obedient daughter, "Anna de Boullan."

Such were the feelings under which this young and interesting lady, so calumniated by papistical writers, appeared at court. The marriage was celebrated at Abbeville on the 9th of October 1514, and after a sumptuous banquet, the king of France distributed his royal largesses among the English lords, who were charmed by his courtesy. But the morrow was a day of trial to the young queen. Louis XII had dismissed the numerous train which had accompanied her, and even Lady Guildford, to whom Henry had specially confided her. Three only were left,—of whom the youthful Anne Boleyn was one. At this separation, Mary gave way to the keenest sorrow. To cheer her spirits, Louis proclaimed a grand tournament. Brandon hastened to France at its first announcement, and carried off all the prizes; while the king, languidly reclining on a couch, could with difficulty look upon the brilliant spectacle over which his queen presided, sick at heart yet radiant with youth and beauty. Mary was unable to conceal her emotion, and Louisa of Savoy, who was watching her, divined her secret. But Louis, if he experienced the tortures of jealousy, did not feel them long, for his death took place on the 1st January 1515.

Even before her husband's funeral was over, Mary's heart beat high with hope. Francis I, impatient to see her wedded to some unimportant political personage, encouraged her love for Brandon. The latter, who had been commissioned by. Henry to convey to her his letters of condolence, feared his master's anger if he should dare aspire to the hand of the princess. But the widowed queen, who was resolved to brave every thing, told her lover: "Either you marry me in four days or you see me no more." The choice the king had made of his ambassador announced that he would not behave very harshly. The marriage was celebrated in the abbey of Clugny, and Henry pardoned them.

While Mary returned to England, as Wolsey had predicted, Anne Boleyn remained in France. Her father, desiring his daughter to become an accomplished woman, intrusted her to the care of the virtuous Claude of France, the good queen, at whose court the daughters of the first families of the kingdom were trained. Margaret, duchess of Alencon, the sister of Francis, and afterwards queen of Navarre, often charmed the queen's circle by her lively conversation. She soon became deeply attached to the young Englishwoman, and on the death of Claude took her into her own family. Anne Boleyn was destined at no very remote period to be at the court of London a reflection of the graceful Margaret, and her relations with that princess were not without influence on the English Reformation. And indeed the literary movement which had passed from Italy into France appeared at that time as if it would cross from France into Britain. Oxford exercises over England as great an influence as the metropolis; and it is almost always within its walls that a movement commences whether for good or evil. At this period of our history, an enthusiastic youth hailed with joy the first beams of the new sun, and attacked with their sarcasms the idleness of the monks, the immorality of the clergy, and the superstition of the people. Disgusted with the priestcraft of the middle ages, and captivated by the writers of antiquity and the purity of the Gospel, Oxford boldly called for a

reform which should burst the bonds of clerical domination and emancipate the human mind. Men of letters thought for a while that they had found the most powerful man in England in Wolsey, the ally that would give them the victory.

He possessed little taste for learning, but seeing the wind of public favour blow in that direction, he readily spread his sails before it. He got the reputation of a profound divine, by quoting a few words of Thomas Aquinas, and the fame of a Mæcenas and Ptolemy, by inviting the learned to his gorgeous entertainments. “O happy cardinal,” exclaimed Erasmus, “who can surround his table with such torches!” At that time the king felt the same ambition as his minister, and having tasted in turn the pleasures of war and diplomacy, he now bent his mind to literature. He desired Wolsey to present Sir Thomas More to him.—“What shall I do at court?” replied the latter. “I shall be as awkward as a man that never rode sitteth in a saddle.” Happy in his family circle, where his father, mother, and children, gathering round the same table, formed a pleasing group, which the pencil of Holbein has transmitted to us, More had no desire to leave it. But Henry was not a man to put up with a refusel; he employed force almost to draw More from his retirement, and in a short time he could not live without the society of the man of letters. On calm and starlight nights they would walk together upon the leads at the top of the palace, discoursing on the motions of the heavenly bodies. If More did not appear at court, Henry would go to Chelsea and share the frugal dinner of the family with some of their simple neighbours. “Where,” asked Erasmus, “where is the Athens, the Porch, or the Academe, that can be compared with the court of England?… It is a seat of the muses rather than a palace.… The golden age is reviving, and I congratulate the world.” But the friends of classical learning were not content with the cardinal’s banquets or the king’s favours. They wanted victories, and their keenest darts were aimed at the cloisters, those strong fortresses of the hierarchy and of uncleanness. The abbot of Saint Albans, having taken a married woman for his concubine, and placed her at the head of a nunnery, his monks had followed his example, and indulged in the most scandalous debauchery. Public indignation was so far aroused, that Wolsey himself—Wolsey, the father of several illegitimate children, and who was suffering the penalty of his irregularities2—was carried away by the spirit of the age, and demanded of the pope a general reform of manners. When they heard of this request, the priests and friars were loud in their outcries. “What are you about?” said they to Wolsey. “You are giving the victory to the enemies of the church, and your only reward will be the hatred of the whole world.” As this was not the cardinal’s game, he abandoned his project, and conceived one more easily executed. Wishing to deserve the name of “Ptolemy” conferred on him by Erasmus, he undertook to build two large colleges, one at Ipswich, his native town, the other at Oxford; and found it convenient to take the money necessary for their endowment, not from his own purse, but from the purses of the monks. He pointed out to the pope twenty-two monasteries in which (he said) vice and impiety had taken up their abode. The pope granted their secularization, and Wolsey having thus procured a revenue of £2000 sterling, laid the foundations of his college, traced out various courts, and constructed spacious kitchens. He fell into disgrace before he had completed his work, which led Gualter to say with a sneer: “He began a college and built a cook’s shop.” But a great example had been set: the monasteries had been attacked, and the first breach made in them by a cardinal. Cromwell, Wolsey’s secretary, remarked how his master had set about his work, and in after-years profited by the lesson.

It was fortunate for letters that they had sincerer friends in London than Wolsey. Of these were Colet, dean of St. Paul's, whose house was the centre of the literary movement which, preceded the Reformation, and his friend and guest Erasmus. The latter was the hardy pioneer who opened the road of antiquity to modern Europe. One day he would entertain Colet's guests with the account of a new manuscript; on another, with a discussion on the forms of ancient literature; and at other times he would attack the schoolmen and monks, when Colet would take the same side. The only antagonist who dared measure his strength with him was Sir Thomas More, who, although a layman, stoutly defended the ordinances of the church. But mere table-talk could not satisfy the dean: a numerous audience attended his sermons at St. Paul's. The spirituality of Christ's words, the authority which characterizes them, their admirable simplicity and mysterious depth, had deeply charmed him: "I admire the writings of the apostles," he would say, "but I forget them almost, when I contemplate the wonderful majesty of Jesus Christ." Setting aside the texts prescribed by the church, he explained, like Zwingle, the Gospel of St. Matthew. Nor did he stop here. Taking advantage of the Convocation, he delivered a sermon on conformation and reformation, which was one of the numerous forerunners of the great reform of the sixteenth century. "We see strange and heretical ideas appear in our days, and no wonder," said he. "But you must know there is no heresy more dangerous to the church than the vicious lives of its priests. A reformation is needed; and that reformation must begin with the bishops and be extended to the priests. The clergy once reformed, we shall proceed to the reformation of the people." Thus spoke Colet, while the citizens of London listened to him with rapture, and called him a new Saint Paul.4

Such discourses could not be allowed to pass unpunished. Fitzjames, bishop of London, was a superstitious obstinate old man of eighty, fond of money, excessively irritable, a poor theologian, and a slave to Duns Scotus, the subtle doctor. Calling to his aid two other bishops as zealous as himself for the preservation of abuses, namely, Bricot and Standish, he denounced the dean of St. Paul's to Warham. The archbishop having inquired what he had done: "What has he done?" rejoined the bishop of London. "He teaches that we must not worship images; he translates the Lord's Prayer into English; he pretends that the text Feed my sheep, does not include the temporal supplies the clergy draw from their flock. And besides all this," he continued with some embarrassment, "he has spoken against those who carry their manuscripts into the pulpit and read their sermons!" As this was the bishop's practice, the primate could not refrain from smiling; and since Colet refused to justify himself, Warham did so for him. From that time Colet laboured with fresh zeal to scatter the darkness. He devoted the larger portion of his fortune to found the celebrated school of St. Paul, of which the learned Lilly was the first master. Two parties, the Greeks and the Trojans, entered the lists, not to contend with sword and spear, as in the ancient epic, but with the tongue, the pen, and sometimes the fist. If the Trojans (the obscurants) were defeated in the public disputations, they had their revenge in the secret of the confessional. Cave a Græcis ne fias hereticus, was the watchword of the priests—their daily lesson to the youths under their care. They looked on the school founded by Colet as the monstrous horse of the perjured Sinon, and announced that from its bosom would inevitably issue the destruction of the people. Colet and Erasmus replied to the monks by inflicting fresh blows. Linacre, a thorough literary enthusiast,—Grocyn, a man of sarcastic humour but generous heart,—and many others, reinforced the Grecian phalanx. Henry himself used to take one of them with him during his journeys, and if any unlucky Trojan ventured in his presence to attack the tongue of Plato and of

Saint Paul, the young king would set his Hellenian on him. Not more numerous were the contests witnessed in times of yore on the classic banks of Xanthus and Simois.

CHAPTER XII

Wolsey—His first Commission—His complaisance and Dioceses—Cardinal, Chancellor, and Legate—Ostentation and Necromancy—His Spies and Enmity—Pretensions of the Clergy.

Just as every thing seemed tending to a reformation, a powerful priest rendered the way more difficult.

One of the most striking personages of the age was then making his appearance on the stage of the world. It was the destiny of that man, in the reign of Henry VIII, to combine extreme ability with extreme immorality; and to be a new and striking example of the wholesome truth that immorality is more effectual to destroy a man than ability to save him. Wolsey was the last high-priest of Rome in England, and when his fall startled the nation, it was the signal of a still more striking fall—the fall of popery.

Thomas Wolsey, the son of a wealthy butcher of Ipswich, according to the common story, which is sanctioned by high authority, had attained under Henry VII the post of almoner, at the recommendation of Sir Richard Nanfan, treasurer of Calais and an old patron of his. But Wolsey was not at all desirous of passing his life in saying mass. As soon as he had discharged the regular duties of his office, instead of spending the rest of the day in idleness, as his colleagues did, he strove to win the good graces of the persons round the king.

Fox, Bishop of Winchester, keeper of the privy-seal under Henry VII, uneasy at the growing power of the earl of Surrey, looked about for a man to counterbalance them. He thought he had found such a one in Wolsey. It was to oppose the Surreys, the grandfather and uncles of Anne Boleyn, that the son of the Ipswich butcher was drawn from his obscurity. This is not an unimportant circumstance in our narrative. Fox began to praise Wolsey in the king’s hearing, and at the same time he encouraged the almoner to give himself to public affairs. The latter was not deaf, and soon found an opportunity of winning his sovereign’s favour. The king having business of importance with the emperor, who was then in Flanders, sent for Wolsey, explained his wishes, and ordered him to prepare to set out. The chaplain determined to show Henry VII how capable he was of serving him. It was long past noon when he took leave of the king at Richmond—at four o’clock he was in London, at seven at Gravesend. By travelling all night he reached Dover just as the packet-boat was about to sail. After a passage of three hours he reached Calais, whence he travelled post, and the same evening appeared before Maximilian. Having obtained what he desired, he set off again by night, and on the next day but one reached Richmond, three days and some few hours after his departure. The king, catching sight of him just as he was going to mass, sharply inquired, why he had not set out. “Sire, I am just returned,” answered Wolsey, placing the emperor’s letters in his master’s hands. Henry was delighted, and Wolsey saw that his fortune was made. The courtiers hoped at first that Wolsey, like an inexperienced pilot, would run his vessel on some hidden rock; but never did helmsman manage his ship with more skill. Although twenty years older than Henry VIII the almoner danced, and sang, and laughed with the prince’s companions, and amused his new master with tales of scandal and quotations from Thomas Aquinas. The young king found his house a temple of paganism, a shrine of voluptuousness; and while Henry’s

councillors were entreating him to leave his pleasures and attend to business, Wolsey was continually reminding him that he ought to devote his youth to learning and amusement, and leave the toils of government to others. Wolsey was created bishop of Tournay during the campaign in Flanders, and on his return to England, was raised to the sees of Lincoln and of York. Three anitres had been placed on his head in one year. He found at last the vein he so ardently sought for. And yet he was not satisfied. The archbishop of Canterbury had insisted, as primate, that the cross of York should be lowered to his. Wolsey was not of a disposition to concede this, and when he found that Warham was not content with being his equal, he resolved to make him his inferior. He wrote to Paris and to Rome. Francis I, who desired to conciliate England, demanded the purple for Wolsey, and the archbishop of York received the title of Cardinal St. Cecilia beyond the Tiber. In November 1515, his hat was brought by the envoy of the pope: “It would have been better to have given him a Tyburn tippet,” said some indignant Englishmen; “these Romish hats never brought good into England”—a saying that has become proverbial. This was not enough for Wolsey: he desired secular greatness above all things. Warham, tired of contending with so arrogant a rival, resigned the seals, and the king immediately transferred them to the cardinal. At length a bull appointed him legate a latere of the holy see, and placed under his jurisdiction all the colleges, monasteries, spiritual courts, bishops, and the primate himself (1519). From that time, as lord-chancellor of England and legate, Wolsey administered every thing in church and state. He filled his coffers with money procured both at home and from abroad, and yielded without restraint to his dominant vices, ostentation and pride. Whenever he appeared in public, two priests, the tallest and comeliest that could be found, carried before him two huge silver crosses, one to mark his dignity as archbishop, the other as papal legate. Chamberlains, gentlemen, pages, sergeants, chaplains, choristers, clerks, cupbearers, cooks, and other domesties, to the number of more than 500, among whom were nine or ten lords and the stateliest yeomen of the country, filled his palace. He generally wore a dress of searlet velvet and silk, with hat and gloves of the same colour. His shoes were embroidered with gold and silver, inlaid with pearls and precious stones. A kind of papacy was thus forming in England; for wherever prido flourishes there popery is developed.

One thing occupied Wolsey more than all the pomp with which he was surrounded: his desire, namely, to captivate the king. For this purpose he cast Henry’s nativity, and procured an amulet which he wore constantly, in order to charm his master by its magic properties. Then having recourse to a still more effectual necromancy, he selected from among the licentious companions of the young monarch those of the keenest discernment and most ambitious character; and after binding them to him by a solemn oath, he placed them at court to be as eyes and ears to him. Accordingly not a word was said in the presence of the monarch, particularly against Wolsey, of which he was not informed an hour afterwards. If the culprit was not in favour, he was expelled without mercy; in the contrary case, the minister sent him on some distant mission. The queen’s ladies, the king’s chaplains, and even their confessors, were the cardinal’s spies. He pretended to omnipresence, as the pope to infallibility.

Wolsey was not devoid of certain showy virtues, for he was liberal to the poor even to affectation, and as chancellor inexorable to every kind of irregularity, and strove particularly to make the rich and high-born bend beneath his power. Men of learning alone obtained from him some little attention, and hence Erasmus calls him “the Achates of a new Æneas.” But the nation was not to

be carried away by the eulogies of a few scholars. Wolsey—a man of more than suspected morals, double-hearted, faithless to his promises, oppressing the people with heavy taxes, and exceedingly arrogant to every body—Wolsey soon became hated by the people of England. The elevation of a prince of the Roman church could not be favourable to the Reformation. The priests, encouraged by it, determined to make a stand against the triple attack of the learned, the reformers, and the state; and they soon had an opportunity of trying their strength. Holy orders had become during the middle ages a warrant for every sort of crime. Parliament, desirous of correcting this abuse and checking the encroachments of the church, declared in the year 1513 that any ecclesiastic, accused of theft or murder, should be tried before the secular tribunals. Exceptions, however, were made in favour of bishops, priests, and deacons—that is to say, nearly all the clergy. Notwithstanding this timid precaution, an insolent clerk, the abbot of Winchelcomb, began the battle by exclaiming at St. Paul's: "Touch not mine anointed, said the Lord." At the same time Wolsey, accompanied by a long train of priests and prelates, had an audience of the king, at which he said with hands upraised to heaven: "Sire, to try a clerk, is a violation of God's laws." This time, however, Henry did not give way. "By God's will, we are king of England," he replied, "and the kings of England in times past had never any superior but God only. Therefore know you well that we will maintain the right of our crown." He saw distinctly that to put the clergy above the laws was to put them above the throne. The priests were beaten, but not disheartened: perseverance is a characteristic feature of every hierarchical order. Not walking by faith, they walk all the more by sight; and skilful combinations supply the place of the holy aspirations of the Christian. Humble disciples of the Gospel were soon to experience this, for the clergy by a few isolated attacks were about to flesh themselves for the great struggles of the Reformation.

CHAPTER XIII The Wolves—Richard Hun—A murder—Verdict of the Jury—Hun condemned, and his Character vindicated—The Gravesend Passage-boat—A festival disturbed—Brown tortured—Visit from his Wife—A Martyr—Character of Erasmus—1516 and 1517—Erasmus goes to Basle.

It is occasionally necessary to soften down the somewhat exaggerated colours in which contemporary writers describe the Romish clergy; but there are certain appellations which history is bound to accept. The wolves, for so the priests were called, by attacking the Lords and Commons had attempted a work beyond their reach. They turned their wrath on others. There were many shepherds endeavouring to gather together the sheep of the Lord beside the peaceful waters: these must be frightened, and the sheep driven into the howling wilderness. "The wolves" determined to fall upon the Lollards.

There lived in London an honest tradesman named Richard Hun, one of those witnesses of the truth who, sincere though unenlightened, have often been found in the bosom of Catholicism. It was his practice to retire to his closet and spend a portion of each day in the study of the Bible. At the death of one of his children, the priest required of him an exorbitant fee, which Hun refused to pay, and for which he was summoned before the legate's court. Animated by that public spirit, which characterizes the people of England, he felt indignant that an Englishman should be cited before a foreign tribunal, and laid an information against the priest and his counsel under the act of Præmunire. Such boldness—most extraordinary at that time—exasperated the clergy beyond all bounds. "If these proud citizens are allowed to have their way," exclaimed the monks, "every layman will dare to resist a priest."

Exertions were accordingly made to snare the pretended rebel in the trap of heresy; he was thrown into the Lollards' tower at St. Paul's, and an iron collar was fastened round his neck, attached to which was a chain so heavy that neither man nor beast (says Foxe) would have been able to bear it long. When taken before his judges, they could not convict him of heresy, and it was observed with astonishment "that he had his beads in prison with him." They would have set him at liberty, after inflicting on him perhaps some trifling penance—but then, what a bad example it would be, and who could stop the reformers, if it was so easy to resist the papacy? Unable to triumph by justice, certain fanatics resolved to triumph by crime. At midnight on the 2nd December—the day of his examination—three men stealthily ascended the stairs of the Lollards' tower: the bellringer went first carrying a torch; a sergeant named Charles Joseph followed, and last came the bishop's chancellor. Having entered the cell, they went up to the bed on which Hun was lying, and finding that he was asleep, the chancellor said: "Lay hands on the thief." Charles Joseph and the bellringer fell upon the prisoner, who, awaking with a start, saw at a glance what this midnight visit meant. He re-resisted the assassins at first, but was soon overpowered and strangled. Charles Joseph then fixed the dead man's belt round his neck, the bellringer helped to raise his lifeless body, and the chancellor slipped the other end of the belt through a ring fixed in the wall. They then placed his cap on his head, and hastily quitted the cell. Immediately after, the conscience-stricken. Charles Joseph got on horseback and rode from the city; the bellringer left the cathedral and hid himself: the crime dispersed the criminals. The chancellor alone kept his ground, and he was at prayers when the news was brought him that the turnkey had found Hun hanging. "He must have killed himself in despair," said the hypocrite. But every one knew poor Hun's Christian feelings. "It is the priests who have murdered him," was the general cry in London, and an inquest was ordered to be held on his body. On Tuesday, the 5th of December, William Barnwell the city coroner, the two sheriffs, and twenty-four jurymen, proceeded to the Lollards' tower. They remarked that the belt was so short that the head could not be got out of it, and that consequently it had never been placed in it voluntarily, and hence the jury concluded that the suspension was an afterthought of some other persons. Moreover they found that the ring was too high for the poor victim to reach it,—that the body bore marks of violence—and that traces of blood were to be seen in the cell: "Wherefore all we find by God and all our consciences (runs the verdict), that Richard Hun was murdered. Also we acquit the said Richard Hun of his own death."

It was but too true, and the criminals themselves confessed it. The miserable Charles Joseph having returned home on the evening of the 6th December, said to his maid-servant: "If you will swear to keep my secret, I will tell you all."—"Yes, master," she replied, "if it is neither felony nor treason."—Joseph took a book, swore the girl on it, and then said to her: "I have killed Richard Hun!"—"O master! how? he was called a worthy man."—"I would lever [rather] than a hundred pounds it were not done," he made answer; "but what is done cannot be undone." He then rushed out of the house. The clergy foresaw what a serious blow this unhappy affair would be to them, and to justify themselves they examined Hun's Bible (it was Wickliffe's version), and having read in the preface that "poor men and idiots [simple folks] have the truth of the holy Scriptures more than a thousand prelates and religious men and clerks of the school," and further, that "the pope ought to be called Antichrist," the bishop of London, assisted by the bishops of Durham and Lincoln, declared Hun guilty of heresy, and on the 20th December his dead body was burnt at Smithfield. "Hun's bone's have been burnt, and therefore he was a heretic," said the priests; "he was a heretic, and therefore he committed suicide." The triumph of the clergy was of short duration; for

almost at the same time William Horsey, the bishop's chancellor, Charles Joseph, and John Spalding the bellringer, were convicted of the murder. A bill passed the Commons restoring Hun's property to his family and vindicating his character; the Lords accepted the bill, and the king himself said to the priests: "Restore to these wretched children the property of their father whom you so cruelly murdered to our great and just horror."—"If the clerical theocracy should gain the mastery of the state," was the general remark in London, "it would not only be a very great lie, but the most frightful tyranny!" England has never gone back since that time, and a theocratic rule has always inspired the sound portion of the nation with a just and insurmountable antipathy. Such were the events taking place in England shortly before the Reformation. This was not all. The clergy had not been fortunate in Huns affair, but they were not for that reason unwilling to attempt a new one. In the spring of 1517—the year in which Luther posted up his theses—a priest, whose manners announced a man swollen with pride, happened to be on board the passage-boat from London to Gravesend with an intelligent and pious Christian of Ashford, by name John Brown. The passengers, as they floated down the stream, were amusing themselves by watching the banks glide away from them, when the priest, turning towards Brown, said to him insolently: "You are too near me, get farther off. Do you know who I am?"—"No, sir," answered Brown.—"Well, then, you must know that I am a priest."—"Indeed, sir; are you a parson, or vicar, or a lady's chaplain?"—"No; I am a soul-priest," he haughtily replied; "I sing mass to save souls."—"Do you, sir," rejoined Brown somewhat ironically, "that is well done; and can you tell me where you find the soul when you begin the mass?"—"I cannot," said the priest.—"And where you leave it when the mass is ended?"—"I do not know."—"What!" continued Brown with marks of astonishment, "you do not know where you find the soul or where you leave it … and yet you say that you save it!"—"Go thy ways," said the priest angrily, "thou art a heretic, and I will be even with thee." Thenceforward the priest and his neighbour conversed no more together. At last they reached Gravesend, and the boat anchored. As soon as the priest had landed, he hastened to two of his friends, Walter and William More, and all three mounting their horses, set off for Canterbury, and denounced Brown to the archbishop. In the meantime John Brown had reached home. Three days later, his wife, Elizabeth, who had just left her chamber, went to church, dressed all in white, to return thanks to God for delivering her in the perils of childbirth. Her husband, assisted by her daughter Alice and the maid-servant, were preparing for their friends the feast usual on such occasions, and they had all of them taken their seats at table, joy beaming on every face, when the street-door was abruptly opened, and Chilton, the constable, a cruel and savage man, accompanied by several of the archbishop's apparitors, seized upon the worthy townsman. All sprang from their seats in alarm; Elizabeth and Alice uttered the most heart-rending cries; but the primate's officers, without showing any emotion, pulled Brown out of the house, and placed him on horseback, tying his feet under the animal's belly. It is a serious matter to jest with a priest. The cavalcade rode off quickly, and Brown was thrown into prison, and there left forty days. At the end of this time, the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of Rochester called before them the impudent fellow who doubted whether a priest's mass could save souls, and required him to retract this "blasphemy." But Brown, if he did not believe in the mass, believed in the Gospel: "Christ was once offered," he said, "to take away the sins of many. It is by this sacrifice we are saved, and not by the repetitions of the priests." At this reply the archbishop made a sign to the executioners, one of whom took off the shoes and stockings of this pious Christian, while the other brought in a pan of burning coals, upon which they set the martyr's feet. The English laws in truth forbade torture to be inflicted on any

subject of the crown, but the clergy thought themselves above the laws. “Confess the efficacity of the mass,” cried the two bishops to poor Brown. “If I deny my Lord upon earth,” he replied, “He will deny me before his Father in heaven.” The flesh was burnt off the soles of the feet even to the bones, and still John Brown remained unshaken. The bishops therefore ordered him to be given over to the secular arm that he might be burnt alive. On the Saturday preceding the festival of Pentecost, in the year 1517, the martyr was led back to Ashford, where he arrived just as the day was drawing to a close. A number of idle persons were collected in the street, and among them was Brown’s maid-servant, who ran off crying to the house, and told her mistress: “I have seen him!… He was bound, and they were taking him to prison.” Elizabeth hastened to her husband and found him sitting with his feet in the stocks, his features changed by suffering, and expecting to be burnt alive on the morrow. The poor woman sat down beside him, weeping most bitterly, while he, being hindered by his chains, could not so much as bend towards her. “I cannot set my feet to the ground,” said he, “for bishops have burnt them to the bones; but they could not burn my tongue and prevent my confessing the Lord.… O Elizabeth!… continue to love him for He is good; and bring up our children in his fear.” On the following morning—it was Whitsunday—the brutal Chilton and his assistants led Brown to the place of execution, and fastened him to the stake. Elizabeth and Alice, with his other children and his friends, desirous of receiving his last sigh, surrounded the pile, uttering cries of anguish. The fagots were set on fire, while Brown, calm and collected, and full of confidence in the blood of the Saviour, clasped his hands, and repeated this hymn, which Foxe has preserved:—

O Lord, I yield me to thy grace, Grant me mercy for my trespass;

Let never the fiend my soul chase.

Lord, I will bow, and thou shalt beat, Let never my soul come in hell-heat. The martyr was silent: the flames had consumed their victim. Then redoubled cries of anguish rent the air. His wife and daughter seemed as if they would lose their senses. The bystanders showed them the tenderest compassion, and turned with a movement of indignation towards the executioners. The brutal Chilton perceiving this, cried out:—“Come along; let us toss the heretic’s children into the flames, lest they should one day spring from their father’s ashes.” He rushed towards Alice, and was about to lay hold of her, when the maiden shrank back screaming with horror. To the end of her life, she recollected the fearful moment, and to her we are indebted for the particulars. The fury of the monster was checked. Such were the scenes passing in England shortly before the Reformation. The priests were not yet satisfied, for the scholars still remained in England: if they could not be burnt, they should at least be banished. They set to work accordingly. Standish, bishop of St. Asaph, a sincere man, as it would seem, but fanatical, was inveterate in his hatred of Erasmus, who had irritated him by an idle sarcasm. When speaking of St. Asaph’s it was very common to abbreviate it into St. As’s; and as Standish was a theologian of no great learning, Erasmus, in his jesting way, would sometimes call him Episcopus a Sancto Asino. As the bishop could not destroy Colet, the disciple, he flattered himself that he should triumph over the master.

Erasmus knew Standish’s intentions. Should he commence in England that struggle with the papacy which Luther was about to begin in Germany? It was no longer possible to steer a middle course: he must either fight or leave. The Dutchman was faithful to his nature—we may even say, to his vocation: he left the country.

Erasmus was, in his time, the head of the great literary community. By means of his connexions and his correspondence, which extended over all Europe, he established between those countries where learning was reviving, an interchange of ideas and manuscripts. The pioneer of antiquity, an eminent critic, a witty satirist, the advocate of correct taste, and a restorer of literature, one only glory was wanting: he had not the creative spirit, the heroic soul of a Luther. He calculated with no little skill, could detect the smile on the lips or the knitting of the brows; but he had not that self-abandonment, that enthusiasm for the truth, that firm confidence in God, without which nothing great can be done in the world, and least of all in the church. “Erasmus had much, but was little,” said one of his biographers. In the year 1517 a crisis had arrived: the period of the revival was over, that of the Reformation was beginning. The restoration of letters was succeeded by the regeneration of religion: the days of criticism and neutrality by those of courage and action. Erasmus was then only forty-nine years old; but he had finished his career. From being first, he must now be second: the monk of Wittemberg dethroned him. He looked around himself in vain: placed in a new country, he had lost his road. A hero was needed to inaugurate the great movement of modern times: Erasmus was a mere man of letters. When attacked by Standish in 1516, the literary king determined to quit the court of England, and take refuge in a printing-office. But before laying down his sceptre at the foot of a Saxon monk, he signalized the end of his reign by the most brilliant of his publications. The epoch of 1516–17, memorable for the theses of Luther, was destined to be equally remarkable by a work which was to imprint on the new times their essential character. What distinguishes the Reformation from all anterior revivals is the union of learning with piety, and a faith more profound, more enlightened, and based on the word of God. The Christian people was then emancipated from the tutelage of the schools and the popes, and its charter of enfranchisement was the Bible. The sixteenth century did more than its predecessors: it went straight to the fountain (the Holy Scriptures), cleared it of weeds and brambles, plumbed its depths, and caused its abundant streams to pour forth on all around. The Reformation age studied the Greek Testament, which the clerical age had almost forgotten,—and this is its greatest glory. Now the first explorer of this divine source was Erasmus. When attacked by the hierarchy, the leader of the schools withdrew from the splendid halls of Henry VIII. It seemed to him that the new era which he had announced to the world was rudely interrupted: he could do nothing more by his conversation for the country of the Tudors. But he carried with him those precious leaves, the fruit of his labours—a book which would do more than he desired. He hastened to Basle, and took up his quarters in Frobenius’s printing-office, where he not only laboured himself, but made others labour. England will soon receive the seed of the new life, and the Reformation is about to begin.

BOOK XVIII The Revival of the Church

CHAPTER I

Four reforming Powers—Which reformed England?—Papal Reform?—Episcopal Reform?—Royal Reform?—What is required in a legitimate Reform—The Share of the Kingly Power—Share of the Episcopal Authority—High and Low Church—Political Events—The Greek and Latin New Testament—Thoughts of Erasmus—Enthusiasm and anger—Desire of Erasmus—Clamours of the Priests—Their Attack at Court—Astonishment of Erasmus—His Labours for this Work—Edward Lee; his Character—Lee’s Tragedy—Conspiracy.

It was within the province of four powers in the sixteenth century to effect a reformation of the church: these were the papacy, the episcopate, the monarchy, and Holy Scripture. The Reformation in England was essentially the work of Scripture. The only true reformation is that which emanates from the word of God. The Holy Scriptures, by bearing witness to the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Son of God, create in man by the Holy Ghost a faith which justifies him. That faith which produces in him a new life, unites him to Christ, without his requiring a chain of bishops or a Roman mediator, who would separate him from the Saviour instead of drawing him nearer. This Reformation by the word restores that spiritual Christianity which the outward and hierarchical religion had destroyed; and from the regeneration of individuals naturally results the regeneration of the church. The Reformation of England, perhaps to a greater extent than that of the continent, was effected by the word of God. This statement may appear paradoxical, but it is not the less true. Those great individualities we meet with in Germany, Switzerland, and France—men like Luther, Zwingle, and Calvin—do not appear in England; but Holy Scripture is widely circulated. What brought light into the British isles subsequently to the year 1517, and on a more extended scale after the year 1526, was the word—the invisible power of the invisible God. The religion of the anglo-Saxon race—a race called more than any other to circulate the oracles of God throughout the world—is particularly distinguished by its biblical character. The Reformation of England could not be papal. No reform can be hoped from that which ought to be not only reformed but abolished; and besides, no monarch dethrones himself. We may even affirm that the popedom has always felt a peculiar affection for its conquests in Britain, and that they would have been the last it would have renounced. A serious voice had declared in the middle of the fifteenth century: “A reform is neither in the will nor in the power of the popes.” The Reformation of England was not episcopal. Roman hierarchism will never be abolished by Roman bishops. An episcopal assembly may perhaps, as at Constance, depose three competing popes, but then it will be to save the papacy. And if the bishops could not abolish the papacy, still less could they reform themselves. The then existing episcopal power being at emnity with the word of God, and the slave of its own abuses, was incapable of renovating the church. On the contrary, it exerted all its influence to prevent such a renovation. The Reformation in England was not royal. Samuel, David, and Josiah were able to do something for the raising up of the church, when God again turned his face towards it; but a king cannot rob his people of their religion, and still less can he give them one. It has often been repeated that “the English Reformation derives its origin from the monarch;” but the assertion is incorrect. The work of God, here as elsewhere, cannot be put in comparison with the work of the king; and if the latter was infinitely surpassed in importance, it was also preceded in time by many years. The monarch was still keeping up a vigorous resistance behind his intrenchments, when God had already decided the victory along the whole line of operations. Shall we be told that a reform effected by any other principle than the established authorities, both in church and state, would have been a revolution? But has God, the lawful sovereign of the church, forbidden all revolution in a sinful world? A revolution is not a revolt. The fall of the first man was a great revolution: the restoration of man by Jesus Christ was a counter-revolution. The corruption occasioned by popery was allied to the fall: the reformation accomplished in the sixteenth century was connected therefore with the restoration. There will no doubt be other interventions of the Deity, which will be revolutions in the same direction as the Reformation. When God creates a new heaven and a new earth, will not that be one of the most glorious of revolutions? The Reformation by the word alone gives truth, alone gives unity; but more than that,

it alone bears the marks of true legitimacy; for the church belongs not unto men, even though they be priests. God alone is its lawful sovereign. And yet the human elements which we have enumerated were not wholly foreign to the work that was accomplishing in England. Besides the word of God, other principles were in operation, and although less radical and less primitive, they still retain the sympathy of eminent men of that nation. And in the first place, the intervention of the king's authority was necessary to a certain point. Since the supremacy of Rome had been established in England by several usages which had the force of law, the intervention of the temporal power was necessary to break the bonds which it had previously sanctioned. But it was requisite for the monarchy, while adopting a negative and political action, to leave the positive, doctrinal, and creative action to the word of God.

Besides the Reformation in the name of the Scriptures, there was then in England another in the name of the king. The word of God began, the kingly power followed; and ever since, these two forces have sometimes gone together against the authority of the Roman pontiffs—sometimes in opposition to each other, like those troops which march side by side in the same army, against the same enemy, and which have occasionally been seen, even on the field of battle, to turn their swords against each other.

Finally, the episcopate, which had begun by opposing the Reformation, was compelled to accept it in despite of its convictions. The majority of the bishops were opposed to it; but the better portion were found to incline, some to the side of outward reform, of which separation from the papacy was the very essence, and others to the side of internal reform, whose mainspring was union with Jesus Christ. Lastly, the episcopate took up its ground on its own account, and soon two great parties alone existed in England: the scriptural party and the clerical party.

These two parties have survived even to our days, and their colours are still distinguishable in the river of the church, like the muddy Arve and the limpid Rhone after their confluence. The royal supremacy, from which many Christians, preferring the paths of independence, have withdrawn since the end of the 16th century, is recognised by both parties in the establishment, with some few exceptions. But whilst the High Church is essentially hierarchical, the Low Church is essentially biblical. In the one, the Church is above and the word below; in the other, the Church is below and the Word above. These two principles, evangelism and hierarchism, are found in the Christianity of the first centuries, but with a signal difference. Hierarchism then almost entirely effaced evangelism; in the age of protestantism, on the contrary, evangelism continued to exist by the side of hierarchism, and it has remained de jure, if not always de facto, the only legitimate opinion of the church.

Thus there is in England a complication of influences and contests, which render the Work more difficult to describe; but it is on that very account more worthy the attention of the philosopher and the Christian.

Great events had just occurred in Europe. Francis I had crossed the Alps, gained a signal victory at Marignano, and conquered the north of Italy. The affrighted Maximilian knew of none who could save him but Henry VIII. "I will adopt you; you shall be my successor in the empire," he intimated to him in May 1516. "Your army shall invade France; and then we will march together to Rome, where the sovereign pontiff shall crown you king of the Romans." The king of France, anxious to effect a diversion, had formed a league with Denmark and Scotland, and had made preparations

for invading England to place on the throne the “white rose,”—the pretender Pole, heir to the claims of the house of York. Henry now showed his prudence; he declined Maximilian’s offer, and turned his whole attention to the security of his kingdom. But while he refused to bear arms in France and Italy, a war of quite another kind broke out in England. The great work of the 16th century was about to begin. A volume fresh from the presses of Basle had just crossed the Channel. Being transmitted to London, Oxford, and Cambridge, this book, the fruit of Erasmus’s vigils, soon found its way wherever there were friends of learning. It was the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ, published for the first time in Greek with a new Latin translation—an event more important for the world than would have been the landing of the pretender in England, or the appearance of the chief of the Tudors in Italy. This book, in which God has deposited for man’s salvation the seeds of life, was about to effect alone, without patrons and without interpreters, the most astonishing revolution in Britain. When Erasmus published this work, at the dawn, so to say, of modern times, he did not see all its scope. Had he foreseen it, he would perhaps have recoiled in alarm. He saw indeed that there was a great work to be done, but he believed that all good men would unite to do it with common accord. “A spiritual temple must be raised in desolated Christendom,” said he. “The mighty of this world will contribute towards it their marble, their ivory, and their gold; I who am poor and humble offer the foundation stone,” and he laid down before the world his edition of the Greek Testament. Then glancing disdainfully at the traditions of men, he said: “It is not from human reservoirs, fetid with stagnant waters, that we should draw the doctrine of salvation; but from the pure and abundant streams that flow from the heart of God.” And when some of his suspicious friends spoke to him of the difficulties of the times, he replied: “If the ship of the church is to be saved from being swallowed up by the tempest, there is only one anchor that can save it: it is the heavenly word, which, issuing from the bosom of the Father, lives, speaks, and works still in the Gospel.” These noble sentiments served as an introduction to those blessed pages which were to reform England. Erasmus, like Caiaphas, prophesied without being aware of it. The New Testament in Greek and Latin had hardly appeared when it was received by all men of upright mind with unprecedented enthusiasm. Never had any book produced such a sensation. It was in every hand: men struggled to procure it, read it eagerly, and would even kiss it. The words it contained enlightened every heart. But a reaction soon took place. Traditional catholicism uttered a cry from the depths of its noisome pools, (to use Erasmus’s figure). Franciscans and Dominicans, priests and bishops, not daring to attack the educated and well-born, went among the ignorant populace, and endeavoured by their tales and clamours to stir up susceptible women and credulous men. “Here are horrible heresies,” they exclaimed, “here are frightful antichrists! If this book be tolerated it will be the death of the papacy!”—“We must drive this man from the university,” said one. “We must turn him out of the church,” added another. “The public places re-echoed with their howlings,” said Erasmus The firebrands tossed by their furious hands were raising fires in every quarter; and the flames kindled in a few obscure convents threatened to spread over the whole country. This irritation was not without a cause. The book, indeed, contained nothing but Latin and Greek; but this first step seemed to augur another—the translation of the Bible into the vulgar tongue. Erasmus loudly called for it. “Perhaps it may be necessary to conceal the secrets of kings,” he remarked, “but we must publish the mysteries of Christ. The Holy Scriptures, translated into all languages, should be read not only by the Scotch and Irish, but even by Turks and Saracens. The husbandman should sing them as he holds the handle of his plough, the weaver repeat them as he plies his shuttle, and the wearied traveller, halting on his journey,

refresh him under some shady tree by these godly narratives." These words prefigured a golden age after the iron age of popery. A number of Christian families in Britain and on the continent were soon to realize these evangelical forebodings, and England after three centuries was to endeavour to carry them out for the benefit of all the nations on the face of the earth. The priests saw the danger, and by a skilful manœuvre, instead of finding fault with the Greek Testament, attacked the translation and the translator. "He has corrected the Vulgate," they said, "and puts himself in the place of Saint Jerome. He sets aside a work authorized by the consent of ages and inspired by the Holy Ghost. What audacity!" And then, turning over the pages, they pointed out the most odious passages: "Look here! this book calls upon men to repent, instead of requiring them, as the Vulgate does, to do penance!" (Matthew 4:17) The priests thundered against him from their pulpits: "This man has committed the unpardonable sin," they asserted; "for he maintains that there is nothing in common between the Holy Ghost and the monks—that they are logs rather than men!" These simple remarks were received with a general laugh; but the priests, in no wise disconcerted, cried out all the louder: "He's a heretic, an heresiarch, a forger! he's a goose4 … what do I say? he's a very antichrist!"

It was not sufficient for the papal janissaries to make war in the plain, they must carry it to the higher ground. Was not the king a friend of Erasmus? If he should declare himself a patron of the Greek and Latin Testament, what an awful calamity!… After having agitated the cloisters, towns, and universities, they resolved to protest against it boldly, even in Henry's presence. They thought: "If he is won, all is won." It happened one day that a certan theologian (whose name is not given) having to preach in his turn before the king, he declaimed violently against the Greek language and its new interpreters. Pace, the king's secretary, was present, and turning his eyes on Henry, observed him smiling good humouredly. On leaving the church, every one began to exclaim against the preacher. "Bring the priest to me," said the king; and then turning to More, he added: "You shall defend the Greek cause against him, and I will listen to the disputation." The literary tribunal was soon formed, but the sovereign's order had taken away all the priest's courage. He came forward trembling, fell on his knees, and with clasped hands exclaimed: "I know not what spirit impelled me." "A spirit of madness," said the king, "and not the spirit of Jesus Christ."2 He then added: "Have you ever read Erasmus?" "No, Sire." "Away with you then, you are a blockhead." "And yet," said the preacher in confusion, "I remember to have read something about Moria," (Erasmus's treatise on Folly).—"A subject, your majesty, that ought to be very familiar to him," wickedly interrupted Pace. The obscurant could say nothing in his justification. "I am not altogether opposed to the Greek," he added at last, "seeing that it is derived from the Hebrew." This was greeted with a general laugh, and the king impatiently ordered the monk to leave the room, and never appear before him again.

Erasmus was astonished at these discussions. He had imagined the season to be most favourable. "Every thing looks peaceful," he had said to himself; "now is the time to launch my Greek Testament into the learned world." As well might the sun rise upon the earth, and no one see it! At that very hour God was raising up a monk at Wittemberg who would lift the trumpet to his lips, and proclaim the new day. "Wretch that I am!" exclaimed the timid scholar, beating his breast, "who could have forseen this horrible tempest!"

Nothing was more important at the dawn of the Reformation than the publication of the Testament of Jesus Christ in the original language. Never had Erasmus worked so carefully. "If I told what

sweat it cost me, no one would believe me." He had collated many Greek MSS. of the New Testament,3 and was surrounded by all the commentaries and translations, by the writings of Origen, Cyprian, Ambrose, Basil, Chrysostom, Cyril, Jerome, and Augustine. Hic sum in campo meo! he exclaimed as he sat in the midst of his books. He had investigated the texts according to the principles of sacred criticism. When a knowledge of Hebrew was necessary, he had consulted Capito and more particularly Œcolampadius. Nothing without Theseus, said he of the latter, making use of a Greek proverb. He had corrected the amphibologies, obscurities, hebraisms, and barbarisms of the Vulgate; and had caused a list to be printed of the errors in that version.

"We must restore the pure text of the word of God," he had said; and when he heard the maledictions of the priests, he had exclaimed: "I call God to witness I thought I was doing a work acceptable to the Lord and necessary to the cause of Christ." Nor in this was he deceived. At the head of his adversaries was Edward Lee, successively king's almoner, archdeacon of Colchester, and archbishop of York. Lee, at that time but little known, was a man of talent and activity, but also vain and loquacious, and determined to make his way at any cost. Even when a school-boy he looked down on all his companions. As child, youth, man, and in mature years, he was always the same, Erasmus tells us;6 that is to say, vain, envious, jealous, boasting, passionate, and revengeful. We must bear in mind, however, that when Erasmus describes the character of his opponents, he is far from being an impartial judge. In the bosom of Roman-catholicism, there have always existed well-meaning, though ill-informed men, who, not knowing the interior power of the word of God, have thought that if its authority were substituted for that of the Romish church, the only foundation of truth and of Christian society would be shaken. Yet while we judge Lee less severely than Erasmus does, we cannot close our eyes to his faults. His memory was richly furnished, but his heart was a stranger to divine truth: he was a schoolman and not a believer. He wanted the people to obey the church and not trouble themselves about the Scriptures. He was the Doctor Eck of England, but with more of outward appearance and morality than Luther's adversary. Yet he was by no means a rigid moralist. On one occasion, when preaching at the palace, he introduced ballads into his sermon, one of which began thus:—

"Pass time with good company." And the other:—

"I love unloved."

We are indebted to Secretary Pace for this characteristic trait.

During the sojourn of Erasmus in England, Lee, observing his influence, had sought his friendship, and Erasmus, with his usual courtesy, had solicited his advice upon his work. But Lee, jealous of his great reputation, only waited for an opportunity to injure it, which he seized upon as soon as it occurred. The New Testament had not been long published, when Lee turned round abruptly, and from being Erasmus's friend became his implacable adversary. "If we do not stop this leak," said he, when he heard of the New Testament, "it will sink the ship." Nothing terrifies the defenders of human traditions so much as the word of God.

Lee immediately leagued himself with all those in England who abhorred the study of Scripture, says Erasmus. Although exceedingly conceited, he showed himself the most amiable of men, in order to accomplish his designs. He invited Englishmen to his house, welcomed strangers, and gained many recruits by the excellence of his dinners. While seated at table among his guests, he

hinted perfidious charges against Erasmus, and his company left him “loaded with lies.”4—“In this New Testament,” said he, “there are three hundred dangerous, frightful passages … three hundred did I say?… there are more than a thousand!” Not satisfied with using his tongue, Lee wrote scores of letters, and employed several secretaries. Was there any convent in the odour of sanctity, he “forwarded to it instantly wine, choice viands, and other presents.” To each one he assigned his part, and over all England they were rehearsing what Erasmus calls Lee’s tragedy. In this manner they were preparing the catastrophe: a prison for Erasmus, the fire for the Holy Scriptures. When all was arranged, Lee issued his manifesto. Although a poor Greek scholar, he drew up some Annotations on Erasmus’s book, which the latter called “mere abuse and blasphemy;” but which the members of the league regarded as oracles. They passed them secretly from hand to hand, and these obscure sheets, by many indirect channels, found their way into every part of England, and met with numerous readers. There was to be no publication—such was the watchword; Lee was too much afraid. “Why did you not publish your work,” asked Erasmus, with cutting irony. “Who knows whether the holy father, appointing you the Aristarchus of letters, might not have sent you a birch to keep the whole world in order!”4 The Annotations having triumphed in the convents, the conspiracy took a new flight. In every place of public resort, at fairs and markets, at the dinner-table and in the council-chamber, in shops, and taverns, and houses of ill-fame, in churches and in the universities, in cottages and in palaces, the league blattered against Erasmus and the Greek Testament. Carmelites, Dominicans, and Sophists, invoked heaven and conjured hell. What need was there of Scripture? Had they not the apostolical succession of the clergy? No hostile landing in England could, in their eyes, be more fatal than that of the New Testament. The whole nation must rise to repel this impudent invasion. There is, perhaps, no country in Europe, where the Reformation was received by so unexpected a storm.

CHAPTER II

Effects of the New Testament in the Universities—Conversations—A Cambridge Fellow—Bilney buys the New Testament—The first Passage—His Conversion—Protestantism, the Fruit of the Gospel—The Vale of the Severn—William Tyndale—Evangelization at Oxford—Bilney teaches at Cambridge—Fryth—Is Conversion Possible?—True Consecration—The Reformation has begun.

While this rude blast was rushing over England, and roaring in the long galleries of its convents, the still small voice of the Word was making its way into the peaceful homes of praying men and the ancient halls of Oxford and Cambridge. In private chambers, in the lecture-rooms and refectories, students, and even masters of arts, were to be seen reading the Greek and Latin Testament. Animated groups were discussing the principles of the Reformation. When Christ came on earth (said some) He gave the word, and when He ascended up into heaven He gave the Holy Spirit. These are the two forces which created the church—and these are the forces that must regenerate it.—No (replied the partizans of Rome), it was the teaching of the apostles at first, and it is the teaching of the priests now.—The apostles (rejoined the friends of the Testament of Erasmus)—yes, it is true—the apostles were during their ministry a living Scripture; but their oral teaching would infallibly have been altered by passing from mouth to mouth. God willed, therefore, that these precious lessons should be preserved to us in their writings, and thus become the ever-undefiled source of truth and salvation. To set the Scriptures in the foremost place, as your pretended reformers are doing (replied the schoolmen of Oxford and Cambridge); is to propagate heresy! And what are the reformers doing (asked their apologists) except what Christ did before

them? The sayings of the prophets existed in the time of Jesus only as Scripture, and it was to this written Word that our Lord appealed when he founded his kingdom. And now in like manner the teaching of the apostles exists only as Scripture, and it is to this written word that we appeal in order to re-establish the kingdom of our Lord in its primitive condition. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; all is in motion—in the lofty halls of our colleges, in the mansions of the rich and noble, and in the lowly dwellings of the poor. If we want to scatter the darkness, must we light the shrivelled wick of some old lamp? Ought we not rather to open the doors and shutters and admit freely into the house the great light which God has placed in the heavens?

There was in Trinity Hall, Cambridge, a young doctor much given to the study of the canon law, of serious turn of mind and bashful disposition, and whose tender conscience strove, although ineffectually, to fulfil the commandments of God. Anxious about his salvation, Thomas Bilney applied to the priests, whom he looked upon as physicians of the soul. Kneeling before his confessor, with humble look and pale face, he told him all his sins, and even those of which he doubted. The priest prescribed at one time fasting, at another prolonged vigils, and then masses and indulgences which cost him dearly.2 The poor doctor went through all these practices with great devotion, but found no consolation in them. Being weak and slender, his body wasted away by degrees; his understanding grew weaker, his imagination faded, and his purse became empty. “Alas!” said he with anguish, “my last state is worse than the first.” From time to time an idea crossed his mind: “May not the priests be seeking their own interest, and not the salvation of my soul.”4 But immediately rejecting the rash doubt, he fell back under the iron hand of the clergy.

One day Bilney heard his friends talking about a new book: it was the Greek Testament printed with a translation which was highly praised for its elegant Latinity. Attracted by the beauty of the style rather than by the divinity of the subject,6 he stretched out his hand; but just as he was going to take the volume, fear came upon him and he withdrew it hastily. In fact the confessors strictly prohibited Greek and Hebrew books, “the sources of all heresies;” and Erasmus’s Testament was particularly forbidden. Yet Bilney regretted so great a sacrifice; was it not the Testament of Jesus Christ? Might not God have placed therein some word which perhaps might heal his soul? He stepped forward, and then again shrank back.… At last he took courage. Urged, said he, by the hand of God, he walked out of the college, slipped into the house where the volume was sold in secret, bought it with fear and trembling, and then hastened back and shut himself up in his room.

He opened it—his eyes caught these words: This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. He laid down the book, and meditated on the astonishing declaration. “What! St. Paul the chief of sinners, and yet St. Paul is sure of being saved!” He read the verse again and again. “O assertion of St. Paul, how sweet art thou to my soul!” he exclaimed.3 This declaration continually haunted him, and in this manner God instructed him in the secret of his heart. He could not tell what had happened to him;5 it seemed as if a refreshing wind were blowing over his soul, or as if a rich treasure had been placed in his hands. The Holy Spirit took what was Christ’s, and announced it to him. “I also am like Paul,” exclaimed he with emotion, “and more than Paul, the greatest of sinners!… But Christ saves sinners. At last I have heard of Jesus.” His doubts were ended—he was saved. Then took place in him a wonderful transformation. An unknown joy pervaded him; his conscience until then sore with the wounds of sin was healed;8 instead of despair he felt an inward peace passing all understanding. “Jesus Christ,” exclaimed he, “Yes, Jesus Christ saves!” … Such is the character

of the Reformation: it is Jesus Christ who saves and not the church. “I see it all,” said Bilney; “my vigils, my fasts, my pilgrimages, my purchase of masses and indulgences, were destroying instead of saying me.10 All these efforts were, as St. Augustine says, a hasty running out of the right way.”

Bilney never grew tired of reading his New Testament. He no longer lent an attentive ear to the teaching of the schoolmen; he heard Jesus at Capernaum, Peter in the temple, Paul on. Mars’ hill, and felt within himself that Christ possesses the words of eternal life. A witness to Jesus Christ had just been born by the same power which had transformed Paul, Apollos, and Timothy. The Reformation of England was beginning. Bilney was united to the Son of God, not by a remote succession, but by an immediate generation. Leaving to the disciples of the pope the entangled chain of their imaginary succession, whose links it is impossible to disengage, he attached himself closely to Christ. The word of the first century gave birth to the sixteenth. Protestantism does not descend from the Gospel in the fiftieth generation like the Romish church of the Council of Trent, or in the sixtieth like some modern doctors: it is the direct legitimate son—the son of the master.

God’s action was not limited to one spot. The first rays of the sun from on high gilded with their fires at once the gothic colleges of Oxford and the antique schools of Cambridge.

Along the banks of the Severn extends a picturesque country, bounded by the forest of Dean, and sprinkled with villages, steeples, and ancient castles. In the sixteenth century it was particularly admired by priests and friars, and a familiar oath among them was: “As sure as God’s in Glo’ster!” The papal birds of prey had swooped upon it. For fifty years, from 1484 to 1534, four Italian bishops, placed in succession over the diocese, had surrendered it to the pope, to the monks, and to immorality. Thieves in particular were the objects of the tenderest favours of the hierarchy. John de Giglis, collector of the apostolical chamber, had received from the sovereign pontiff authority to pardon murder and theft, on condition that the criminal shared his profits with the pontifical commissioners. In this valley, at the foot of Stinchcomb hill, to the southwest of Gloucester, there dwelt, during the latter half of the fifteenth century, a family which had taken refuge there during the wars of the Roses, and assumed the name of Hutchins. In the reign of Henry VII, the Lancasterian party having the upper hand, they resumed their name of Tyndale, which had been borne of yore by many noble barons. In 1484, about a year after the birth of Luther, and about the time that Zwingle first saw light in the mountains of the Tockenburg, these partisans of the red rose were blessed with a son, whom they called William. His youth was passed in the fields surrounding his native village of North Nibley, beneath the shadows of Berkeley Castle, or beside the rapid waters of the Severn, and in the midst of friars and pontifical collectors. He was sent very early to Oxford, where he learnt grammar and philosophy in the school of St. Mary Magdalene, adjoining the college of that name. He made rapid progress, particularly in languages, under the first classical scholars in England—Grocyn, W. Latimer, and Linacre—and took his degrees.2 A more excellent master than these doctors—the Holy Spirit speaking in Scripture—was soon to teach him a science which it is not in the power of man to impart.

Oxford, where Erasmus had so many friends, was the city in which his New Testament met with the warmest welcome. The young Gloucestershire student, inwardly impelled towards the study of sacred literature, read the celebrated book which was then attracting the attention of Christendom. At first he regarded it only as a work of learning, or at most as a manual of piety, whose beauties were calculated to excite religious feelings; but erelong he found it to be something more. The

more he read it, the more was he struck by the truth and energy of the word. The strange book spoke to him of God, of Christ, and of regeneration, with a simplicity and authority which completely subdued him. William had found a master whom he had not sought at Oxford—this was God himself. The pages he held in his hand were the divine revelation so long mislaid. Possessing a noble soul, a bold spirit, and indefatigable activity, he did not keep this treasure to himself. He uttered that cry, more suited to a Christian than to Archimedes: εὕρηκα, I have found it. It was not long before several of the younger members of the university, attracted by the purity of his life and the charms of his conversation, gathered round him, and read with him the Greek and Latin gospels of Erasmus.4 “A certain well-informed young man,” wrote Erasmus in a letter wherein he speaks of the publication of his New Testament, “began to lecture with success on Greek literature at Oxford.” He was probably speaking of Tyndale. The monks took the alarm. “A barbarian,” continues Erasmus, “entered the pulpit and violently abused the Greek language.”—“These folk,” said Tyndale, “wished to extinguish the light which exposed their trickery, and they have been laying their plans these dozen years.” This observation was made in 1531, and refers therefore to the proceedings of 1517. Germany and England were beginning the struggle at nearly the same time, and Oxford perhaps before Wittemberg. Tyndale, bearing in mind the injunction: “When they persecute you in one city, flee ye into another,” left Oxford and proceeded to Cambridge. It must needs be that souls whom God has brought to his knowledge should meet and enlighten one another: live coals, when separated, go out; when gathered together, they brighten up, so as even to purify silver and gold. The Romish hierarchy, not knowing what they did, were collecting the scattered brands of the Reformation.

Bilney was not inactive at Cambridge. Not long had the “sublime lesson of Jesus Christ” filled him with joy, before he fell on his knees and exclaimed: “O Thou who art the truth, give me strength that I may teach it; and convert the ungodly by means of one who has been ungodly himself.” After this prayer his eyes gleamed with new fire; he had assembled his friends, and opening Erasmus’s Testament, had placed his finger on the words that had reached his soul, and these words had touched many. The arrival of Tyndale gave him fresh courage, and the light burnt brighter in Cambridge.

John Fryth, a young man of eighteen, the son of an innkeeper of Sevenoaks in Kent, was distinguished among the students of King’s College, by the promptitude of his understanding and the integrity of his life. He was as deeply read in the mathematics as Tyndale in the classics, and Bilney in canon law. Although of an exact turn of mind, yet his soul was elevated, and he recognised in Holy Scripture a learning of a new kind. “These things are not demonstrated like a proposition of Euclid,” he said; “mere study is sufficient to impress the theories of mathematics on our minds; but this science of God meets with a resistance in man that necessitates the intervention of a divine power. Christianity is a regeneration.” The heavenly seed soon grew up in Fryth’s heart.

These three young scholars set to work with enthusiasm. They declared that neither priestly absolution nor any other religious rite could give remission of sins; that the assurance of pardon is obtained by faith alone; and that faith purifies the heart. Then they addressed to all men that saying of Christ’s at which the monks were so offended: Repent and be converted!

Ideas so new produced a great clamour. A famous orator undertook one day at Cambridge to show that it was useless to preach conversion to the sinner. “Thou, who, for sixty years past,” said he, “hast wallowed in thy lusts, like a sow in her mire, dost thou think that thou canst in one year take as many steps towards heaven, and that in thine age, as thou hast done towards hell?” Bilney left the church with indignation. “Is that preaching repentance in the name of Jesus?” he asked. “Does not this priest tell us: Christ will not save thee.2 Alas! for so many years that this deadly doctrine has been taught in Christendom, not one man has dared open his mouth against it!” Many of the Cambridge fellows were scandalized at Bilney’s language: was not the preacher whose teaching he condemned duly ordained by the bishop? He replied: “What would be the use of being a hundred times consecrated, were it even by a thousand papal bulls, if the inward calling is wanting? To no purpose hath the bishop breathed on our heads if we have never felt the breath of the Holy Ghost in our hearts?” Thus, at the very beginning of the Reformation, England, rejecting the Romish superstitions, discerned with extreme nicety what constitutes the essence of consecration to the service of the Lord.

After pronouncing these noble words, Bilney, who longed for an outpouring of the Holy Ghost, shut himself up in his room, fell on his knees, and called upon God to come to the assistance of his church. Then rising up, he exclaimed, as if animated by a prophetic spirit: “A new time is beginning. The Christian assembly is about to be renewed…. Some one is coming unto us, I see him, I hear him—it is Jesus Christ. … He is the king, and it is he who will call the true ministers commissioned to evangelize his people.”

Tyndale, full of the same hopes as Bilney, left Cambridge in the course of the year 1519.

Thus the English Reformation began independently of those of Luther and Zwingle—deriving its origin from God alone. In every province of Christendom there was a simultaneous action of the divine word. The principle of the Reformation at Oxford, Cambridge, and London was the Greek New Testament, published by Erasmus. England, in course of time learnt to be proud of this origin of its Reformation.

CHAPTER III

Alarm of the Clergy—The Two Days—Thomas Man’s Preaching—True real Presence—Persecutions at Coventry—Standish preaches at St. Paul’s—His Petition to the King and Queen—His Arguments and Defeat—Wolsey’s Ambition—First Overtures—Henry and Francis Candidates for the Empire—Conference between Francis I and Sir T. Boleyn—The Tiara promised to Wolsey—The Cardinal’s Intrigues with Charles and Francis. This revival caused great alarm throughout the Roman hierarchy. Content with the baptism they administered, they feared the baptism of the Holy Ghost perfected by faith in the word of God. Some of the clergy, who were full of zeal, but of zeal without knowledge, prepared for the struggle, and the cries raised by the prelates were repeated by all the inferior orders. The first blows did not fall on the members of the universities, but on those humble Christians, the relics of Wickliffe’s ministry, to whom the reform movement among the learned had imparted a new life. The awakening of the fourteenth century was about to be succeeded by that of the sixteenth, and the last gleams of the closing day were almost lost in the first rays of that which was commencing. The young doctors of Oxford and Cambridge aroused the attention of the alarmed hierarchy, and attracted their eyes to the humble Lollards, who here and there still recalled the days of Wickliffe. An artisan named Thomas Man,

sometimes called Doctor Man, from his knowledge of Holy Scripture, had been imprisoned for his faith in the priory of Frideswide at Oxford (1511 a. d.) Tormented by the remembrance of a recantation which had been extorted from him, he had escaped from this monastery and fled into the eastern parts of England, where he had preached the Word, supplying his daily wants by the labour of his hands. This “champion of God” afterwards drew near the capital, and assisted by his wife, the new Priscilla of this new Aquila, he proclaimed the doctrine of Christ to the crowd collected around him in some “upper chamber” of London, or in some lonely meadow watered by the Thames, or under the aged oaks of Windsor Forest. He thought with Chrysostom of old, that “all priests are not saints, but all saints are priests.”2 “He that receiveth the word of God,” said he, “receiveth God himself, that is the true real presence. The vendors of masses are not the high-priests of this mystery; but the men whom God hath anointed with his Spirit to be kings and priests.” From six to seven hundred persons were converted by his preaching. The monks who dared not as yet attack the universities, resolved to fall upon those preachers who made their temple on the banks of the Thames, or in some remote corner of the city. Man was seized, condemned, and burnt alive on the 29th March 1519. And this was not all. There lived at Coventry a little band of serious Christians—four shoemakers, a glover, a hosier, and a widow named Smith—who gave their children a pious education. The Franciscans were annoyed that laymen, and even a woman, should dare meddle with religious instruction. On Ash Wednesday (1519) Simon Morton, the bishop’s sumner, apprehended them all, men, women, and children. On the following Friday, the parents were taken to the Abbey of Mackstock, about six miles from Coventry, and the children to the Grey Friar’s convent. “Let us see what heresies you have been taught?” said Friar Stafford to the intimidated little ones. The poor children confessed they had been taught in English the Lord’s prayer, the apostles’ creed, and the ten commandments. On hearing this, Stafford told them angrily: “I forbid you, (unless you wish to be burnt as your parents will be,) to have any thing to do with the Pater, the credo, or the ten commandments in English.”

Five weeks after this, the men were condemned to be burnt alive, but the judges had compassion on the widow, because of her young family (for she was their only support,) and let her go. It was night: Morton offered to see Dame Smith home; she took his arm, and they threaded the dark and narrow streets of Coventry. “Eh, eh!” said the apparitor, on a sudden, “what have we here?” He heard in fact the noise of paper rubbing against something. “What have you got there?” he continued, dropping her arm, and putting his hand up her sleeve, from which he drew out a parchment. Approaching a window whence issued the faint rays of a lamp, he examined the mysterious scroll, and found it to contain the Lord’s prayer, the apostles’ creed, and the ten commandments in English. “Oh, oh! sirrah!” said he; “come along. As good now as another time!” Then seizing the poor widow by the arm, he dragged her before the bishop. Sentence of death was immediately pronounced on her, and on the 4th of April, Dame Smith, Robert Hatchets, Archer, Hawkins, Thomas Bond, Wrigsham, and Landsdale, were burnt alive at Coventry in the Little Park, for the crime of teaching their children the Lord’s prayer, the apostles’ creed, and the commandments of God. But what availed it to silence these obscure lips, so long as the Testament of Erasmus could speak? Lee’s conspiracy must be revived. Standish, bishop of St. Asaph, was a narrow-minded man, rather fanatical, but probably sincere, of great courage, and not without some degree of piety. This prelate, being determined to preach a crusade against the New Testament, began at London, in St. Paul’s cathedral, before the mayor and corporation. “Away with these new translations,” he said, “or else the religion of Jesus Christ is threatened with

utter ruin." But Standish was deficient in tact, and instead of confining himself to general statements, like most of his party, he endeavoured to show how far Erasmus had corrupted the Gospel, and continued thus in a whining voice: "Must I who for so many years have been a doctor of the Holy Scriptures, and who have always read in my Bible: In principio erat verbum,—must I now be obliged to read: In principio erat sermo," for thus had Erasmus translated the opening words of St. John's Gospel. Risum teneatis, whispered one to another, when they heard this puerile charge: "My lord," proceeded the bishop, turning to the mayor, "magistrates of the city, and citizens all, fly to the succour of religion!" Standish continued his pathetic appeals, but his oratory was all in vain; some stood unmoved, others shrugged their shoulders, and others grew impatient. The citizens of London seemed determined to support liberty and the Bible.

Standish, seeing the failure of his attack in the city, sighed and groaned and prayed, and repeated mass against the so much dreaded book. But he also made up his mind to do more. One day, during the rejoicings at court for the betrothal of the Princess Mary, then two years old, with a French prince who was just born, St. Asaph, absorbed and absent in the midst of the gay crowd, meditated a bold step. Suddenly he made his way through the crowd, and threw himself at the feet of the king and queen. All were thunder-struck, and asked one another what the old bishop could mean. "Great king," said he, "your ancestors who have reigned over this island,—and yours, O great queen, who have governed Aragon, were always distinguished by their zeal for the church. Show yourselves worthy of your forefathers. Times full of danger are come upon us, a book has just appeared, and been published too, by Erasmus! It is such a book that, if you close not your kingdom against it, it is all over with the religion of Christ among us." The bishop ceased, and a dead silence ensued. The devout Standish, fearing lest Henry's well-known love of learning should be an obstacle to his prayer, raised his eyes and his hands toward heaven, and kneeling in the midst of the courtly assembly, exclaimed in a sorrowful tone: "O Christ! O Son of God! save thy spouse!… for no man cometh to her help."

Having thus spoken, the prelate, whose courage was worthy of a better cause, rose up and waited. Every one strove to guess at the king's thoughts. Sir Thomas More was present, and he could not forsake his friend Erasmus. "What are the heresies this book is likely to engender?" he inquired. After the sublime came the ridiculous. With the forefinger of his right hand, touching successively the fingers of his left, Standish replied: "First, this book destroys the resurrection; secondly, it annuls the sacrament of marriage; thirdly, it abolishes the mass." Then uplifting his thumb and two fingers, he showed them to the assembly with a look of triumph. The bigoted Catherine shuddered as she saw Standish's three fingers,—signs of the three heresies of Erasmus; and Henry himself, an admirer of Aquinas, was embarrassed. It was a critical moment: the Greek Testament was on the point of being banished from England. "The proof, the proof," exclaimed the friends of literature. "I will give it," rejoined the impetuous Standish, and then once more touching his left thumb: "Firstly," he said, … But he brought forward such foolish reasons, that even the women and the unlearned were ashamed of them. The more he endeavoured to justify his assertions, the more confused he became: he affirmed among other things that the Epistles of St. Paul were written in Hebrew. "There is not a schoolboy that does not know that Paul's epistles were written in Greek," said a doctor of divinity kneeling before the king. Henry, blushing for the bishop, turned the conversation, and Standish, ashamed at having made a Greek write to the Greeks in Hebrew, would have withdrawn unobserved. "The beetle must not attack the

eagle," was whispered in his ear. Thus did the book of God remain in England the standard of a faithful band, who found in its pages the motto, which the church of Rome had usurped: The truth is in me alone. A more formidable adversary than Standish aspired to combat the Reformation, not only in England, but in all the West. One of those ambitious designs, which easily germinate in the human heart, developed itself in the soul of the chief minister of Henry VIII; and if this project succeeded, it promised to secure for ever the empire of the papacy on the banks of the Thames, and perhaps in the whole of Christendom.

Wolsey, as chancellor and legate, governed both in state and in church, and could, without an untruth, utter his famous Ego et rex meus. Having reached so great a height, he desired to soar still higher. The favourite of Henry VIII, almost his master, treated as a brother by the emperor, by the king of France, and by other crowned heads, invested with the title of Majesty, the peculiar property of sovereigns, the cardinal, sincere in his faith in the popedom, aspired to fill the throne of the pontiffs, and thus become Deus in terris. He thought, that if God permitted a Luther to appear in the world, it was because he had a Wolsey to oppose to him.

It would be difficult to fix the precise moment when this immoderate desire entered his mind: it was about the end of 1518 that it began to show itself. The bishop of Ely, ambassador at the court of Francis I, being in conference with that prince on the 18th of December in that year, said to him mysteriously: "The cardinal has an idea in his mind … on which he can unbosom himself to nobody … except it be to your majesty." Francis understood him. An event occurred to facilitate the cardinal's plans. If Wolsey desired to be the first priest, Henry desired to be the first king. The imperial crown, vacant by the death of Maximilian, was sought by two princes:—by Charles of Austria, a cold and calculating man, caring little about the pleasures and even the pomp of power, but forming great designs, and knowing how to pursue them with energy; and by Francis I, a man of less penetrating glance and less indefatigable activity, but more daring and impetuous. Henry VIII, inferior to both, passionate, capricious, and selfish, thought himself strong enough to contend with such puissant competitors, and secretly strove to win "the monarchy of all Christendom." Wolsey flattered himself that, hidden under the cloak of his master's ambition, he might satisfy his own. If he procured the crown of the Cæsars for Henry, he might easily obtain the tiara of the popes for himself; if he failed, the least that could be done to compensate England for the loss of the empire, would be to give the sovereignty of the church to her prime minister.

Henry first sounded the king of France. Sir Thomas Boleyn appeared one day before Francis I just as the latter was returning from mass. The king, desirous to anticipate a confidence that might be embarrassing, took the ambassador aside to the window and whispered to him: "Some of the electors have offered me the empire; I hope your master will be favourable to me." Sir Thomas, in confusion, made some vague reply, and the chivalrous king, following up his idea, took the ambassador firmly by one hand, and laying the other on his breast, exclaimed: "By my faith, if I become emperor, in three years I shall be in Constantinople, or I shall die on the road!" This was not what Henry wanted; but dissembling his wishes, he took care to inform Francis that he would support his candidature. Upon hearing this Francis raised his hat and exclaimed: "I desire to see the king of England; I will see him, I tell you, even if I go to London with only one page and one lackey."

Francis was well aware that if he threatened the king's ambition, he must flatter the minister's, and recollecting the hint given by the bishop of Ely, he said one day to Boleyn: "It seems to me that my brother of England and I could do, indeed ought to do … something for the cardinal. He was prepared by God for the good of Christendom … one of the greatest men in the church … and on the word of a king, if he consents, I will do it." A few minutes after he continued: "Write and tell the cardinal, that if he aspires to be the head of the church, and if any thing should happen to the reigning pope, I will promise him fourteen cardinals on my part. Let us only act in concert, your master and me, and I promise you, Mr. Ambassador, that neither pope nor emperor shall be created in Europe without our consent." But Henry did not act in concert with the king of France. At Wolsey's instigation he supported three candidates at once: at Paris he was for Francis I; at Madrid for Charles V; and at Frankfort for himself. The kings of France and England failed, and on the 10th August, Pace, Henry's envoy at Frankfort, having returned to England, desired to console the king by mentioning the sums of money which Charles had spent. "By the mass!" exclaimed the king, congratulating himself at not having obtained the crown at so dear a rate. Wolsey proposed to sing a Te Deum in St. Paul's, and bonfires were lighted in the city. The cardinal's rejoicings were not misplaced. Charles had scarcely ascended the imperial throne, in despite of the king of France, when these two princes swore eternal hatred of each other, and each was anxious to win over Henry VIII. At one time Charles, under the pretence of seeing his uncle and aunt, visited England; at another, Francis had an interview with the king in the neighbourhood of Calais. The cardinal shared in the flattering attentions of the two monarchs. "It is easy for the king of Spain, who has become the head of the empire, to raise whomsoever he pleases to the supreme pontificate," said the young emperor to him; and at these words the ambitious cardinal surrendered himself to Maximilian's successor. But erelong Francis I flattered him in his turn, and Wolsey replied also to his advances. The king of France gave Henry tournaments and banquets of Asiatic luxury; and Wolsey, whose countenance yet bore the marks of the graceful smile with which he had taken leave of Charles, smiled also on Francis, and sang mass in his honour. He engaged the hand of the Princess Mary to the dauphin of France and to Charles V, leaving the care of unravelling the matter to futurity. Then proud of his skilful practices he returned to London full of hope. By walking in falsehood he hoped to attain the tiara: and if it was yet too far above him, there were certain gospellers in England who might serve as a ladder to reach it. Murder might serve as the complement to fraud.

CHAPTER IV

Tyndale—Sodbury Hall—Sir John and Lady Walsh—Table-Talk—The Holy Scriptures—The images—The Anchor of Faith—A Roman Camp—Preaching of Faith and Works—Tyndale accused by the Priests—They tear up what he has planted—Tyndale resolves to translate the Bible—His first triumph—The Priests in the taverns—Tyndale summoned before the Chancellor of Worcester—Consoled by an aged Doctor—Attacked by a schoolman—His Secret becomes known—He leaves Sodbury Hall.

Whilst this ambitious prelate was thinking of nothing but his own glory and that of the Roman pontificate, a great desire, but of a very different nature, was springing up in the heart of one of the humble "gospellers" of England. If Wolsey had his eyes fixed on the throne of the popedom in order to seat himself there, Tyndale thought of raising up the true throne of the church by re-establishing the legitimate sovereignty of the word of God. The Greek Testament of Erasmus

had been one step; and it now became necessary to place before the simple what the king of the schools had given to the learned. This idea, which pursued the young Oxford doctor everywhere, was to be the mighty mainspring of the English Reformation. On the slope of Sodbury hill there stood a plain but large mansion commanding an extensive view over the beautiful vale of the Severn where Tyndale was born. It was inhabited by a family of gentle birth: Sir John Walsh had shone in the tournaments of the court, and by this means conciliated the favour of his prince. He kept open table; and gentlemen, deans, abbots, archdeacons, doctors of divinity, and fat rectors, charmed by Sir John's cordial welcome and by his good dinners, were ever at his house. The former brother at arms of Henry VIII felt an interest in the questions then discussing throughout Christendom. Lady Walsh herself, a sensible and generous woman, lost not a word of the animated conversation of her guests, and discreetly tried to incline the balance to the side of truth.

Tyndale after leaving Oxford and Cambridge had returned to the home of his fathers. Sir John had requested him to educate his children, and he had accepted. William was then in the prime of life (he was about thirty-six), well instructed in Scripture, and full of desire to show forth the light which God had given him. Opportunities were not wanting. Seated at table with all the doctors welcomed by Sir John, Tyndale entered into conversation with them. They talked of the learned men of the day—of Erasmus much, and sometimes of Luther, who was beginning to astonish England.2 They discussed several questions touching the holy Scriptures, and sundry points of theology. Tyndale expressed his convictions with admirable clearness, supported them with great learning, and kept his ground against all with unbending courage. These animated conversations in the vale of the Severn are one of the essential features of the picture presented by the Reformation in this country. The historians of antiquity invented the speeches which they have put into the mouths of their heroes. In our times history, without inventing, should make us acquainted with the sentiments of the persons of whom it treats. It is sufficient to read Tyndale's works to form some idea of these conversations. It is from his writings that the following discussion has been drawn. In the dining-room of the old hall a varied group was assembled round the hospitable table. There were Sir John and Lady Walsh, a few gentlemen of the neighbourhood, with several abbots, deans, monks, and doctors, in their respective costumes. Tyndale occupied the humblest place, and generally kept Erasmus's New Testament within reach in order to prove what he advanced. Numerous domestics were moving about engaged in waiting on the guests; and at length the conversation, after wandering a little, took a more precise direction. The priests grew impatient when they saw the terrible volume appear. "Your Scriptures only serve to make heretics," they exclaimed. "On the contrary," replied Tyndale, "the source of all heresies is pride; now the word of God strips man of everything, and leaves him as bare as Job."—"The word of God! why even we don't understand your word, how can the vulgar understand it?"—"You do not understand it," rejoined Tyndale, "because you look into it only for foolish questions, as you would into our Lady's Matins, or Merlin's Prophecies. Now the Scriptures are a clue which we must follow, without turning aside, until we arrive at Christ;6 for Christ is the end."—"And I tell you," shouted out a priest, "that the Scriptures are a Dædalian labyrinth, rather than Ariadne's clue—a conjuring book wherein everybody finds what he wants."—"Alas!" replied Tyndale; "you read them without Jesus Christ; that's why they are an obscure book to you. What do I say? a den of thorns where you only escape from the briers to be caught by the brambles." "No!" exclaimed another clerk, heedless of contradicting his colleague, "nothing is obscure to us; it is we who give the Scriptures, and we who explain them to you."—"You would lose both your time and your trouble," said Tyndale; "do you

know who taught the eagles to find their prey?2 Well, that same God teaches his hungry children to find their Father in his word. Far from having given us the Scriptures, it is you who have hidden them from us; it is you who burn those who teach them, and if you could, you would burn the Scriptures themselves."

Tyndale was not satisfied with merely laying down the great principles of faith: he alway sought after what he calls "the sweet marrow within;" but to the divine unction he added no little humour, and unmercifully ridiculed the superstitions of his adversaries. "You set candles before images," he said to them; "and since you give them light, why don't you give them food. Why don't you make their bellies hollow, and put victuals and drink inside. To serve God by such mummeries is treating him like a spoilt child, whom you pacify with a toy or with a horse made of a stick."4 But the learned Christian soon returned to more serious thoughts; and when his adversaries extolled the papacy as the power that would save the church in the tempest, he replied: "Let us only take on board the anchor of faith, after having dipped it in the blood of Christ, and when the storm bursts upon us, let us boldly cast the anchor into the sea; then you may be sure the ship will remain safe on the great waters." And, in fine, if his opponents rejected any doctrine of the truth, Tyndale (says the chronicler) opening his Testament would set his finger on the verse which refuted the Romish error, and exclaim: "Look and read."6 The beginnings of the English Reformation are not to be found, as we have seen, in a material ecclesiasticism, which has been decorated with the name of English Catholicism: they are essentially spiritual. The Divine Word, the creator of the new life in the individual, is also the founder and reformer of the church. The reformed churches, and particularly the reformed churches of Great Britain, belong to evangelism. The contemplation of God's works refreshed Tyndale after the discussions he had to maintain at his patron's table. He would often ramble to the top of Sodbury hill, and there repose amidst the ruins of an ancient Roman camp which crowned the summit. It was here that Queen Margaret of Anjou halted; and here too rested Edward IV, who pursued her, before the fatal battle of Tewkesbury, which caused this princess to fall into the hands of the White Rose. Amidst these ruins, monuments of the Roman invasion and of the civil dissensions of England, Tyndale meditated upon other battles, which were to restore liberty and truth to Christendom. Then rousing himself he would descend the hill, and courageously resume his task.

Behind the mansion stood a little church, overshadowed by two large yew trees, and dedicated to Saint Adeline. On Sundays Tyndale used to preach there, Sir John and Lady Walsh, with the eldest of the children, occupying the manorial pew. This humble sanctuary was filled by their household and tenantry, listening attentively to the words of their teacher, which fell from his lips like the waters of Shiloah that go softly. Tyndale was very lively in conversation; but he explained the Scriptures with so much unction, says the chronicler, "that his hearers thought they heard St. John himself." If he resembled John in the mildness of his language, he resembled Paul in the strength of his doctrine. "According to the pope," he said, "we must first be good after his doctrine, and compel God to be good again for our goodness. Nay, verily, God's goodness is the root of all goodness. Antichrist turneth the tree of salvation topsy-turvy: he planteth the branches, and setteth the roots upwards. We must put it straight.… As the husband marrieth the wife, before he can have any lawful children by her;2 even so faith justifieth us to make us fruitful in good works. But neither the one nor the other should remain barren. Faith is the holy candle wherewith we must bless ourselves at the last hour; without it, you will go astray in the valley of the shadow of

death, though you had a thousand tapers lighted around your bed." The priests, irritated at such observations, determined to ruin Tyndale, and some of them invited Sir John and his lady to an entertainment, at which he was not present. During dinner, they so abused the young doctor and his New Testament, that his patrons retired greatly annoyed that their tutor should have made so many enemies. They told him all they had heard, and Tyndale successfully refuted his adversaries' arguments. "What!" exclaimed Lady Walsh, "there are some of these doctors worth one hundred, some two hundred, and some three hundred pounds … and were it reason, think you, Master William, that we should believe you before them?" Tyndale, opening the New Testament, replied: "No! it is not me you should believe. That is what the priests have told you; but look here, St. Peter, St. Paul, and the Lord himself say quite the contrary."2 The Word of God was there, positive and supreme: the sword of the spirit cut the difficulty.

Before long the manor-house and St. Adeline's church became too narrow for Tyndale's zeal. He preached every Sunday, sometimes in a village, sometimes in a town. The inhabitants of Bristol assembled to hear him in a large meadow, called St. Austin's Green. But no sooner had he preached in any place than the priests hastened thither, tore up what he had planted,4 called him a heretic, and threatened to expel from the church every one who dared listen to him. When Tyndale returned he found the field laid waste by the enemy; and looking sadly upon it, as the husbandman who sees his corn beaten down by the hail, and his rich furrows turned into a barren waste, he exclaimed: "What is to be done? While I am sowing in one place, the enemy ravages the field I have just left. I cannot be everywhere Oh! if Christians possessed the Holy Scriptures in their own tongue, they could of themselves withstand these sophists. Without the Bible it is impossible to establish the laity in the truth."

Then a great idea sprang up in Tyndale's heart: "It was in the language of Israel," said he, "that the Psalms were sung in the temple of Jehovah; and shall not the Gospel speak the language of England among us?… Ought the church to have less light at noonday than at the dawn?… Christians must read the New Testament in their mother-tongue." Tyndale believed that this idea proceeded from God. The new sun would lead to the discovery of a new world, and the infallible rule would make all human diversities give way to a divine unity. "One holdeth this doctor, another that," said Tyndale, "one followeth Duns Scotus, another St. Thomas, another Bonaventure, Alexander Hales, Raymond of Penaford, Lyra, Gorram, Hugh de Sancto Victore, and so many others besides.… Now, each of these authors contradicts the other. How then can we distinguish him who says right from him who says wrong?… How?… Verily, by God's word." Tyndale hesitated no longer.… While Wolsey sought to win the papal tiara, the humble tutor of Sodbury undertook to place the torch of heaven in the midst of his fellow-countrymen. The translation of the Bible shall be the work of his life. The first triumph of the word was a revolution in the manor-house. In proportion as Sir John and Lady Walsh acquired a taste for the Gospel, they became disgusted with the priests. The clergy were not so often invited to Sodbury, nor did they meet with the same welcome. They soon discontinued their visits, and thought of nothing but how they could drive Tyndale from the mansion and from the diocese.

Unwilling to compromise themselves in this warfare, they sent forward some of those light troops which the church has always at her disposal. Mendicant friars and poor curates, who could hardly understand their missal, and the most learned of whom made Albertus de secretis mulierum their habitual study, fell upon Tyndale like a pack of hungry hounds. They trooped to the alehouses, and

calling for a jug of beer, took their seats, one at one table, another at another. They invited the peasantry to drink with them, and entering into conversation with them, poured forth a thousand curses upon the daring reformer: “He’s a hypocrite,” said one; “he’s a heretic,” said another. The most skilful among them would mount upon a stool, and turning the tavern into a temple, deliver, for the first time in his life, an extemporaneous discourse. They reported words that Tyndale had never uttered, and actions that he had never committed.4 Rushing upon the poor tutor (he himself informs us) “like unclean swine that follow their carnal lusts,” they tore his good name to very tatters, and shared the spoil among them; while the audience, excited by their calumnies and heated by the beer, departed overflowing with rage and hatred against the heretic of Sodbury.

After the monks came the dignitaries. The deans and abbots, Sir John’s former guests, accused Tyndale to the chancellor of the diocese, and the storm which had begun in the tavern burst forth in the episcopal palace. The titular bishop of Worcester (an appanage of the Italian prelates) was Giulio de’ Medici, a learned man, great politician, and crafty priest, who already governed the popedom without being pope. Wolsey, who administered the diocese for his absent colleague, had appointed Thomas Parker chancellor, a man devoted to the Roman church. It was to him the churchmen made their complaint. A judicial inquiry had its difficulties; the king’s companion-at-arms was the patron of the pretended heretic, and Sir Anthony Poyntz, Lady Walsh’s brother, was sheriff of the county. The chancellor was therefore content to convoke a general conference of the clergy. Tyndale obeyed the summons, but foreseeing what awaited him, he cried heartily to God, as he pursued his way up the banks of the Severn, “to give him strength to stand fast in the truth of his word.”3 When they were assembled, the abbots and deans, and other ecclesiastics of the diocese, with haughty heads and threatening looks, crowded round the humble but unbending Tyndale. When his turn arrived, he stood forward, and the chancellor administered him a severe reprimand, to which he made a calm reply. This so exasperated the chancellor, that, giving way to his passion, he treated Tyndale as if he had been a dog. “Where are your witnesses?” demanded the latter. “Let them come forward, and I will answer them.” Not one of them dared support the charge—they looked another way. The chancellor waited, one witness at least he must have, but he could not get that.5 Annoyed at this desertion of the priests, the representative of the Medici became more equitable, and let the accusation drop. Tyndale quietly returned to Sodbury, blessing God who had saved him from the cruel hands of his adversaries, and entertaining nothing but the tenderest charity towards them. “Take away my goods,” he said to them one day, “take away my good name! yet so long as Christ dwelleth in my heart, so long shall I love you not a whit the less.”7 Here indeed is the Saint John to whom Tyndale has been compared. In this violent warfare, however, he could not fail to receive some heavy blows; and where could he find consolation? Fryth and Bilney were far from him. Tyndale recollected an aged doctor who lived near Sodbury, and who had shown him great affection. He went to see him, and opened his heart to him. The old man looked at him for a while as if he hesitated to disclose some great mystery. “Do you not know,” said he, lowering his voice, “that the pope is very Antichrist whom the Scripture speaketh of?… But beware what you say…. That knowledge may cost you your life.” This doctrine of Antichrist, which Luther was at that moment enunciating so boldly, struck Tyndale. Strengthened by it, as was the Saxon reformer, he felt fresh energy in his heart, and the aged doctor was to him what the aged friar had been to Luther. When the priests saw that their plot had failed, they commissioned a celebrated divine to undertake his conversion. The reformer replied with his Greek Testament to the schoolman’s arguments. The theologian was

speechless: at last he exclaimed: “Well then! it were better to be without God’s laws than the pope’s.” Tyndale, who did not expect so plain and blasphemous a confession, made answer: “And I defy the pope and all his laws!” and then, as if unable to keep his secret, he added: “If God spares my life, I will take care that a ploughboy shall know more of the Scriptures than you do.”4

All his thoughts were now directed to the means of carrying out his plans; and desirous of avoiding conversations that might compromise them, he thenceforth passed the greater portion of his time in the library. He prayed, he read, he began his translation of the Bible, and in all probability communicated portions of it to Sir John and Lady Walsh.

All his precautions were useless: the scholastic divine had betrayed him, and the priests had sworn to stop him in his translation of the Bible. One day he fell in with a troop of monks and curates, who abused him in the grossest manner. “It’s the favour of the gentry of the country that makes you so proud,” said they; “but notwithstanding your patrons, there will be a talk about you before long, and in a pretty fashion too!… You shall not always live in a manor-house!” “Banish me to the obscurest corner of England,” replied Tyndale; “provided you will permit me to teach children and preach the Gospel, and give me ten pounds a-year for my support. … I shall be satisfied!” The priests left him, but with the intention of preparing him a very different fate.

Tyndale indulged in his pleasant dreams no longer. He saw that he was on the point of being arrested, condemned, and interrupted in his great work. He must seek a retreat where he can discharge in peace the task God has allotted him. “You cannot save me from the hands of the priests,” said he to Sir John, “and God knows to what troubles you would expose yourself by keeping me in your family. Permit me to leave you.” Having said this, he gathered up his papers, took his Testament, pressed the hands of his benefactors, kissed the children, and then descending the hill, bade farewell to the smiling banks of the Severn, and departed alone—alone with his faith. What shall he do? What will become of him? Where shall he go? He went forth like Abraham, one thing alone engrossing his mind:—the Scriptures shall be translated into the vulgar tongue, and he will deposit the oracles of God in the midst of his countrymen.

CHAPTER V

Luther’s works in England—Consultation of the Bishops—The Bull of Leo X published in England—Luther’s books burnt—Letter of Henry VIII—He undertakes to write against Luther—Cry of Alarm—Tradition and Sacramentalism—Prudence of Sir T. More—The Book presented to the Pope—Defender of the Faith—Exultation of the King.

Whilst a plain minister was commencing the Reformation in a tranquil valley in the west of England, powerful reinforcements were landing on the shores of Kent. The writings and actions of Luther excited a lively sensation in Great Britain. His appearance before the diet of Worms was a common subject of conversation. Ships from the harbours of the Low Countries brought his books to London, and the German printers had made answer to the nuncio Aleander, who was prohibiting the Lutheran works in the empire: “Very well! we shall send them to England!” One might almost say that England was destined to be the asylum of truth. And in fact, the Theses of 1517, the Explanation of the Lord’s Prayer, the books against Emser, against the papacy of Rome, against the bull of Antichrist, the Epistle to the Galatians, the Appeal to the German nobility, and above all the Babylonish Captivity of the Church—all crossed the sea, were translated, and

circulated throughout the kingdom. The German and English nations, having a common origin and being sufficiently alike at that time in character and civilization, the works intended for one might be read by the other with advantage. The monk in his cell, the country gentleman in his hall, the doctor in his college, the tradesman in his shop, and even the bishop in his palace, studied these extraordinary writings. The laity in particular, who had been prepared by Wickliffe and disgusted by the avarice and disorderly lives of the priests, read with enthusiasm the eloquent pages of the Saxon monk. They strengthened all hearts. The papacy was not inactive in presence of all these efforts. The times of Gregory VII and of Innocent III, it is true, were passed; and weakness and irresolution had succeeded to the former energy and activity of the Roman pontificate. The spiritual power had resigned the dominion of Europe to the secular powers, and it was doubtful whether faith in the papacy could be found in the papacy itself. Yet a German (Dr. Eck) by the most indefatigible exertions had extorted a bull from the profane Leo X, and this bull had just reached England. The pope himself sent it to Henry, calling upon him to extirpate the Lutheran heresy.3 The king handed it to Wolsey, and the latter transmitted it to the bishops, who, after reading the heretic's books, met together to discuss the matter. There was more Romish faith in London than in the Vatican. "This false friar," exclaimed Wolsey, "attacks submission to the clergy—that fountain of all virtues." The humanist prelates were the most annoyed; the road they had taken ended in an abyss, and they shrank back in alarm. Tonstall, the friend of Erasmus, afterwards bishop of London, and who had just returned from his embassy to Germany where Luther had been painted to him in the darkest colours, was particularly violent: "This monk is a Proteus.… I mean an atheist. If you allow the heresies to grow up which he is scattering with both hands, they will choke the faith and the church will perish.2 Had we not enough of the Wickliffites—here are new legions of the same kind!… To-day Luther calls for the abolition of the mass; to-morrow he will ask for the abolition of Jesus Christ. He rejects every thing, and puts nothing in its place. What? if barbarians plunder our frontiers, we punish them … and shall we bear with heretics who plunder our altars?… No! by the mortal agony that Christ endured, I entreat you.… What am I saying? the whole church conjures you to combat against this devouring dragon.… to punish this hell-dog, to silence his sinister howlings, and to drive him shamefully back into his den." Thus spoke the eloquent Tonstall; nor was Wolsey far behind him. The only attachment at all respectable in this man was that which he entertained for the church; it may perhaps be called respectable, for it was the only one that did not exclusively regard himself. On the 14th May 1521, this English pope, in imitation of the Italian pope, issued his bull against Luther.

It was read (probably on the first Sunday in June) in all the churches during high mass, when the congregation was most numerous. A priest exclaimed: "For every book of Martin Luther's found in your possession within fifteen days after this injunction, you will incur the greater excommunication." Then a public notary, holding the pope's bull in his hand, with a description of Luther's perverse opinions, proceeded towards the principal door of the church and fastened up the document. The people gathered round it; the most competent person read it aloud, while the rest listened; and the following are some of the sentences which, by the pope's order, resounded in the porches of all the cathedral, conventual, collegiate, and parish churches of every county in England:7 "11. Sins are not pardoned to any, unless, the priest remitting them, he believe they are remitted to him.

“13. If by reason of some impossibility, the contrite be not confessed, or the priest absolve him, not in earnest, but in jest; yet if he believe that he is absolved, he is most truly absolved.

“14. In the sacrament of penance and the remission of a fault, the pope or bishop doth not more than the lowest priest; yea, where there is not a priest, then any Christian will do; yea, if it were a woman or a child.

“26. The pope, the successor of Peter, is not Christ’s vicar

“28. It is not at all in the hand of the church or the pope to decree articles of faith, no, nor to decree the laws of manners or of good works.” The cardinal-legate, accompanied by the nuncio, by the ambassador of Charles V, and by several bishops, proceeded in great pomp to St. Paul’s, where the bishop of Rochester preached, and Wolsey burnt Luther’s books. But they were hardly reduced to ashes, before sarcasms and jests were heard in every direction. “Fire is not a theological argument,” said one. “The papists, who accuse Martin Luther of slaying and murdering Christians,” added another, “are like the pickpocket, who began to cry stop thief, as soon as he saw himself in danger of being caught.” “The bishop of Rochester,” said a third, “concludes that because Luther has thrown the pope’s decretals into the fire, he would throw in the pope himself…. We may hence deduce another syllogism, quite as sound: The popes have burnt the New Testament, therefore, if they could, they would burn Christ himself.” These jests were rapidly circulated from mouth to mouth. It was not enough that Luther’s writings were in England, they must needs be known, and the priests took upon themselves to advertise them. The Reformation was advancing, and Rome herself pushed behind the car. The cardinal saw that something more was required than these paper autos-da-fé, and the activity he displayed may indicate what he would have done in Europe, if ever he had reached the pontifical chair. “The spirit of Satan left him no repose,” says the papist Sanders. Some action out of the ordinary course is needful, thought Wolsey. Kings have hitherto been the enemies of the popes: a king shall now undertake their defence. Princes are not very anxious about learning, a prince shall publish a book!… “Sire,” said he to the king, to get Henry in the vein, “you ought to write to the princes of Germany on the subject of this heresy.” He did so. Writing to the Archduke Palatine, he said: “This fire, which has been kindled by Luther, and fanned by the arts of the devil, is raging every where. If Luther does not repent, deliver him and his audacious treatises to the flames. I offer you my royal co-operation, and even, if necessary, my life.” This was the first time Henry showed that cruel thirst, which was in after days to be quenched in the blood of his wives and friends. The king having taken the first step, it was not difficult for Wolsey to induce him to take another. To defend the honour of Thomas Aquinas, to stand forward as the champion of the church, and to obtain from the pope a title equivalent to that of Christianissimus, most Christian king, were more than sufficient motives to induce Henry to break a lance with Luther. “I will combat with the pen this Cerberus, sprung from the depths of hell,” said he, “and if he refuses to retract, the fire shall consume the heretic and his heresies together.”3 The king shut himself up in his library: all the scholastic tastes with which his youth had been imbued were revived; he worked as if he were archbishop of Canterbury, and not king of England; with the pope’s permission he read Luther’s writings; he ransacked Thomas Aquinas; forged, with infinite labour, the arrows with which he hoped to pierce the heretic; called several learned men to his aid, and at last published his book. His first words were a cry of alarm. “Beware of the track of this serpent,” said he to his Christian readers; “walk on tiptoe; fear the thickets and caves in which he lies concealed, and whence he will dart his poison on you. If he

licks you, be careful! the cunning viper caresses only that he may bite!" After that Henry sounded a charge: "Be of good cheer! Filled with the same valour that you would display against Turks, Saracens, and other infidels, march now against this little friar,—a fellow apparently weak, but more formidable through the spirit that animates him than all infidels, Saracens, and Turks put together." Thus did Henry VIII, the Peter the Hermit of the sixteenth century, preach a crusade against Luther, in order to save the papacy.

He had skilfully chosen the ground on which he gave battle: sacramentalism and tradition are in fact the two essential features of the papal religion; just as a lively faith and Holy Scripture are of the religion of the Gospel. Henry did a service to the Reformation, by pointing out the principles it would mainly have to combat; and by furnishing Luther with an opportunity of establishing the authority of the Bible, he made him take a most important step in the path of reform. "If a teaching is opposed to Scripture," said the Reformer, "whatever be its origin—traditions, custom, kings, Thomists, sophists, Satan, or even an angel from heaven,—all from whom it proceeds must be accursed. Nothing can exist contrary to Scripture, and every thing must exist for it."

Henry's book being terminated by the aid of the bishop of Rochester, the king showed it to Sir Thomas More, who begged him to pronounce less decidedly in favour of the papal supremacy. "I will not change a word," replied the king, full of servile devotion to the popedom. "Besides, I have my reasons," and he whispered them in More's ear.

Doctor Clarke, ambassador from England at the court of Rome, was commissioned to present the pope with a magnificently bound copy of the king's work. "The glory of England," said he, "is to be in the foremost rank among the nations in obedience to the papacy." Happily Britain was ere long to know a glory of a very different kind. The ambassador added that his master, after having refuted Luther's errors with the pen, was ready to combat his adherents with the sword. The pope, touched with this offer, gave him his foot, and then his cheek to kiss, and said to him: "I will do for your Master's book as much as the church has done for the works of St. Jerome and St. Augustine." The enfeebled papacy had neither the power of intelligence, nor even of fanaticism. It still maintained its pretensions and its pomp, but it resembled the corpses of the mighty ones of the earth that lie in state, clad in their most magnificent robes: splendour above, death and corruption below. The thunderbolts of a Hildebrand ceasing to produce their effect, Rome gratefully accepted the defence of laymen, such as Henry VIII and Sir Thomas More, without disdaining their judicial sentences and their scaffolds. "We must honour those noble champions," said the pope to his cardinals, "who show themselves prepared to cut off with the sword the rotten members of Jesus Christ. What title shall we give to the virtuous king of England?"—Protector of the Roman church, suggested one; Apostolic king, said another; and finally, but not without some opposition, Henry VIII was proclaimed Defender of the Faith. At the same time the pope promised ten years' indulgence to all readers of the king's book. This was a lure after the fashion of the middle ages, and which never failed in its effect. The clergy compared its author to the wisest of kings; and the book, of which many thousand copies were printed, filled the Christian world (Cochlœus tells us) with admiration and delight.

Nothing could equal Henry's joy. "His majesty," said the vicar of Croydon, "would not exchange that name for all London and twenty miles round." The king's fool, entering the room just as his master had received the bull, asked him the cause of his transports. "The pope has just named me

Defender of the Faith!"—"Ho! ho! good Harry," replied the fool, "let you and me defend one another; but … take my word for it … let the faith alone to defend itself." An entire modern system was found in those words. In the midst of the general intoxication, the fool was the only sensible person. But Henry could listen to nothing. Seated on an elevated throne, with the cardinal at his right hand, he caused the pope's letter to be read in public. The trumpets sounded: Wolsey said Mass; the king and his court took their seats around a sumptuous table, and the heralds at arms proclaimed: Henricus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ et Franciæ, Defensor Fidei et Dominus Hiberniæ!

Thus was the king of England more than ever united to the pope: whoever brings the Holy Scriptures into his kingdom shall there encounter that material sword, ferrum et materialem gladium, in which the papacy so much delighted.

CHAPTER VI

Wolsey's Machinations to obtain the Tiara—He gains Charles V—Alliance between Henry and Charles—Wolsey offers to command the Troops—Treaty of Bruges—Henry believes himself King of France—Victories of Francis I—Death of Leo X.

One thing only was wanting to check more surely the progress of the Gospel: Wolsey's accession to the pontifical throne. Consumed by the desire of reaching "the summit of sacerdotal unity," he formed, to attain this end, one of the most perfidious schemes ambition ever engendered. He thought with others: "The end justifies the means." The cardinal could only attain the popedom through the emperor or the king of France; for then, as now, it was the secular powers that really elected the chief of catholicity. After carefully weighing the influence of these two princes, Wolsey found that the balance inclined to the side of Charles, and his choice was made. A close intimacy of long standing united him to Francis I, but that mattered little; he must betray his friend to gain his friend's rival. But this was no easy matter. Henry was dissatisfied with Charles the Fifth. Wolsey was therefore obliged to employ every imaginable delicacy in his manœuvres. First he sent Sir Richard Wingfield to the emperor; then he wrote a flattering letter in Henry's name to the princess-regent of the Low Countries. The difficulty was to get the king to sign it. "Have the goodness to put your name," said Wolsey, "even if it should annoy your Highness.… You know very well … that women like to be pleased."3 This argument prevailed with the king, who still possessed a spirit of gallantry. Lastly, Wolsey being named arbitrator between Charles and Francis, resolved to depart for Calais, apparently to hear the complaints of the two princes; but in reality to betray one of them. Wolsey felt as much pleasure in such practices, as Francis in giving battle. The king of France rejected his arbitration: he had a sharp eye, and his mother one still sharper. "Your master loves me not," said he to Charles's ambassador, "and I do not love him any more, and am determined to be his enemy." It was impossible to speak more plainly. Far from imitating this frankness, the politic Charles endeavoured to gain Wolsey, and Wolsey, who was eager to sell himself, adroitly hinted at what price he might be bought, "If the king of England sides with me," Charles informed the cardinal, "you shall be elected pope at the death of Leo X."2 Francis, betrayed by Wolsey, abandoned by the pope, and threatened by the emperor, determined at last to accept Henry's mediation. But Charles was now thinking of very different matters. Instead of a mediation, he demanded of the king of England 4000 of his famous bowmen. Henry smiled as he read the despatch and looking at Pace his secretary, and Marney the captain of his guards, he said: "Beati qui audiunt et non intelligunt!" thus forbidding them to understand, and above all to

bruit abroad this strange request. It was agreed to raise the number of archers to 6000; and the cardinal, having the tiara continually before his eyes, departed to perform at Calais the odious comedy of a hypocritical arbitration. Being detained at Dover by contrary winds, the mediator took advantage of this delay to draw up a list of the 6000 archers and their captains, not forgetting to insert in it, “certain obstinate deer,” as Henry had said, “that must of necessity be hunted down.” These were some gentlemen whom the king desired to get rid of.

While the ambassadors of the king of France were received at Calais on the 4th of August with great honours, by the lord high chamberlain of England, the cardinal signed a convention with Charles’s ministers that Henry should withdraw his promise of the Princess Mary’s hand to the dauphin, and give her to the emperor. At the same time he issued orders to destroy the French navy, and to invade France. And finally he procured by way of compensating England for the pension of 16,000 pounds hitherto received from the court of St. Germains, that the emperor should pay henceforward the annual sum of 40,000 marks. Without ready money the bargain would not have been a good one. This was not all. While Wolsey was waiting to be elected pope, he conceived the idea of becoming a soldier. A commander was wanted for the 6000 archers Henry was sending against the king of France; and why should he not be the cardinal himself? He immediately intrigued to get the noblemen set aside who had been proposed as generals in chief. “Shrewsbury,” he said to the king, “is wanted for Scotland—Worcester by his experience is worthy that … you should keep him near you. As for Dorset … he will be very dear.” Then the priest added: “Sire, if during my sojourn on the other side of the sea, you have good reason to send your archers.… I hasten to inform you that whenever the emperor takes the command of his soldiers, I am ready, although an ecclesiastic, to put myself at the head of yours.” What devotedness! Wolsey would cause his cross of cardinal a latere to be carried before him (he said); and neither Francis nor Bayard would be able to resist him. To command at the same time the state, the church, and the army, while awaiting the tiara,—to surround his head with laurels: such was this man’s ambition. Unfortunately for him, they were not of that opinion at court. The king made the earl of Essex commander-in-chief. As Wolsey could not be general, he turned to diplomacy. He hastened to Bruges; and as he entered at the emperor’s side, a voice was heard above the crowd, exclaiming: Salve, Rex regis tui atque regni sui!—a sound most pleasing to his ears. People were very much astonished at Bruges by the intimacy existing between the cardinal and the emperor. “There is some mystery beneath it all,” they said.3 Wolsey desired to place the crown of France on Henry’s head, and the tiara on his own. Such was the mystery, which was well worth a few civilities to the mighty Charles V. The alliance was concluded, and the contracting parties agreed “to avenge the insults offered to the throne of Jesus Christ,” or in other words, to the popedom.

Wolsey, in order to drag Henry into the intrigues which were to procure him the tiara, had reminded him that he was king of France, and the suggestion had been eagerly caught at. At midnight on the 7th of August, the king dictated to his secretary a letter for Wolsey containing this strange expression: Si ibitis parare regi locum in regno ejus hereditario, Majestas ejus quum tempus erit opportunum, sequetur, The theologian who had corrected the famous latin book of the king’s against Luther, most certainly had not revised this phrase. According to Henry, France was his hereditary kingdom, and Wolsey was going to prepare the throne for him.… The king could not restrain his joy at the mere idea, and already he surpassed in imagination both Edward III and the Black Prince. “I am about to attain a glory superior to that which my ancestors have gained by so

many wars and battles."2 Wolsey traced out for him the road to his palace on the banks of the Seine: "Mezières is about to fall; afterwards there is only Rheims, which is not a strong city; and thus your grace will very easily reach Paris." Henry followed on the map the route he would have to take: "Affairs are going on well," wrote the cardinal, "the Lord be praised." In him this Christian language was a mere official formality.

Wolsey was mistaken: things were going on badly. On the 20th of October 1522, Francis I whom so much perfidy had been unable to deceive,—Francis, ambitious and turbulent, but honest in this matter at least, and confiding in the strength of his arms, had suddenly appeared between Cambray and Valenciennes. The emperor fled to Flanders in alarm, and Wolsey, instead of putting himself at the head of the army, had shielded himself under his arbitrator's cloak. Writing to Henry, who, a fortnight before, had by his advice excited Charles to attack France, he said: "I am confident that your virtuous mediation will greatly increase your reputation and honour throughout Christendom." Francis rejected Wolsey's offers, but the object of the latter was attained. The negotiations had gained time for Charles, and bad weather soon stopped the French army. Wolsey returned satisfied to London about the middle of December. It was true that Henry's triumphant entry into Paris became very difficult; but the cardinal was sure of the emperor's favour, and through it (he imagined) of the tiara. Wolsey had done, therefore, what he desired. He had hardly arrived in England, when there came news which raised him to the height of happiness: Leo X was dead. His joy surpassed what Henry had felt at the thought of his hereditary kingdom. Protected by the powerful Charles V, to whom he had sacrificed every thing, the English cardinal was at last on the point of receiving that pontifical crown which would permit him to crush heresy, and which was, in his eyes, the just reward of so many infamous transactions.

CHAPTER VII The Just Men of Lincolnshire—Their Assemblies and Teaching—Agnes and Morden—Itinerant Libraries—Polemical Conversations—Sarcasm—Royal Decree and Terror—Depositions and Condemnations—Four Martyrs—A Conclave—Charles consoles Wolsey.

Wolsey did not stay until he was pope, before persecuting the disciples of the word of God. Desirous of carrying out the stipulations of the convention at Bruges, he had broken out against "the king's subjects who disturbed the apostolic see." Henry had to vindicate the title conferred on him by the pope; the cardinal had to gain the popedom; and both could satisfy their desires by the erection of a few scaffolds. In the county of Lincoln on the shores of the North Sea, along the fertile banks of the Humber, Trent, and Witham, and on the slopes of the smiling hills, dwelt many peaceful Christians—laboarers, artificers, and shepherds—who spent their days in toil, in keeping their flocks, in doing good, and in reading the Bible. The more the gospel-light increased in England, the greater was the increase in the number of these children of peace.2 These "just men," as they were called, were devoid of human knowledge, but they thirsted for the knowledge of God. Thinking they were alone the true disciples of the Lord, they married only among themselves. They appeared occasionally at church; but instead of repeating their prayers like the rest, they sat, said their enemies, "mum like beasts."4 On Sundays and holidays, they assembled in each other's houses, and sometimes passed a whole night in reading a portion of Scripture. If there chanced to be few books among them, one of the brethren, who had learnt by heart the Epistle of St. James, the beginning of St. Luke's gospel, the sermon on the mount, or an epistle of St. Paul's, would recite a few verses in a loud and calm voice; then all would piously converse about the holy truths of the faith, and exhort one another to put them in practice. But if any person

joined their meetings, who did not belong to their body, they would all keep silent. Speaking much among each other, they were speechless before those from without: fear of the priests and of the faggot made them dumb. There was no family rejoicing without the Scriptures. At the marriage of a daughter of the aged Durdant, one of their patriarchs, the wedding party met secretly in a barn, and read the whole of one of St. Paul's epistles. Marriages are rarely celebrated with such pastimes as this!

Although they were dumb before enemies or suspected persons, these poor people did not keep silence in the presence of the humble: a glowing proselytism characterized them all. "Come to my house," said the pious Agnes Ashford to James Morden, "and I will teach you some verses of Scripture." Agnes was an educated woman; she could read; Morden came, and the poor woman's chamber was transformed into a school of theology. Agnes began: "Ye are the salt of the earth," and then recited the following verses. Five times did Morden return to Agnes before he knew that beautiful discourse. "We are spread like salt over the various parts of the kingdom," said this Christian woman to the neophyte, "in order that we may check the progress of superstition by our doctrine and our life. But," added she in alarm, "keep this secret in your heart, as a man would keep a thief in prison."3 As books were rare these pious Christians had established a kind of itinerant library, and one John Scrivener was continually engaged in carrying the precious volumes from one to another. But at times, as he was proceeding along the banks of the river or through the forest glades, he observed that he was followed. He would quicken his pace and run into some barn where the friendly peasants promptly hid him beneath the straw, or, like the spies of Israel, under the stalks of flax.5 The bloodhounds arrived, sought and found nothing; and more than once those who so generously harboured these evangelists cruelly expiated the crime of charity. The disappointed officers had scarcely retired from the neighbourhood when these friends of the word of God came out of their hiding-place, and profited by the moment of liberty to assemble the brethren. The persecutions they suffered irritated them against the priests. They worshipped God, read, and sang with a low voice; but when the conversation became general, they gave free course to their indignation. "Would you know the use of the pope's pardons?" said one of them; "they are to blind the eyes and empty the purse."—"True pilgrimages," said the tailor Geoffrey of Uxbridge, "consist in visiting the poor and sick—barefoot, if so it please you—for these are the little ones that are god's true image."—"Money spent in pilgrimages," added a third, "serves only to maintain thieves and harlots." The women were often the most animated in the controversy. "What need is there to go to the feet," said Agnes Ward, who disbelieved in saints, "when we may go to the head?"—"the clergy of the good old times," said the wife of David Lewis, "used to lead the people as a hen leadeth her chickens;3 but now if our priests lead their flocks any where, it is to the devil assuredly."

Erelong there was a general panic throughout this district. The king's confessor John Longland was bishop of Lincoln. This fanatic priest, Wolsey's creature, took advantage of his position to petition Henry for a severe persecution: this was the ordinary use in England, France, and elsewhere, of the confessors of princes. It was unfortunate that among these pious disciples of the word, men of a cynical turn were now and then met with, whose biting sarcasms went beyond all bounds. Wolsey and Longland knew how to employ these expressions in arousing the king's anger. "As one of these fellows," they said, "was busy beating out his corn in his barn, a man chanced to pass by. 'Good morrow, neighbour,' (said the latter), 'you are hard at it!'—'Yes,' replied

the old heretic, thinking of transubstantiation, 'I am thrashing the corn out of which the priests make God Almighty.'" Henry hesitated no longer. On the 20th October 1521, nine days after the bull on the Defender of the Faith had been signed at Rome, the king, who was at Windsor, summoned his secretary, and dictated an order commanding all his subjects to assist the bishop of Lincoln against the heretics. "You will obey it at the peril of your lives," added he. The order was transmitted to Longland, and the bishop immediately issued his warrants, and his officers spread terror far and wide. When they beheld them, these peaceful but timid Christians were troubled. Isabella Bartlet, hearing them approach her cottage, screamed out to her husband: "You are a lost man! and I am a dead woman!" This cry was re-echoed from all the cottages of Lincolnshire. The bishop, on his judgment-seat, skilfully played upon these poor unhappy beings to make them accuse one another. Alas! according to the ancient prophecy: "the brother delivered up the brother to death." Robert Bartlet deposed against his brother Richard and his own wife; Jane Bernard accused her own father and Tredway his mother. It was not until after the most cruel anguish that these poor creatures were driven to such frightful extremities; but the bishop and death terrified them: a small number alone remained firm. As regards heroism, Wickliffe's Reformation brought but a feeble aid to the Reformation of the sixteenth century; still, if it did not furnish many heroes, it prepared the English people to love God's word above all things. Of these humble people, some were condemned to do penance in different monasteries; others to carry a faggot on their shoulders thrice round the market-place, and then to stand some time exposed to the jeers of the populace; others were fastened to a post while the executioner branded them on the cheek with a red-hot iron. They also had their martyrs. Wickliffe's revival had never been without them. Four of these brethren were chosen to be put to death, and among them the pious evangelical colporteur Scrivener. By burning him to ashes, the clergy desired to make sure that he would no longer circulate the word of God; and by a horrible refinement of cruelty his children were compelled to set fire to the pile that was to consume their father. They stretched forth their trembling hands, held in the strong grasp of the executioners.… Poor children!… But it is easier to burn the limbs of Christians than to quench the Spirit of Heaven. These cruel fires could not destroy among the Lincolnshire peasantry that love of the Bible which in all ages has been England's strength, far more than the wisdom of her senators or the bravery of her generals.

Having by these exploits gained indisputable claims to the tiara, Wolsey turned his efforts towards Rome. Leo X, as we have seen, was just dead (1522). The cardinal sent Pace to Rome, instructing him to "Represent to the cardinals that by choosing a partizan of Charles or Francis, they will incur the enmity of one or the other of these princes, and that if they elect some feeble Italian priest, the apostolical see must become the prey of the strongest. Luther's revolt and the emperor's ambition endanger the papacy. There is only one means of preventing the threatening dangers.… It is to choose me.… Now go and exert yourself." The concleve opened at Rome on the 27th December, and Wolsey was proposed; but the cardinals were not generally favourable to his election. "He is too young," said one; "too firm," said another. "He will fix the seat of the papacy in England and not in Rome," urged many. He did not receive twenty votes. "The cardinals," wrote the English ambassador, "snarled and quarrelled with each other; and their bad faith and hatred increased every day." On the sixth day, only one dish was sent them; and then in despair they chose Adrian, who had been tutor to the emperor, and the cry was raised: Papam habemus!

During all this time Wolsey was in London, consumed by ambition, and counting the days and hours. At length a despatch from Ghent, dated the 22nd January, reached him with these words: “On the 9th of January, the cardinal of Tortosa was elected!” … Wolsey was almost distracted. To gain Charles, he had sacrificed the alliance of Francis I; there was no stratagem that he had not employed, and yet Charles, in spite of his engagements, had procured the election of his tutor!… The emperor knew what must be the cardinal’s anger, and endeavoured to appease it: “The new pope,” he wrote, “is old and sickly; he cannot hold his office long…. Beg the cardinal of York for my sake to take great care of his health.”

Charles did more than this: he visited London in person, under pretence of his betrothal with Mary of England, and, in the treaty then drawn up, he consented to the insertion of an article by virtue of which Henry VIII and the mighty emperor, bound themselves, if either should infringe the treaty, to appear before Wolsey and to submit to his decisions. The cardinal, gratified by such condescension, grew calm; and at the same time he was soothed with the most flattering hopes. “Charles’s imbecile preceptor,” they told him, “has arrived at the Vatican, attended only by his female cook; you shall soon make your entrance there surrounded by all your grandeur.” To be certain of his game, Wolsey made secret approaches to Francis I, and then waited for the death of the pope.

CHAPTER VIII

Character of Tyndale—He arrives in London—He preaches—The Cloth and the Ell—The bishop of London gives Audience to Tyndale—He is dismissed—A Christian Merchant of London—Spirit of Love in the Reformation—Tyndale in Monmouth’s House—Fryth helps him to translate the New Testament—Importunities of the Bishop of Lincoln—Persecution in London—Tyndale’s Resolution—He departs—His Indignation against the Prelates—His Hopes.

While the cardinal was intriguing to attain his selfish ends, Tyndale was humbly carrying out the great idea of giving the Scriptures of God to England.

After bidding a sad farewell to the manor-house of Sodbury, the learned tutor had departed for London. This occurred about the end of 1522 or the beginning of 1523. He had left the university—he had forsaken the house of his protector; his wandering career was about to commence, but a thick veil hid from him all its sorrows. Tyndale, a man simple in his habits, sober, daring, and generous, fearing neither fatigue nor danger, inflexible in his duty, anointed with the Spirit of God, overflowing with love for his brethren, emancipated from human traditions, the servant of God alone, and loving nought but Jesus Christ, imaginative, quick at repartee, and of touching eloquence—such a man might have shone in the foremost ranks; but he preferred a retired life in some poor corner, provided he could give his countrymen the Scriptures of God. Where could he find this calm retreat? was the question he put to himself as he was making his solitary way to London. The metropolitan see was then filled by Cuthbert Tonstall, who was more of a statesman and a scholar than of a churchman, “the first of English men in Greek and Latin literature,” said Erasmus. This eulogy of the learned Dutchman occurred to Tyndale’s memory. It was the Greek Testament of Erasmus that led me to Christ, said he to himself; why should not the house of Erasmus’s friend offer me a shelter that I may translate it … At last he reached London, and, a stranger in that crowded city, he wandered along the streets, a prey by turns to hope and fear. Being recommended by Sir John Walsh to Sir Harry Guildford, the king’s comptroller, and by

him to several priests, Tyndale began to preach almost immediately, especially at St. Dunstan's, and bore into the heart of the capital the truth which had been banished from the banks of the Severn. The word of God was with him the basis of salvation, and the grace of God its essence. His inventive mind presented the truths he proclaimed in a striking manner. He said on one occasion:—"It is the blood of Christ that opens the gates of heaven, and not thy works. I am wrong.… Yes, if thou wilt have it so, by thy good works shalt thou be saved.—Yet, understand me well,—not by those which thou has done, but by those which Christ has done for thee. Christ is in thee and thou in him, knit together inseparably. Thou canst not be damned, except Christ be damned with thee; neither can Christ be saved except thou be saved with him." This lucid view of justification by faith places Tyndale among the reformers. He did not take his seat on a bishop's throne, or wear a silken cope; but he mounted the scaffold, and was clothed with a garment of flames. In the service of a crucified Saviour this latter distinction is higher than the former.

Yet the translation was his chief business; he spoke to his acquaintances about it, and some of them opposed his project. "The teachings of the doctors," said some of the city tradesmen, "can alone make us understand Scripture." "That is to say," replied Tyndale, "I must measure the yard by the cloth. Look here," continued he, using a practical argument, "here are in your shop twenty pieces of stuff of different lengths.… Do you measure the yard by these pieces, or the pieces by the yard?… The universal standard is Scripture." This comparison was easily fixed in the minds of the petty tradesmen of the capital.

Desirous of carrying out his project, Tyndale aspired to become the bishop's chaplain; his ambition was more modest than Wolsey's. The hellenist possessed qualities which could not fail to please the most learned of Englishmen in Greek literatures Tonstall and Tyndale both liked and read the same authors. The ex-tutor determined to plead his cause through the elegant and harmonious disciple of Radicus and Gorgias: "Here is one of Isocrates' orations that I have translated into Latin," said he to Sir Harry Guildford; "I should be pleased to become chaplain to his lordship the bishop of London; will you beg him to accept this trifle. Isocrates ought to be an excellent recommendation to a scholar; will you be good enough to add yours." Guildford spoke to the bishop, placed the translation in his hands, and Tonstall replied with that benevolence which he showed to every one. "Your business is in a fair way," said the comptroller to Tyndale; "write a letter to his lordship, and deliver it yourself."2

Tyndale's hopes now began to be realized. He wrote his letter in the best style, and then, commending himself to God, proceeded to the episcopal palace. He fortunately knew one of the bishop's officers, William Hebilthwayte, to whom he gave the letter. Hebilthwayte carried it to his lordship, while Tyndale waited. His heart throbbed with anxiety: shall he find at last the long hoped for asylum? The bishop's answer might decide the whole course of his life. If the door is opened,—if the translator of the Scriptures should be settled in the episcopal palace, why should not his London patron receive the truth like his patron at Sodbury? and, in that case, what a future for the church and for the kingdom!… The Reformation was knocking at the door of the hierarchy of England, and the latter was about to utter its yea or its nay. After a few moments' absence Hebilthwayte returned: "I am going to conduct you to his lordship." Tyndale fancied himself that he had attained his wishes. The bishop was too kind-hearted to refuse an audience to a man who called upon him with the triple recommendation of Isocrates, of the comptroller, and of the king's old companion in arms. He received Tyndale with kindness, a little tempered however with

coldness, as if he were a man whose acquaintanceship might compromise him. Tyndale having made known his wishes, the bishop hastened to reply: “Alas! my house is full. I have now more people than I can employ.” Tyndale was discomfited by this answer. The bishop of London was a learned man, but wanting in courage and consistency; he gave his right hand to the friends of letters and of the Gospel, and his left hand to the friends of the priests; and then endeavoured to walk with both. But when he had to choose between the two parties, clerical interests prevailed. There was no lack of bishops, priests, and laymen about him, who intimidated him by their clamours. After taking a few steps forward, he suddenly recoiled. Still Tyndale ventured to hazard a word; but the prelate was cold as before. The humanists, who laughed at the ignorance of the monks, hesitated to touch an ecclesiastical system which lavished on them such rich sinecures. They accepted the new ideas in theory, but not in practice. They were very willing to discuss them at table, but not to proclaim them from the pulpit; and covering the Greek Testament with applause, they tore it in pieces when rendered into the vulgar tongue. “If you will look well about London,” said Tonstall coldly to the poor priest; “you will not fail to meet with some suitable employment.” This was all Tyndale could obtain. Hebilthwayte waited on him to the door, and the hellenist departed sad and desponding. His expectations were disappointed. Driven from the banks of the Severn, without a home in the capital, what would become of the translation of the Scriptures? “Alas!” he said; “I was deceived … there is nothing to be looked for from the bishops.… Christ was smitten on the cheek before the bishop, Paul was buffeted before the bishop2 … and a bishop has just turned me away.” His dejection did not last long: there was an elastic principle in his soul. “I hunger for the word of God,” said he, “I will translate it, whatever they may say or do. God will not suffer me to perish. He never made a mouth but he made food for it, nor a body, but he made raiment also.” This trustfulness was not misplaced. It was the privilege of a layman to give what the bishop refused. Among Tyndale’s hearers at St. Dunstan’s was a rich merchant named Humphrey Monmouth, who had visited Rome, and to whom (as well as to his companions) the pope had been so kind as to give certain Roman curiosities, such as indulgences, a culpâ et a pœnâ. Ships laden with his manufactures every year quitted London for foreign countries. He had formerly attended Colet’s preaching at St. Paul’s, and from the year 1515 he had known the word of God. He was one of the gentlest and most obliging men in England; he kept open house for the friends of learning and of the Gospel, and his library contained the newest publications. In putting on Jesus Christ, Monmouth had particularly striven to put on his character; he helped generously with his purse both priests and men of letters; he gave forty pounds sterling to the chaplain of the bishop of London, the same to the king’s, to the provincial of the Augustines, and to others besides. Latimer, who sometimes dined with him, once related in the pulpit an anecdote characteristic of the friends of the Reformation in England. Among the regular guests at Monmouth’s table was one of his poorest neighbours, a zealous Romanist, to whom his generous host often used to lend money. One day when the pious merchant was extolling Scripture and blaming popery, his neighbour turned pale, rose from the table, and left, the room. “I will never set foot in his house again,” he said to his friends, “and I will never borrow another shilling of him.”2 He next went to the bishop and laid an information against his benefactor. Monmouth forgave him, and tried to bring him back; but the neighbour constantly turned out of his way. Once, however, they met in a street so narrow that he could not escape. “I will pass by without looking at him,” said the Romanist turning away his head. But Monmouth went straight to him, took him by the hand, and said affectionately: “Neighbour, what wrong have I done

you?" and he continued to speak to him with so much love, that the poor man fell on his knees, burst into tears, and begged his forgiveness. Such was the spirit which, at the very outset, animated the work of the Reformation in England: it was acceptable to God, and found favour with the people.

Monmouth being edified by Tyndale's sermons, inquired into his means of living. "I have none," replied he, "but I hope to enter into the bishop's service." This was before his "visit to Tonstall. When Tyndale saw all his hopes frustrated, he went to Monmouth and told him everything. "Come and live with me," said the wealthy merchant, "and there labour." God did to Tyndale according to his faith. Simple, frugal, devoted to work, he studied night and day;5 and wishing to guard his mind against "being overcharged with surfeiting," he refused the delicacies of his patron's table, and would take nothing but sodden meat and small beer. It would even seem that he carried simplicity in dress almost too far.2 By his conversation and his works, he shed over the house of his patron the mild light of the Christian virtues, and Monmouth loved him more and more every day.

Tyndale was advancing in his work when John Fryth, the mathematician of King's College, Cambridge, arrived in London. It is probable that Tyndale, feeling the want of an associate, had invited him. United like Luther and Melancthon, the two friends held many precious conversations together. "I will consecrate my life wholly to the church of Jesus Christ," said Fryth. "To be a good man, you must give great part of yourself to your parents, a greater part to your country; but the greatest of all to the church of the Lord." "The people should know the word of God,"4 they said both. "The interpretation of the gospel, without the intervention of councils or popes, is sufficient to create a saving faith in the heart." They shut themselves up in the little room in Monmouth's house, and translated chapter after chapter from the Greek into plain English. The bishop of London knew nothing of the work going on a few yards from him, and everything was succeeding to Tyndale's wishes when it was interrupted by an unforeseen circumstance.

Longland, the persecutor of the Lincolnshire Christians, did not confine his activity within the limits of his diocese; he besieged the king, the cardinal, and the queen with his cruel importunities, using Wolsey's influence with Henry, and Henry's with Wolsey. "His majesty," he wrote to the cardinal, "shows in this holy dispute as much goodness as zeal … yet, be pleased to urge him to overthrow God's enemies." And then turning to the king, the confessor said, to spur him on: "The cardinal is about to fulminate the greater excommunication against all who possess Luther's works or hold his opinions, and to make the booksellers sign a bond before the magistrates, not to sell heretical books." "Wonderful!" replied Henry with a sneer, "they will fear the magisterial bond, I think, more than the clerical excommunication." And yet the consequences of the "clerical" excommunication were to be very positive; whosoever persevered in his offence was to be pursued by the law ad ignem, even to the fire. At last the confessor applied to the queen: "We cannot be sure of restraining the press," he said to her. "These wretched books come to us from Germany, France, and the Low Countries; and are even printed in the very midst of us. Madam, we must train and prepare skilful men, such as are able to discuss the controverted points, so that the laity, struck on the one hand by well developed arguments, and frightened by the fear of punishment on the other, may be kept in obedience." In the bishop's system, "fire" was to be the complement of Roman learning. The essential idea of Jesuitism is already visible in this conception of Henry the Eighth's confessor. That system is the natural development of Romanism.

Tonstall, urged forward by Longland, and desirous of showing himself as holy a churchman as he had once been a skilful statesman and elegant scholar—Tonstall, the friend of Erasmus, began to persecute. He would have feared to shed blood, like Longland; but there are measures which torture the mind and not the body, and which the most moderate men fear not to make use of. John Higgins, Henry Chambers, Thomas Eaglestone, a priest named Edmund Spilman, and some other Christians in London, used to meet and read portions of the Bible in English, and even asserted publicly that “Luther had more learning in his little finger than all the doctors in England.” The bishop ordered these rebels to be arrested: he flattered and alarmed them, threatening them with a cruel death (which he would hardly have inflicted on them), and by these skilful practices reduced them to silence.

Tyndale, who witnessed this persecution, feared lest the stake should interrupt his labour. If those who read a few fragments of Scripture are threatened with death, what will he not have to endure who is translating the whole? His friends entreated him to withdraw from the bishop’s pursuit. “Alas!” he exclaimed, “is there then no place where I can translate the Bible?… It is not the bishop’s house alone that is closed against me, but all England.”

He then made a great sacrifice. Since there is no place in his own country where he can translate the word of God, he will go and seek one among the nations of the continent. It is true the people are unknown to him; he is without resources; perhaps persecution and even death await him there…. It matters not! some time must clapse before it is known what he is doing, and perhaps he will have been able to translate the Bible. He turned his eyes towards Germany. “God does not destine us to a quiet life here below,” he said. “If he calls us to peace on the part of Jesus Christ, he calls us to war on the part of the world.”

There lay at that moment in the river Thames a vessel loading for Hamburg. Monmouth gave Tyndale ten pounds sterling for his voyage, and other friends contributed a like amount. He left the half of this sum in the hands of his benefactor to provide for his future wants, and prepared to quit London, where he had spent a year. Rejected by his fellow-countrymen, persecuted by the clergy, and carrying with him only his New Testament and his ten pounds, he went on board the ship, shaking off the dust of his feet, according to his Master’s precept, and that dust fell back on the priests of England. He was indignant (says the chronicler) against those coarse monks, covetous priests, and pompous prelates, who were waging an impious war against God. “What a trade is that of the priests!” he said in one of his later writings; “they want money for every thing: money for baptism, money for churchings, for weddings, for buryings, for images, brotherhoods, penances, soul-masses, bells, organs, chalices, copes, surplices, ewers, censers, and all manner of ornaments. Poor sheep! The parson shears, the vicar shaves, the parish priest polls, the friar scrapes, the indulgence seller pares … all that you want is a butcher to flay you and take away your skin.3 He will not leave you long. Why are your prelates dressed in red? Because they are ready to shed the blood of whomsoever seeketh the word of God. Scourge of states, devastators of kingdoms, the priests take away not only Holy Scripture, but also prosperity and peace; but of their councils is no layman; reigning over all, they obey nobody; and making all concur to their own greatness, they conspire against every kingdom.”5 No kingdom was to be more familiar than England with the conspiracies of the papacy of which Tyndale spoke; and yet none was to free itself more irrevocably from the power of Rome.

Yet Tyndale was leaving the shores of his native land, and as he turned his eyes towards the new countries, hope revived in his heart. He was going to be free, and he would use his liberty to deliver the word of God, so long held captive. “The priests,” he said one day, “when they had slain Christ, set poleaxes to keep him in his sepulchre, that he should not rise again, even so have our priests buried the testament of God, and all their study is to keep it down, that it rise not again. But the hour of the Lord is come, and nothing can hinder the word of God, as nothing could hinder Jesus Christ of old from issuing from the tomb.” Indeed that poor man, then sailing towards Germany, was to send back, even from the banks of the Elbe, the eternal Gospel to his countrymen.

CHAPTER IX

Bilney at Cambridge—Conversions—The University Cross-Bearer—A Leicestershire Farmer—A Party of Students—Superstitious Practices—An obstinate Papist—The Sophists—Latimer attacks Stafford—Bilney’s Resolution—Latimer hears Bilney’s Confession—Confessor converted—New Life in Latimer—Bilney preaches Grace—Nature of the Ministry—Latimer’s Character and Teaching—Works of Charity—Three Classes of Adversaries—Clark and Dalaber This ship did not bear away all the hopes of England. A society of Christians had been formed at Cambridge, of which Bilney was the centre. He now knew no other canon law than Scripture, and had found a new master, “the Holy Spirit of Christ,” says an historian. Although he was naturally timid, and often suffered from the exhaustion brought on by his fasts and vigils, there was in his language a life, liberty, and strength, strikingly in contrast with his sickly appearance. He desired to draw to the knowledge of God, all who came nigh him; and by degrees, the rays of the Gospel sun, which was then rising in the firmament of Christendom, pierced the ancient windows of the colleges, and illuminated the solitary chambers of certain of the masters and fellows. Master Arthur, Master Thistle of Pembroke Hall, and Master Stafford, were among the first to join Bilney. George Stafford, professor of divinity, was a man of deep learning and holy life, clear and precise in his teaching. He was admired by every one in Cambridge, so that his conversion, like that of his friends, spread alarm among the partisans of the schoolmen. But a conversion still more striking than this was destined to give the English Reformation a champion more illustrious than either Stafford or Bilney.

There was in Cambridge, at that time, a priest notorious for his ardent fanaticism. In the processions, amidst the pomp, prayers, and chanting of the train, none could fail to notice a master-of-arts, about thirty years of age, who, with erect head, carried proudly the university cross. Hugh Latimer, for such was his name, combined a biting humour with an impetuous disposition and indefatigable zeal, and was very quick in ridiculing the faults of his adversaries. There was more wit and raillery in his fanaticism than can often be found in such characters. He followed the friends of the word of God into the colleges and houses where they used to meet, debated with them, and pressed them to abandon their faith. He was a second Saul, and was soon to resemble the apostle of the Gentiles in another respect.

He first saw light in the year 1491, in the county of Leicester. Hugh’s father was an honest yeoman; and accompanied by one of his six sisters, the little boy had often tended in the pastures the five score sheep belonging to the farm, or driven home to his mother the thirty cows it was her business to milk. In 1497, the Cornish rebels, under Lord Audley, having encamped at Blackheath,

our farmer had donned his rusty armour, and mounting his horse, responded to the summons of the crown. Hugh, then only six years old, was present at his departure, and as if he had wished to take his little part in the battle, he had buckled the straps of his father's armour. Fifty-two years afterwards he recalled this circumstance to mind in a sermon preached before king Edward. His father's house was always open to the neighbours; and no poor man ever turned away from the door without having received alms. The old man brought up his family in the love of men and in the fear of God, and having remarked with joy the precocious understanding of his son, he had him educated in the country schools, and then sent to Cambridge at the age of fourteen. This was in 1505, just as Luther was entering the Augustine convent. The son of the Leicestershire yeoman was lively, fond of pleasure, and of cheerful conversation, and mingled frequently in the amusements of his fellow-students. One day, as they were dining together, one of the party exclaimed: Nil melius quam latari et facere bene!—"There is nothing better than to be merry and to do well."—"A vengeance on that bene!" replied a monk of impudent mien; "I wish it were beyond the sea; it mars all the rest." Young Latimer was much surprised at the remark: "I understand it now," said he; "that will be a heavy bene to these monks when they have to render God an account of their lives."

Latimer having become more serious, threw himself heart and soul into the practices of superstition, and a very bigoted old cousin undertook to instruct him in them. One day, when one of their relations lay dead, she said to him: "Now we must drive out the devil. Take this holy taper, my child, and pass it over the body, first longways and then athwart, so as always to make the sign of the cross." But the scholar performing this exorcism very awkwardly, his aged cousin snatched the candle from his hand, exclaiming angrily: "It's a great pity your father spends so much money on your studies: he will never make anything of you." This prophecy was not fulfilled. He became Fellow of Clare Hall in 1509, and took his master's degree in 1514. His classical studies being ended, he began to study divinity. Duns Scotus, Aquinas, and Hugo de Sancto Victore were his favourite authors. The practical side of things, however, engaged him more than the speculative; and he was more distinguished in Cambridge for his asceticism and enthusiasm than for his learning. He attached importance to the merest trifles. As the missal directs that water should be mingled with the sacramental wine, often while saying mass he would be troubled in his conscience for fear he had not put sufficient water. This remorse never left him a moment's tranquillity during the service. In him, as in many others, attachment to puerile ordinances occupied in his heart the place of faith in the great truths. With him, the cause of the church was the cause of God, and he respected Thomas à Becket at least as much as St. Paul. "I was then," said he, "as obstinate a papist as any in England."5 Luther said the same thing of himself. The fervent Latimer soon observed that everybody around him was not equally zealous with himself for the ceremonies of the church. He watched with surprise certain young members of the university who, forsaking the doctors of the School, met daily to read and search into the Holy Scriptures. People sneered at them in Cambridge: "It is only the sophists," was the cry; but raillery was not enough for Latimer. One day he entered the room where these sophists were assembled, and begged them to cease studying the Bible. All his entreaties were useless. Can we be astonished at it? said Latimer to himself. Don't we see even the tutors setting an example to these stray sheep? There is Master Stafford, the most illustrious professor in English universities, devoting his time ad Biblia, like Luther at Wittemberg, and explaining the Scriptures according to the Hebrew and Greek texts! and the delighted students celebrate in bad verse the doctor, Qui Paulum explicuit rite

et evangelium. That young people should occupy themselves with these new doctrines was conceivable, but that a doctor of divinity should do so—what a disgrace! Latimer therefore determined to attack Stafford. He insulted him; he entreated the youth of Cambridge to abandon the professor and his heretical teaching; he attended the hall in which the doctor taught, made signs of impatience during the lesson, and cavilled at it after leaving the school. He even preached in public against the learned doctor. But it seemed to him that Cambridge and England were struck blind: true, the clergy approved of Latimer's proceedings—nay praised them; and yet they did nothing. To console him, however, he was named cross-bearer to the university, and we have already seen him discharging this duty.

Latimer desired to show himself worthy of such an honour. He had left the students to attack Stafford; and he now left Stafford for a more illustrious adversary. But this attack led him to some one that was stronger than he. At the occasion of receiving the degree of bachelor of divinity he had to deliver a Latin discourse in the presence of the university; Latimer chose for his subject Philip Melancthon and his doctrines. Had not this daring heretic presumed to say quite recently that the fathers of the church have altered the sense of Scripture? Had he not asserted that, like those rocks whose various colours are imparted to the polypus which clings to them, so the doctors of the church give each their own opinion in the passages they explain? And finally had he not discovered a new touchstone (it is thus he styles the Holy Scripture) by which we must test the sentences even of St. Thomas?

Latimer's discourse made a great impression. At last (said his hearers) England, nay Cambridge, will furnish a champion for the church that will confront the Wittemberg doctors, and save the vessel of our Lord. But very different was to be the result. There was among the hearers one man almost hidden through his small stature: it was Bilney. For some time he had been watching Latimer's movements, and his zeal interested him, though it was a zeal without knowledge. His energy was not great, but he possessed a delicate tact, a skilful discernment of character which enabled him to distinguish error, and to select the fittest method for combating it. Accordingly, a chronicler styles him "a trier of Satan's subtleties, appointed by God to detect the bad money that the enemy was circulating throughout the church." Bilney easily detected Latimer's sophisms, but at the same time loved his person, and conceived the design of winning him to the Gospel. But how to manage it? The prejudiced Latimer would not even listen to the evangelical Bilney. The latter reflected, prayed, and at last planned a very candid and very strange plot, which led to one of the most astonishing conversions recorded in history.

He went to the college where Latimer resided. "For the love of God," he said to him, "be pleased to hear my confession." The heretic prayed to make confession to the catholic: what a singular fact! My discourse against Melancthon has no doubt converted him, said Latimer to himself. Had not Bilney once been among the number of the most pious zealots? His pale face, his wasted frame, and his humble look are clear signs that he ought to belong to the ascetics of catholicism. If he turns back, all will turn back with him, and the reaction will be complete at Cambridge. The ardent Latimer eagerly yielded to Bilney's request, and the latter, kneeling before the cross-bearer, related to him with touching simplicity the anguish he had once felt in his soul, the efforts he had made to remove it; their unprofitableness so long as he determined to follow the precepts of the church, and lastly, the peace he had felt when he believed that Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. He described to Latimer the spirit of adoption he had

received, and the happiness he experienced in being able now to call God his father…. Latimer, who expected to receive a confession, listened without mistrust. His heart was opened, and the voice of the pious Bilney penetrated it without obstacle. From time to time the confessor would have chased away the new thoughts which came crowding into his bosom; but the penitent continued. His language, at once so simple and so lively, entered like a two-edged sword. Bilney was not without assistance in his work. A new, a strange witness,—the Holy Ghost,—was speaking in Latimer's soul. He learned from God to know God: he received a new heart. At length grace prevailed: the penitent rose up, but Latimer remained seated, absorbed in thought. The strong cross-bearer contended in vain against the words of the feeble Bilney. Like Saul on the way to Damascus, he was conquered, and his conversion, like the apostle's, was instantaneous. He stammered out a few words; Bilney drew near him with love, and God scattered the darkness which still obscured his mind. He saw Jesus Christ as the only Saviour given to man: he contemplated and adored him. "I learnt more by this confession," he said afterwards, "than by much reading and in many years before2 … I now tasted the word of God, and forsook the doctors of the school and all their fooleries."4 It was not the penitent but the confessor who received absolution. Latimer viewed with horror the obstinate war he had waged against God; he wept bitterly; but Bilney consoled him. "Brother," said he, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow." These two young men, then locked in their solitary chamber at Cambridge, were one day to mount the scaffold for that divine Master whose spirit was teaching them. But one of them before going to the stake was first to sit on an episcopal throne.

Latimer was changed. The energy of his character was tempered by a divine unction. Becoming a believer, he had ceased to be superstitious. Instead of persecuting Jesus Christ, he became a zealous seeker after him. Instead of cavilling and railing, he showed himself meek and gentle;6 instead of frequenting company, he sought solitude, studying the Scriptures and advancing in true theology. He threw off the old man and put on the new. He waited upon Stafford, begged forgiveness for the insult he had offered him, and then regularly attended his lectures, being subjugated more by this doctor's angelic conversation than by his learning. But it was Bilney's society Latimer cultivated most. They conversed together daily, took frequent walks together into the country, and occasionally rested at a place, long known as "the heretic's hill." So striking a conversion gave fresh vigour to the evangelical movement. Hitherto Bilney and Latimer had been the most zealous champions of the two opposite causes; the one despised, the other honoured; the weak man had conquered the strong. This action of the Spirit of God was not thrown away upon Cambridge. Latimer's conversion, as of old the miracles of the apostles, struck men's minds; and was it not in truth a miracle? All the youth of the university ran to hear Bilney preach. He proclaimed "Jesus Christ as He who, having tasted death, has delivered his people from the penalty of sin." While the doctors of the school (even the most pious of them) laid most stress upon man's part in the work of redemption, Bilney on the contrary emphasized the other term, namely, God's part. This doctrine of grace, said his adversaries, annuls the sacraments, and contradicts baptismal regeneration. The selfishness which forms the essence of fallen humanity rejected the evangelical doctrine, and felt that to accept it was to be lost. "Many listened with the left ear," to use an expression of Bilney's; "like Malchus, having their right ear cut off;" and they filled the university with their complaints. But Bilney did not allow himself to be stopped. The idea of eternity had seized on his mind, and perhaps he still retained some feeble relic of the exaggeration of asceticism. He condemned every kind of recreation, even when innocent. Music in

the churches seemed to him a mockery of God; and when Thurlby, who was afterwards a bishop, and who lived at Cambridge in the room below his, used to begin playing on the recorder, Bilney would fall on his knees and pour out his soul in prayer: to him prayer was the sweetest melody. He prayed that the lively faith of the children of God might in all England be substituted for the vanity and pride of the priests. He believed—he prayed—he waited. His waiting was not to be in vain.

Latimer trod in his footsteps: the transformation of his soul was going on; and the more fanaticism he had shown for the sacerdotal system, which places salvation in the hands of the priest, the more zeal he now showed for the evangelical system, which placed it in the hands of Christ. He saw that if the churches must needs have ministers, it is not because they require a human mediation, but from the necessity of a regular preaching of the Gospel and a steady direction of the flock; and accordingly he would have wished to call the servant of the Lord minister (■πηρ■της or δι■κονος το■ λ■γου), and not priest, (■ερε■ς or sacerdos.) In his view, it was not the imposition of hands by the bishop that gave grace, but grace which authorized the imposition of hands. He considered activity to be one of the essential features of the Gospel ministry. “Would you know,” said he, “why the Lord chose fishermen to be his apostles?… See how they watch day and night at their nets to take all such fishes that they can get and come in their way.… So all our bishops, and curates, and vicars should be as painful in casting their nets, that is to say, in preaching God’s word. He regarded all confidence in human strength as a remnant of paganism. “Let us not do,” he said, “as the haughty Ajax, who said to his father as he went to battle: Without the help of God I am able to fight, and I will get the victory with mine own strength.”3 The Reformation had gained in Latimer a very different man from Bilney. He had not so much discernment and prudence perhaps, but he had more energy and eloquence. What Tyndale was to be for England by his writings, Latimer was to be by his discourses. The tenderness of his conscience, the warmth of his zeal, and the vivacity of his understanding, were enlisted in the service of Jesus Christ; and if at times he was carried too far by the liveliness of his wit, it only shows that the reformers were not saints, but sanctified men. “He was one of the first,” says an historian, “who, in the days of king Henry VIII, set himself to preach the Gospel in the truth and simplicity of it.” He preached in Latin ad clerum, and in English ad populum. He boldly placed the law with its curses before his hearers, and then conjured them to flee towards the Saviour of the world. The same zeal which he had employed in saying mass, he now employed in preaching the true sacrifice of Christ. He said one day:—“If one man had committed all the sins since Adam, you may be sure he should be punished with the same horror of death, in such a sort as all men in the world should have suffered.… Such was the pain Christ endured.… If our Saviour had committed all the sins of the world; all that I for my part have done, all that you for your part have done, and all that any man else hath done; if he had done all this himself, his agony that he suffered should have been no greater nor grievouser than it was.… Believe in Jesus Christ, and you shall overcome death.… But, alas!” said he at another time, “the devil, by the help of that Italian bishop, his chaplain, has laboured by all means that he might frustrate the death of Christ and the merits of his passion.”

Thus began in British Christendom the preaching of the Cross. The Reformation was not the substitution of the catholicism of the first ages for the popery of the middle ages: it was a revival of the preaching of St. Paul, and thus it was that on hearing Latimer every one exclaimed with rapture: “Of a Saul, God has made him a very Paul.” To the inward power of faith, the Cambridge

evangelists added the outward power of the life. Saul become Paul, the strong, the ardent Latimer, had need of action; and Bilney, the weak and humble Bilney, in delicate health, observing a severe diet, taking ordinarily but one meal a-day, and never sleeping more than four hours, absorbed in prayer and in the study of the word, displayed at that time all the energy of charity. These two friends devoted themselves not merely to the easy labours of Christian beneficence; but caring little for that formal Christianity so often met with among the easy classes, they explored the gloomy cells of the madhouse to bear the sweet and subtle voice of the gospel to the infuriate maniacs. They visited the miserable lazar-house without the town, in which several poor lepers were dwelling; they carefully tended them, wrapped them in clean sheets, and wooed them to be converted to Christ. The gates of the jail at Cambridge were opened to them,4 and they announced to the poor prisoners that word which giveth liberty. Some were converted by it, and longed for the day of their execution. Latimer, afterwards bishop of Worcester, was one of the most beautiful types of the Reformation in England.

He was opposed by numerous adversaries. In the front rank were the priests, who spared no endeavours to retain souls. “Beware,” said Latimer to the new converts, “lest robbers overtake you, and plunge you into the pope’s prison of purgatory.” After these came the sons and favourites of the aristocracy, worldly and frivolous students, who felt little disposition to listen to the gospel. “By yeomen’s sons the faith of Christ is and hath been chiefly maintained in the church,” said Latimer. “Is this realm taught by rich men’s sons? No, no; read the chronicles; ye shall find sometime noblemen’s sons which have been unpreaching bishops and prelates, but ye shall find none of them learned men.” He would have desired a mode of election which placed in the Christian pulpit, not the richest and most fashionable men, but the ablest and most pious. This important reform was reserved for other days. Lastly, the evangelists of Cambridge came into collision with the brutality of many, to use Latimer’s own expression. “What need have we of universities and schools?” said the students of this class. The Holy Ghost “will give us always what to say.”—“We must trust in the Holy Ghost,” replied Latimer, “but not presume on it. If you will not maintain universities, you shall have a brutality.” In this manner the Reformation restored to Cambridge gravity and knowledge, along with truth and charity.

Yet Bilney and Latimer often turned their eyes towards Oxford, and wondered how the light would be able to penetrate there. Wolsey provided for that. A Cambridge master of arts, John Clark, a conscientious man, of tender heart, great prudence, and unbounded devotion to his duty, had been enlightened by the word of God. Wolsey, who since 1523 had been seeking every where for distinguished scholars to adorn his new college, invited Clark among the first. This doctor, desirous of bearing to Oxford the light which God had given Cambridge, immediately began to deliver a course of divinity lectures, to hold conferences, and to preach in his eloquent manner. He taught every day. Among the graduates and students who followed him was Anthony Dalaber, a young man of simple but profound feeling, who while listening to him had experienced in his heart the regenerating power of the Gospel. Overflowing with the happiness which the knowledge of Jesus Christ imparted to him, he went to the Cardinal’s college, knocked at Clark’s door, and said: “Father, allow me never to quit you more!” The teacher, beholding the young disciple’s enthusiasm, loved him, but thought it his duty to try him: “Anthony,” said he, “you know not what you ask. My teaching is now pleasant to you, but the time will come when God will lay the cross of persecution on you; you will be dragged before bishops; your name will be covered with shame in

the world, and all who love you will be heart-broken on account of you.… Then, my friend, you will regret that you ever knew me."

Anthony believing himself rejected, and unable to bear the idea of returning to the barren instructions of the priests, fell on his knees, and weeping bitterly, exclaimed: "For the tender mercy of God, turn me not away." Touched by his sorrow, Clark folded him in his arms, kissed him, and with tears in his eyes exclaimed: "The Lord give thee what thou askest!… Take me for thy father, I take thee for my son." From that hour Anthony, all joy, was like Timothy at the feet of Paul. He united a quick understanding with tender affections. When any of the students had not attended Clark's conferences, the master commissioned his disciple to visit them, to inquire into their doubts, and to impart to them his instructions. "This exercise did me much good," said Dalaber, "and I made great progress in the knowledge of Scripture."

Thus the kingdom of God, which consists not in forms, but in the power of the Spirit, was set up in Cambridge and Oxford. The alarmed schoolmen, beholding their most pious scholars escaping one after another from their teaching, called the bishops to their aid, and the latter determined to send agents to Cambridge, the focus of the heresy, to apprehend the leaders. This took place in 1523 or the beginning of 1524. The episcopal officers had arrived, and were proceeding to business. The most timid began to feel alarm, but Latimer was full of courage; when suddenly the agents of the clergy were forbidden to go on, and this prohibition, strange to say, originated with Wolsey; "upon what ground I cannot imagine," says Burnet. Certain events were taking place at Rome of a nature to exercise great influence over the priestly councils, and which may perhaps explain what Burnet could not understand.

CHAPTER X

Wolsey seeks the Tiara—Clement VII is elected—Wolsey's dissimulation—Charles offers France to Henry—Pace's Mission on this Subject—Wolsey reforms the Convents—His secret Alliances—Treaty between France and England—Taxation and Insurrection—False Charges against the Reformers—Latimer's Defence—Tenterden Steeple.

Adrian VI died on the 14th September 1523, before the end of the second year of his pontificate. Wolsey thought himself pope. At length he would no longer be the favourite only, but the arbiter of the kings of the earth; and his genius, for which England was too narrow, would have Europe and the world for its stage. Already revolving gigantic projects in his mind, the future pope dreamt of the destruction of heresy in the west, and in the east the cessation of the Greek schism, and new crusades to replant the cross on the walls of Constantinople. There is nothing that Wolsey would not have dared undertake when once seated on the throne of catholicism, and the pontificates of Gregory VII and Innocent III would have been eclipsed by that of the Ipswich butcher's son. The cardinal reminded Henry of his promise, and the very next day the king signed a letter addressed to Charles the Fifth.

Believing himself sure of the emperor, Wolsey turned all his exertions to the side of Rome. "The legate of England," said Henry's ambassadors to the cardinals, "is the very man for the present time. He is the only one thoroughly acquainted with the interests and wants of Christendom, and strong enough to provide for them. He is all kindness, and will share his dignities and wealth among all the prelates who support him." But Julio de' Medici himself aspired to the papacy, and

as eighteen cardinals were devoted to him, the election could not take place without his support. “Rather than yield,” said he in the conclave, “I would die in this prison.” A month passed away, and nothing was done. New intrigues were then resorted to: there were cabals for Wolsey, cabals for Medici. The cardinals were besieged:

Into their midst, by many a secret path, Creeps sly intrigue. At length, on the 19th November 1523, the people collected under their windows, shouting: “No foreign pope.” After forty-nine days debating, Julio was elected, and according to his own expression, “bent his head beneath the yoke of apostolic servitude.” He took the name of Clement VII.

Wolsey was exasperated. It was in vain that he presented himself before St. Peter’s chair at each vacancy: a more active or more fortunate rival always reached it before him. Master of England, and the most influential of European diplomatists, he saw men preferred to him who were his inferiors. This election was an event for the Reformation. Wolsey as pope would, humanly speaking, have tightened the cords which already bound England so closely to Rome; but Wolsey, rejected, could hardly fail to throw himself into tortuous paths which would perhaps contribute to the emancipation of the Church. He became more crafty than ever; declared to Henry that the new election was quite in conformity with his wishes, and hastened to congratulate the new pope. He wrote to his agents at Rome: “This election, I assure you, is as much to the king’s and my rejoicing, consolation, and gladness, as possibly may be devised or imagined.… Ye shall show unto his holiness what joy, comfort, and gladness it is both to the king’s highness and me to perceive that once in our lives it hath pleased God of his great goodness to provide such a pastor unto his church, as his grace and I have long inwardly desired; who for his virtue, wisdom, and other high and notable qualities, we have always reputed the most able and worthy person to be called to that dignity.”3 But the pope, divining his competitor’s vexation, sent the king a golden rose, and a ring to Wolsey. “I am sorry,” he said as he drew it from his finger, “that I cannot present it to his eminence in person” Clement moreover conferred on him the quality of legate for life—an office which had hitherto been temporary only. Thus the popedom and England embraced each other, and nothing appeared more distant than that Christian revolution which was destined very shortly to emancipate Britain from the tutelage of the Vatican.

Wolsey’s disappointed ambition made him suspend the proceedings of the clergy at Cambridge. He had revenge in his heart, and cared not to persecute his fellow-countrymen merely to please his rival; and besides, like several popes, he had a certain fondness for learning. To send a few Lollards to prison was a matter of no difficulty; but learned doctors … this required a closer examination. Hence he gave Rome a sign of independence. And yet it was not specially against the pope that he began to entertain sinister designs: Clement had been more fortunate than himself; but that was no reason why he should be angry with him.… Charles V was the offender, and Wolsey swore a deadly hatred against him. Resolved to strike, he sought only the place where he could inflict the severest blow. To obtain his end, he resolved to dissemble his passion, and to distil drop by drop into Henry’s mind that mortal hatred against Charles, which gave fresh energy to his activity.

Charles discovered the indignation that lay hid under Wolsey’s apparent mildness, and wishing to retain Henry’s alliance, he made more pressing advances to the king. Having deprived the minister of a tiara, he resolved to offer the king a crown: this was, indeed, a noble compensation! “You are

king of France," the emperor said, "and I undertake to win your kingdom for you. Only send an ambassador to Italy to negotiate the matter." Wolsey, who could hardly contain his vexation, was forced to comply, in appearance at least, with the emperor's views. The king, indeed, seemed to think of nothing but his arrival at St. Germain's, and commissioned Pace to visit Italy for this important business. Wolsey hoped that he would be unable to execute his commission; it was impossible to cross the Alps, for the French troops blockaded every passage. But Pace, who was one of those adventurous characters whom nothing can stop, spurred on by the thought that the king himself had sent him, determined to cross the Col di Tenda. On the 27th July, he entered the mountains, traversed precipitous passes, sometimes climbing them on all-fours, and often falling during the descent. In some places he could ride on horseback; "but in the most part thereof I durst not either turn my horse traverse (he wrote to the king) for all the worldly riches, nor in manner look on my left hand, for the pronite and deepness to the valley." After this passage, which lasted six days, Pace arrived in Italy worn out by fatigue. "If the king of England will enter France immediately by way of Normandy," said the constable of Bourbon to him, "I will give him leave to pluck out both my eyes if he is not master of Paris before All-Saints; and when Paris is taken, he will be master of the whole kingdom." But Wolsey, to whom these remarks were transmitted by the ambassador, slighted them, delayed furnishing the subsidies, and required certain conditions which were calculated to thwart the project. Pace, who was ardent and ever imprudent, but plain and straightforward, forgot himself, and in a moment of vexation wrote to Wolsey: "To speak frankly, if you do not attend to these things, I shall impute to your grace the loss of the crown of France." These words ruined Henry's envoy in the cardinal's mind. Was this man, who owed every thing to him, trying to supplant him?… Pace in vain assured Wolsey that he should not take seriously what he had said, but the bolt had hit. Pace was associated with Charles in the cruel enmity of the minister, and he was one day to feel its terrible effects. It was not long before Wolsey was able to satisfy himself that the service Charles had desired to render the king of England was beyond the emperor's strength. No sooner at case on one side, than Wolsey found himself attacked on another. This man, the most powerful among kings' favourites, felt at this time the first breath of disfavour blow over him. On the pontifical throne, he would no doubt have attempted a reform after the manner of Sixtus V; and wishing to rehearse on a smaller stage, and regenerate after his own fashion the catholic church in England, he submitted the monasteries to a strict inquisition, patronized the instruction of youth, and was the first to set a great example, by suppressing certain religious houses whose revenues he applied to his college in Oxford. Thomas Cromwell, his solicitor, displayed much skill and industry in this business, and thus, under the orders of a cardinal of the Roman church, made his first campaign in a war of which he was in later days to hold the chief command. Wolsey and Cromwell, by their reforms, drew down the hatred of certain monks, priests, and noblemen, always the very humble servants of the clerical party. The latter accused the cardinal of not having estimated the monasteries at their just value, and of having, in certain cases, encroached on the royal jurisdiction. Henry, whom the loss of the crown of France had put in a bad humour, resolved, for the first time, not to spare his minister: "There are loud murmurs throughout this kingdom," he said. to him; "it is asserted that your new college at Oxford is only a convenient cloak to hide your malversations." "God forbid," replied the cardinal, "that this virtuous foundation at Oxford, undertaken for the good of my poor soul, should be raised ex rapinis! But, above all, God forbid that I should ever encroach upon your royal authority." He then cunningly insinuated, that by his will he left all his property to the king. Henry was satisfied: he

had a share in the business.

Events of very different importance drew the king's attention to another quarter. The two armies, of the empire and of France, were in presence before Pavia. Wolsey, who openly gave his right hand to Charles V, and secretly his left to Francis, repeated to his master: "If the emperor gains the victory, are you not his ally? and if Francis, am I not in secret communication with him?" "Thus," added the cardinal, "whatever happens, your Highness will have great cause to give thanks to Almighty God." On the 24th of February 1525, the battle of Pavia was fought, and the imperialists found in the French king's tent several of Wolsey's letters, and in his military chest and in the pockets of his soldiers the cardinal's corrupting gold. This alliance had been contrived by Giovanni Gioacchino, a Genoese master of the household to Louisa, regent of France, who passed for a merchant of Bologna, and lived in concealment at Blackfriars. Charles now saw what he had to trust to; but the news of the battle of Pavia had scarcely reached England, when, faithful in perfidy, Wolsey gave utterance to a feigned pleasure. The people rejoiced also, but they were in earnest. Bonfires were lighted in the streets of London; the fountains ran wine, and the lord-mayor, attended by the aldermen, passed through the city on horseback to the sound of the trumpet. The cardinal's joy was not altogether false. He would have been pleased at his enemy's defeat; but his victory was perhaps still more useful to him.

He said to Henry: "The emperor is a liar observing neither faith nor promise: the Archduchess Margaret is a woman of evil life; Dou Ferdinand is a child, and Bourbon a traitor. Sire, you have other things to do with your money than to squander it on these four individuals. Charles is aiming at universal monarchy; Pavia is the first step of this throne, and if England does not oppose him, he will attain it." Joachim having come privily to London, Wolsey prevailed upon Henry to conclude between England and France an "indissoluble peace by land and sea." At last then he was in a position to prove to Charles that it is a dangerous thing to oppose the ambition of a priest. This was not the only advantage Wolsey derived from the triumph of his enemy. The citizens of London imagined that the king of England would be in a few weeks in Paris; Wolsey, rancorous and grasping, determined to make them pay dearly for their enthusiasm. "You desire to conquer France," said he; "you are right. Give me then for that purpose the sixth part of your property; that is a trifle to gratify so noble an inclination." England did not think so; this illegal demand aroused universal complaint. "We are English and not French, freemen and not slaves," was the universal cry. Henry might tyrannize over his court, but not lay hands on his subjects property. The eastern counties rose in insurrection: four thousand men were under arms in a moment; and Henry was guarded in his own palace by only a few servants. It was necessary to break down the bridges to stop the insurgents. The courtiers complained to the king; the king threw the blame on the cardinal; the cardinal laid it on the clergy, who had encouraged him to impose this tax by quoting to him the example of Joseph demanding of the Egyptians the fifth part of their goods; and the clergy in their turn ascribed the insurrection to the gospellers, who (said they) were stirring up a peasant war in England, as they had done in Germany. Reformation produces revolution: this is the favourite text of the followers of the pope. Violent hands must be laid upon the heretics. Non pluit Deus, duc ad christianos. The charge of the priests was absurd; but the people are blind whenever the Gospel is concerned, and occasionally the governors are blind also. Serious reasoning was not necessary to confute this invention. "Here, by the way, I will tell you a merry toy," said Latimer one day in the pulpit. "Master More was once sent in commission into Kent to

help to try out, if it might be, what was the cause of Goodwin Sands and the shelf that stopped up Sandwich haven. He calleth the country afore him, such as were thought to be men of experience, and among others came in an old man with a white head, and one that was thought to be little less than one hundred years old. So Master More called the old aged man unto him, and said: Father, tell me if you can, what is the cause of this great arising of the sands and shelves hereabout, that stop up Sandwich haven? Forsooth, Sir, (quoth he) I am an old man, for I am well-nigh an hundred, and I think that Tenterden steeple is the cause of the Goodwin Sands. For I am an old man, Sir, and I may remember the building of Tenterden steeple, and before that steeple was in building, there was no manner of flats or sands." After relating this anecdote, Latimer slyly added: "Even so, to my purpose, is preaching of God's word the cause of rebellion, as Tenterden steeple was the cause Sandwich haven is decayed."

There was no persecution: there was something else to be done. Wolsey, feeling certain that Charles had obstructed his accession to the popedom, thought only in what manner he might take his revenge. But during this time Tyndale also was pursuing his aim; and the year 1525, memorable for the battle of Pavia, was destined to be no less so in the British isles, by a still more important victory.

CHAPTER XI

Tyndale at Hamburg—First two Gospels—Embarrassment—Tyndale at Wittemberg—At Cologne—The New Testament at Press—Sudden Interruption—Cochlœus at Cologne—Rupert's Manuscripts—Discovery of Cochlœus—His Inquiries—His Alarm—Rincke and the Senate's Prohibition—Consternation and Decision of Tyndale—Cochlœus writes to England—Tyndale ascends the Rhine—Prints two Editions at Worms—Tyndale's Prayer. The ship which carried Tyndale and his MSS. cast anchor at Hamburg, where, since the year 1521, the Gospel had counted numerous friends. Encouraged by the presence of his brethren, the Oxford fellow had taken a quiet lodging in one of the narrow winding streets of that old city, and had immediately resumed his task. A secretary, whom he terms his "faithful companion," aided him in collating texts; but it was not long before this brother, whose name is unknown to us, thinking himself called to preach Christ in places where He had as yet never been proclaimed, left Tyndale. A former friar-observant of the Franciscan order at Greenwich, having abandoned the cloister, and being at this time without resources, offered his services to the Hellenist. William Roye was one of those men (and they are always pretty numerous) whom impatience of the yoke alienates from Rome without their being attracted by the Spirit of God to Christ. Acute, insinuating, crafty, and yet of pleasing manners, he charmed all those who had mere casual relations with him. Tyndale banished to the distant shores of the Elbe, surrounded by strange customs, and hearing only a foreign tongue, often thought of England, and was impatient that his country should enjoy the result of his labours: he accepted Roye's aid. The Gospels of Matthew and Mark, translated and printed at Hamburg, became, it would seem, the first fruits to England of his great task. But Tyndale was soon overwhelmed by annoyances. Roye, who was pretty manageable while he had no money, had become intractable now that his purse was less empty. What was to be done? The reformer having spent the ten pounds he had brought from England, could not satisfy the demands of his assistant, pay his own debts, and remove to another city. He became still more sparing and economical. The Wartburg, in which Luther had translated the New Testament, was a palace in comparison with the lodging in which the reformer of wealthy England endured hunger and cold,

while toiling day and night to give the Gospel to the English Christians.

About the end of 1524, Tyndale sent the two Gospels to Monmouth; and a merchant named John Collenbeke, having brought him the ten pounds he had left in the hands of his old patron, he prepared to depart immediately. Where should he go? Not to England; he must complete his task before all things. Could he be in Luther's neighbourhood and not desire to see him? He needed not the Saxon reformer either to find the truth, which he had already known at Oxford, or to undertake the translation of the Scriptures, which he had already begun in the vale of the Severn. But did not all evangelical foreigners flock to Wittemberg? To remove all doubt as to the interview of the reformers, it would be desirable perhaps to find some trace at Wittemberg either in the university registers or in the writings of the Saxon reformers. Yet several contemporaneous testimonies seem to give a sufficient degree of probability to this conference. Foxe tells us: "He had an interview with Luther and other learned men of that country."2 This must have been in the spring of 1525.

Tyndale, desirious of drawing nearer to his native country, turned his eyes towards the Rhine. There were at Cologne some celebrated printers well known in England, and among others Quentel and the Byrekmans. Francis Byrckman had warehouses in St. Paul's churchyard in London,—a circumstance that might facilitate the introduction and sale of the Testament printed on the banks of the Rhine. This providential circumstance decided Tyndale in favour of Cologne, and thither he repaired with Roye and his MSS. Arrived in the gloomy streets of the city of Agrippina, he contemplated its innumerable churches, and above all its ancient cathedral re-echoing to the voices of its canons, and was oppressed with sorrow as he beheld the priests and monks and mendicants and pilgrims who, from all parts of Europe, poured in to adore the pretended relics of the three wise men and of the eleven thousand virgins. And then Tyndale asked himself whether it was really in this superstitious city that the New Testament was to be printed in English. This was not all. The Reform movement then at work in Germany had broken out at Cologne during the feast of Whitsuntide, and the archbishop had just forbidden all evangelical worship. Yet Tyndale persevered, and submitting to the most minute precautions, not to compromise his work, he took an obscure lodging where he kept himself closely hidden.

Soon however, trusting in God, he called on the printer, presented his manuscripts to him, ordered six thousand copies, and then, upon reflection, sank down to three thousand for fear of a seizure. The printing went on; one sheet followed another; gradually the Gospel unfolded its mysteries in the English tongue, and Tyndale could not contain himself for very joy.2 He saw in his mind's eye the triumphs of the Scriptures over all the kingdom, and exclaimed with transport: "Whether the king wills it or not, ere long all the people of England, enlightened by the New Testament, will obey the Gospel." But on a sudden that sun whose earliest beams he had hailed with songs of joy, was hidden by thick clouds. One day, just as the tenth sheet had been thrown off, the printer hastened to Tyndale, and informed him that the senate of Cologne forbade him to continue the work. Every thing was discovered then. No doubt Henry VIII, who has burnt Luther's books, wishes to burn the New Testament also, to destroy Tyndale's manuscripts, and deliver him up to death. Who had betrayed him? He was lost in unavailing conjectures, and one thing only appeared certain: alas! his vessel, which was moving onwards in full sail, had struck upon a reef! The following is the explanation of this unexpected incident. A man whom we have often met with in the course of this history, one of the most violent enemies of the Reformation—we mean Cochlæus—had arrived in

Cologne. The wave of popular agitation which had stirred this city during the Whitsuntide holidays, had previously swept over Frankfort during the festival of Easter; and the dean of Notre-dame, taking advantage of a moment when the gates of the city were open, had escaped a few minutes before the burghers entered his house to arrest him. On arriving at Cologne, where he hoped to live unknown under the shadow of the powerful elector, he had gone to lodge with George Lauer, a canon in the church of the Apostles. By a singular destiny the two most opposite men, Tyndale and Cochlæus, were in hiding in the same city; they could not long remain there without coming into collision. On the right bank of the Rhine, and opposite Cologne, stood the monastery of Deutz, one of whose abbots, Rupert, who lived in the twelfth century, had said: “To be ignorant of Scripture is to be ignorant of Jesus Christ. This is the scripture of nations! This book of God, which is not pompous in words and poor in meaning like Plato, ought to be set before every people, and to proclaim aloud to the whole world the salvation of all.” One day, when Cochlæus and his host were talking of Rupert, the canon informed the dean that the heretic Osiander of Nuremberg was in treaty with the abbot of Deutz about publishing the writings of this ancient doctor. Cochlæus guessed that Osiander was desirous of bringing forward the contemporary of Saint Bernard as a witness in defence of the Reformation. Hastening to the monastery he alarmed the abbot: “Intrust to me the manuscripts of your celebrated predecessor,” he said; “I will undertake to print them and prove that he was one of us.” The monks placed them in his hands, stipulating for an early publication, from which they expected no little renown. Cochlæus immediately went to Peter Quentel and Arnold Byrckman to make the necessary arrangements. They were Tyndale’s printers.

There Cochlæus made a more important discovery than that of Rupert’s manuscripts. Byrckman and Quentel having invited him one day to meet several of their colleagues at dinner, a printer, somewhat elevated by wine, declared in his cups, (to borrow the words of Cochlæus): “Whether the king and the cardinal of York wish it or not, all England will soon be Lutheran.”3 Cochlæus listened and grew alarmed; he made inquiry, and was informed that two Englishmen, learned men and skilled in the languages, were concealed at Cologue. But all his efforts to discover more proved unavailing.

There was no more repose for the dean of Frankfort; his imagination fermented, his mind became alarmed. “What,” said he, “shall England, that faithful servant of the popedom, be perverted like Germany? Shall the English, the most religious people of Christendom, and whose king once ennobled himself by writing against Luther,—shall they be invaded by heresy?… Shall the mighty cardinal-legate of York be compelled to flee from his palace, as I was from Frankfort?” Cochlæus continued his search; he paid frequent visits to the printers, spoke to them in a friendly tone, flattered them, invited them to visit him at the canon’s; but as yet he dared not hazard the important question; it was sufficient for the moment to have won the good graces of the depositaries of the secret. He soon took a new step; he was careful not to question them before one another; but he procured a private interview with one of them, and supplied him plentifully with Rhine wine:—he himself is our informant.2 Artful questions embarrassed the unwary printer, and at last the secret was disclosed. “The New Testament,” Cochlæus learnt, “is translated into English; three thousand copies are in the press; fourscore pages in quarto are ready; the expense is fully supplied by English merchants, who are secretly to convey the work when printed, and to disperse it widely through all England, before the king or the cardinal can discover or prohibit it. …

Thus will Britain be converted to the opinions of Luther."4 The surprise of Cochlæus equalled his alarm; he dissembled; he wished to learn, however, where the two Englishmen lay concealed; but all his exertions proved ineffectual, and he returned to his lodgings filled with emotion. The danger was very great. A stranger and an exile, what can he do to oppose this impious undertaking? Where shall he find a friend to England, prepared to show his zeal in warding off the threatened blow?… He was bewildered. A flash of light suddenly dispelled the darkness. A person of some consequence at Cologne, Herman Rincke, a patrician and imperial councillor, had been sent on important business by the Emperor Maximilian to Henry VII, and from that time he had always shown a great attachment to England. Cochlæus determined to reveal the fatal secret to him; but, being still alarmed by the scenes at Frankfort, he was afraid to conspire openly against the Reformation. He had left an aged mother and a little niece at home, and was unwilling to do any thing which might compromise them. He therefore crept stealthily towards Rincke's house (as he tells us himself), slipped in secretly, and unfolded the whole matter to him. Rincke could not believe that the New Testament in English was printing at Cologne; however, he sent a confidential person to make inquiries, who reported to him that Cochlæus's information was correct, and that he had found in the printing office a large supply of paper intended for the edition.7 The patrician immediately proceeded to the senate, and spoke of Wolsey, of Henry VIII, and of the preservation of the Romish church in England: and that body which, under the influence of the archbishop, had long since forgotten the rights of liberty, forbade the printer to continue the work. Thus then there were to be no New Testaments for England! A practised hand had warded off the blow aimed at Roman-catholicism; Tyndale would perhaps be thrown into prison, and Cochlæus enjoy a complete triumph.

Tyndale was at first confounded. Were so many years of toil lost, then, for ever? His trial seemed beyond his strength. "They are ravening wolves," he exclaimed, "they preach to others, Steal not, and yet they have robbed the soul of man of the bread of life, and fed her with the shales [shells?] and cods of the hope in their merits and confidence in their good works."2 Yet Tyndale did not long remain cast down; for his faith was of that kind which would remove mountains. Is it not the word of God that is imperilled? If he does not abandon himself, God will not abandon him. He must anticipate the senate of Cologne. Daring and prompt in all his movements, Tyndale bade Roye follow him, hastened to the printing office, collected the sheets, jumped into a boat, and rapidly ascended the river, carrying with him the hope of England. When Cochlæus and Rincke, accompanied by the officers of the senate, reached the printing office, they were surprised beyond measure. The apostate had secured the abominable papers!… Their enemy had escaped like a bird from the net of the fowler. Where was he to be found now? He would no doubt go and place himself under the protection of some Lutheran prince, whither Cochlæus would take good care not to pursue him; but there was one resource left. These English books can do no harm in Germany; they must be prevented reaching London. He wrote to Henry VIII, to Wolsey, and to the bishop of Rochester. "Two Englishmen," said he to the king, "like the two eunuchs who desired to lay hands on Ahasuerus, are plotting wickedly against the peace of your kingdom; but I, like the faithful Mordecai, will lay open their designs to you. They wish to send the New Testament in English to your people. Give orders at every seaport to prevent the introduction of this most baneful merchandise." Such was the name given by this zealous follower of the pope to the word of God. An unexpected ally soon restored peace to the soul of Cochlæus. The celebrated Dr. Eck, a champion of popery far more formidable than he was, had arrived at Cologne on his way to

London, and he undertook to arouse the anger of the bishops and of the king.2 The eyes of the greatest opponents of the Reformation seemed now to be fixed on England. Eck, who boasted of having gained the most signal triumphs over Luther, would easily get the better of the humble tutor and his New Testament.

During this time Tyndale, guarding his precious bales, ascended the rapid river as quickly as he could. He passed before the antique cities and the smiling villages scattered along the banks of the Rhine amidst scenes of picturesque beauty. The mountains, glens, and rocks, the dark forests, the ruined fortresses, the gothic churches, the boats that passed and repassed each other, the birds of prey that soared over his head, as if they bore a mission from Cochlæus—nothing could turn his eyes from the treasure he was carrying with him. At last, after a voyage of five or six days, he reached Worms, where Luther, four years before, had exclaimed: “Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me!” These words of the German reformer, so well known to Tyndale, were the star that had guided him to Worms. He knew that the Gospel was preached in that ancient city. “The citizens are subject to fits of Lutheranism,” said Cochlæus.4 Tyndale arrived there, not as Luther did, surrounded by an immense crowd, but unknown, and imagining himself pursued by the myrmidons of Charles and of Henry As he landed from the boat he cast an uneasy glance around him, and laid down his precious burden on the bank of the river.

He had had time to reflect on the dangers which threatened his work. As his enemies would have marked the edition, some few sheets of it having fallen into their hands, he took steps to mislead the inquisitors, and began a new edition, striking out the prologue and the notes, and substituting the more portable octavo form for the original quarto. Peter Schæffer, the grandson of Fust, one of the inventors of printing, lent his presses for this important work. The two editions were quietly completed about the end of the year 1525.

Thus were the wicked deceived: they would have deprived the English people of the oracles of God, and two editions were now ready to enter England. “Give diligence,” said Tyndale to his fellow-countrymen, as he sent from Worms the Testament he had just translated, “unto the words of eternal life, by the which, if we repent and believe them, we are born anew, created afresh, and enjoy the fruits of the blood of Christ.” In the beginning of 1526, these books crossed the sea by way of Antwerp or Rotterdam. Tyndale was happy; but he knew that the unction of the Holy Ghost alone could enable the people of England to understand these sacred pages; and accordingly he followed them night and day with his prayers. “The scribes and Pharisees,” said he, “had thrust up the sword of the word of God in a scabbard or sheath of glosses, and therein had knit it fast, so that it could neither stick nor cut. Now, O God, draw this sharp sword from the scabbard. Strike, wound, cut asunder, the soul and the flesh, so that man being divided in two, and set at variance with himself, may be in peace with thee to all eternity!”

CHAPTER XII

Worms and Cambridge—St. Paul resuscitated—Latimer’s Preaching—Never Man spake like this Man—Joy and Vexation at Cambridge—Sermon by Prior Buckingham—Irony—Latimer’s Reply to Buckingham—The Students threatened—Latimer preaches before the Bishop—He is forbidden to preach—The most zealous of Bishops—Barnes the Restorer of Letters—Bilney undertakes to convert him—Barnes offers his Pulpit to Latimer—Fryth’s Thirst for God—Christmas Eve, 1525—Storm against Barnes—Ferment in the Colleges—Germany at Cambridge—Meetings at

Oxford—General Expectation.

While these works were accomplishing at Cologne and Worms, others were going on at Cambridge and Oxford. On the banks of the Rhine they were preparing the seed; in England they were drawing the furrows to receive it. The gospel produced a great agitation at Cambridge. Bilney, whom we may call the father of the English Reformation, since, being the first converted by the New Testament, he had brought to the knowledge of God the energetic Latimer, and so many other witnesses of the truth,—Bilney did not at that time put himself forward, like many of those who had listened to him: his vocation was prayer. Timid before men, he was full of boldness before God, and day and night called upon him for souls. But while he was kneeling in his closet, others were at work in the world. Among these Stafford was particularly remarkable. “Paul is risen from the dead,” said many as they heard him. And in fact Stafford explained with so much life the true meaning of the words of the apostle and of the four evangelists, that these holy men, whose faces had been so long hidden under the dense traditions of the schools,2 reappeared before the youth of the university such as the apostolic times had beheld them. But it was not only their persons (for that would have been a trifling matter), it was their doctrine which Stafford laid before his hearers. While the schoolmen of Cambridge were declaring to their pupils a reconciliation which was not yet worked out, and telling them that pardon must be purchased by the works prescribed by the church, Stafford taught that redemption was accomplished, that the satisfaction offered by Jesus Christ was perfect; and he added, that popery having revived the kingdom of the law, God, by the Reformation, was now reviving the kingdom of grace. The Cambridge students, charmed by their master’s teaching, greeted him with applause, and, indulging a little too far in their enthusiasm, said to one another as they left the lecture-room: “Which is the most indebted to the other? Stafford to Paul, who left him the holy epistles; or Paul to Stafford, who has resuscitated that apostle and his holy doctrines, which the middle ages had obscured?”

Above Bilney and Stafford rose Latimer, who, by the power of the Holy Ghost, transfused into other hearts the learned lessons of his master. Being informed of the work that Tyndale was preparing, he maintained from the Cambridge pulpits that the Bible ought to be read in the vulgar tongue.4 “The author of Holy Scripture,” said he, “is the mighty One, the Everlasting … God himself!… and this Scripture partakes of the might and eternity of its author. There is neither king nor emperor that is not bound to obey it. Let us beware of those bypaths of human tradition, filled of stones, brambles, and uprooted trees. Let us follow the straight road of the word. It does not concern us what the Fathers have done, but what they should have done.” A numerous congregation crowded to Latimer’s preaching, and his hearers hung listening to his lips. One in particular attracted attention. He was a Norfolk youth, sixteen years of age, whose features were lighted up with understanding and piety. This poor scholar had received with eagerness the truth announced by the former cross-bearer. He did not miss one of his sermons; with a sheet of paper on his knees, and a pencil in his hand, he took down part of the discourse, trusting the remainder to his memory. This was Thomas Becon, afterwards chaplain to Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury. “If I possess the knowledge of God,” said he, “I owe it (under God) to Latimer.”

Latimer had hearers of many sorts. By the side of those who gave way to their enthusiasm stood men “swelling, blown full, and puffed up like unto Esop’s frog, with envy and malice against him,” said Becon; these were the partizans of traditional catholicism, whom curiosity had attracted, or whom their evangelical friends had dragged to the church. But as Latimer spoke a marvellous

transformation was worked in them; by degrees their angry features relaxed, their fierce looks grew softer; and, if these friends of the priests were asked, after their return home, what they thought of the heretic preacher, they replied, in the exaggeration of their surprise and rapture: “Nunquam sic locutus est homo, sicut hic homo!” (John 7:46) When he descended from the pulpit, Latimer hastened to practise what he had taught. He visited the narrow chambers of the poor scholars, and the dark rooms of the working classes: “he watered with good deeds whatsoever he had before planted with godly words,” said the student who collected his discourses. The disciples conversed together with joy and simplicity of heart; everywhere the breath of a new life was felt; as yet no external reforms had been effected, and yet the spiritual church of the gospel and of the Reformation was already there. And thus the recollection of these happy times was long commemorated in the adage: When Master Stafford read, And Master Latimer preached, Then was Cambridge blessed. The priests could not remain inactive: they heard speak of grace and liberty, and would have nothing to do with either. If grace is tolerated, will it not take from the hands of the clergy the manipulation of salvation, indulgences, penance, and all the rubrics of the canon law? If liberty is conceded, will not the hierarchy, with all its degrees, pomps, violence, and scaffolds, be shaken? Rome desires no other liberty than that of free-will, which, exalting the natural strength of fallen man, dries up as regards mankind the springs of divine life, withers Christianity, and changes that heavenly religion into a human moralism and legal observances. The friends of popery, therefore, collected their forces to oppose the new religion. “Satan, who never sleeps,” says the simple chronicler, “called up his familiar spirits, and sent them forth against the reformers.” Meetings were held in the convents, but particularly in that belonging to the Greyfriars. They mustered all their forces. An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, said they. Latimer extols in his sermons the blessings of Scripture; we must deliver a sermon also to show its dangers. But where was the orator to be found who could cope with him? This was a very embarrassing question to the clerical party. Among the Greyfriars there was a haughty monk, adroit and skilful in little matters, and full at once of ignorance and pride: it was the prior Buckingham. No one had shown more hatred against the evangelical Christians, and no one was in truth a greater stranger to the Gospel. This was the man commissioned to set forth the dangers of the word of God. He was by no means familiar with the New Testament; he opened it however, picked out a few passages here and there which seemed to favour his thesis; and then, arrayed in his costliest robes, with head erect and solemn step, already sure of victory, he went into the pulpit, combated the heretic, and with pompous voice stormed against the reading of the Bible; it was in his eyes the fountain of all heresies and misfortunes. “If that heresy should prevail,” he exclaimed, “there will be an end of everything useful among us. The ploughman, reading in the gospel that no man having put his hand to the plough should look back, would soon lay aside his labour.… The baker, reading that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, will in future make us nothing but very insipid bread; and the simple man finding himself commanded to pluck out the right eye and cast it from thee, England, after a few years, will be a frightful spectacle; it will be little better than a nation of blind and one-eyed men, sadly begging their bread from door to door.” This discourse moved that part of the audience for which it was intended. “The heretic is silenced,” said the monks and clerks; but sensible people smiled, and Latimer was delighted that they had given him such an adversary. Being of a lively disposition and inclined to irony, he resolved to lash the platitudes of the pompous friar. There are some absurdities, he thought, which can only be refuted by showing how foolish they are. Does not even the grave Tertullian speak of things which

are only to be laughed at, for fear of giving them importance by a serious refutation? “Next Sunday I will reply to him,” said Latimer. The church was crowded when Buckingham, with the hood of St. Francis on his shoulders and with a vain-glorious air, took his place solemnly in front of the preacher. Latimer began by recapitulating the least weak of his adversary’s arguments; then taking them up one by one, he turned them over and over, and pointed out all their absurdity with so much wit, that the poor prior was buried in his own nonsense. Then turning towards the listening crowd, he exclaimed with warmth: “This is how your skilful guides abuse your understanding. They look upon you as children that must be for ever kept in leading-strings. Now, the hour of your majority has arrived; boldly examine the Scriptures, and you will easily discover the absurdity of the teaching of your doctors.” And then desirous, as Solomon has it, of answering a fool according to his folly, he added: “As for the comparisons drawn from the plough, the leaven, and the eye, of which the reverned prior has made so singular a use, is it necessary to justify these passages of Scripture? Must I tell you what plough, what leaven, what eye is here meant? Is not our Lord’s teaching distinguished by those expressions which, under a popular form, conceal a spiritual and profound meaning? Do not we know that in all languages and in all speeches, it is not on the image that we must fix our eyes, but on the thing which the image represents?… For instance,” he continued, and as he said these words he cast a piercing glance on the prior, “if we see a fox painted preaching in a friar’s hood, nobody imagines that a fox is meant, but that craft and hypocrisy are described, which are so often found disguised in that garb. At these words the poor prior, on whom the eyes of all the congregation were turned, rose and left the church hastily, and ran off to his convent to hide his rage and confusion among his brethren. The monks and their creatures uttered loud cries against Latimer. It was unpardonable (they said) to have been thus wanting in respect to the cowl of St. Francis. But his friends replied: “Do we not whip children? and he who treats Scripture worse than a child, does he not deserve to be well flogged?” The Romish party did not consider themselves beaten. The heads of colleges and the priests held frequent conferences. The professors were desired to watch carefully over their pupils, and to lead them back to the teaching of the church by flattery and by threats. “We are putting our lance in rest,” they told the students; “if you become evangelicals, your advancement is at an end.” But these open-hearted generous youths loved rather to be poor with Christ, than rich with the priests. Stafford continued to teach, Latimer to preach, and Bilney to visit the poor: the doctrine of Christ ceased not to be spread abroad, and souls to be converted.

One weapon only was left to the schoolmen; this was persecution, the favourite arm of Rome. “Our enterprise has not succeeded,” said they; “Buckingham is a fool. The best way of answering these gospellers is to prevent their speaking.” Dr. West, bishop of Ely, was ordinary of Cambridge; they called for his intervention, and he ordered one of the doctors to inform him the next time Latimer was to preach; “but,” added he, “do not say a word to any one. I wish to come without being expected.”

One day as Latimer was preaching in Latin ad clerum, the bishop suddenly entered the university church, attended by a number of priests. Latimer stopped, waiting respectfully until West and his train had taken their places. “A new audience,” thought he; “and besides, an audience worthy of greater honour calls for a new theme. Leaving, therefore, the subject I had proposed, I will take up one that relates to the episcopal charge, and will preach on these words: Christus existens Pontifex futurorum bonorum.” (Hebrews 9:11) Then describing Jesus Christ, Latimer represented

him as the “true and perfect pattern unto all other bishops.” There was not a single virtue pointed out in the divine bishop that did not correspond with some defect in the Romish bishops. Latimer’s caustic wit had a free course at their expense; but there was so much gravity in his sallies, and so lively a Christianity in his descriptions, that every one must have felt them to be the cries of a Christian conscience rather than the sarcasms of an ill-natured disposition. Never had bishop been taught by one of his priests like this man. “Alas!” said many, “our bishops are not of that breed: they are descended from Annas and Caiaphas.” West was not more at his ease than Buckingham had been formerly. He stifled his anger, however; and after the sermon, said to Latimer with a gracious accent: “You have excellent talents, and if you would do one thing I should be ready to kiss your feet.”2 … What humility in a bishop!… “Preach in this same church,” continued West, “a sermon … against Martin Luther. That is the best way of checking heresy.” Latimer understood the prelate’s meaning, and replied calmly: “If Luther preaches the word of God, I cannot oppose him. But if he teaches the contrary, I am ready to attack him.”—“Well, well, Master Latimer,” exclaimed the bishop, “I perceive that you smell somewhat of the pan. … One day or another you will repent of that merchandise.”

West having left Cambridge in great irritation against that rebellious clerk, hastened to convoke his chapter, and forbade Latimer to preach either in the university or in the diocese. “All that will live godly shall suffer persecution,” Saint Paul had said; Latimer was now experiencing the truth of the saying. It was not enough that the name of heretic had been given him by the priests and their friends, and that the passers-by insulted him in the streets; … the work of God was violently checked. “Behold then,” he exclaimed with a Litter sigh, “the use of the episcopal office … to hinder the preaching of Jesus Christ!” Some few years later he sketched, with his usual caustic irony, the portrait of a certain bishop, of whom Luther also used frequently to speak: “Do you know,” said Latimer, “who is the most diligentest bishop and prelate in all England?… I see you listening and hearkening that I should name him … I will tell you … It is the devil. He is never out of his diocese; ye shall never find him out of the way; call for him when you will, he’s ever at home. He is ever at his plough. Ye shall never find him idle, I warrant you. Where the devil is resident—there away with books and up with candles; away with bibles and up with beads; away with the light of the Gospel and up with the light of candles, yea at noondays; down with Christ’s cross, up with purgatory pickpurse; away with clothing the naked, the poor, and impotent, up with decking of images and gay garnishing of stocks and stones; down with God’s traditions and his most holy word.… Oh! that our prelates would be as diligent to sow the corn of good doctrine as Satan is to sow cockle and darnel!” Truly may it be said, “There was never such a preacher in England as he is.”2 The reformer was not satisfied with merely speaking: he acted. “Neither the menacing words of his adversaries nor their cruel imprisonments,” says one of his contemporaries, “could hinder him from proclaiming God’s truth.” Forbidden to preach in the churches, he went about from house to house. He longed for a pulpit however, and this he obtained. A haughty prelate had in vain interdicted his preaching; Jesus Christ, who is above all bishops, is able, when one door is shut, to open another. Instead of one great preacher there were soon two at Cambridge. An Augustine monk named Robert Barnes, a native of the county of Norfolk, and a great scholar, had gone to Louvain to prosecute his studies. Here he received the degree of doctor of divinity, and having returned to Cambridge, was nominated prior of his monastery in 1523. It was his fortune to reconcile learning and the Gospel in the university; but by leaning too much to learning he diminished the force of the word of God. A great crowd collected every day in the

Augustine convent to hear his lectures upon Terence, and in particular upon Cicero. Many of those who were offended by the simple Christianity of Bilney and Latimer, were attracted by this reformer of another kind. Coleman, Coverdale, Field, Cambridge, Barley, and many other young men of the university, gathered round Barnes and proclaimed him “the restorer of letters.” But the classics were only a preparatory teaching. The masterpieces of antiquity having aided Barnes to clear the soil, he opened before his class the epistles of St. Paul. He did not understand their divine depth, like Stafford; he was not, like him, anointed with the Holy Ghost; he differed from him on several of the apostle’s doctrines, on justification by faith, and on the new creature; but Barnes was an enlightened and liberal man, not without some degree of piety, and desirous, like Stafford, of substituting the teaching of Scripture for the barren disputations of the school. But they soon came into collision, and Cambridge long remembered that celebrated discussion in which Barnes and Stafford contended with so much renown, employing no other weapons than the word of God, to the great astonishment of the blind doctors, and the great joy of the clearsighted, says the chronicler.

Barnes was not as yet thoroughly enlightened, and the friends of the Gospel were astonished that a man, a stranger to the truth, should deal such heavy blows against error. Bilney, whom we continually meet with when any secret work, a work of irresistible charity, is in hand,—Bilney, who had converted Latimer, undertook to convert Barnes; and Stafford, Arthur, Thistel of Pembroke, and Fooke of Benet’s, earnestly prayed God to grant his assistance. The experiment was difficult: Barnes had reached that juste milieu, that “golden mean” of the humanists, that intoxication of learning and glory, which render conversion more difficult. Besides, could a man like Bilney really dare to instruct the restorer of antiquity? But the humble bachelor of arts, so simple in appearance, knew, like David of old, a secret power by which the Goliath of the university might be vanquished. He passed days and nights in prayer; and then urged Barnes openly to manifest his convictions without fearing the reproaches of the world. After many conversations and prayers, Barnes was converted to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Still, the prior retained something undecided in his character, and only half relinquished that middle state with which he had begun. For instance, he appears to have always believed in the efficacy of sacerdotal consecration to transform the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. His eye was not single, and his mind was often agitated and driven to and fro by contrary thoughts: “Alas!” said this divided character one day, “I confess that my cogitations be innumerable.”3

Barnes, having come to a knowledge of the truth, immediately displayed a zeal that was somewhat imprudent. Men of the least decided character, and even those who are destined to make a signal fall, are often those who begin their course with the greatest ardour. Barnes seemed prepared at this time to withstand all England. Being now united to Latimer by a tender Christian affection, he was indignant that the powerful voice of his friend should be lost to the church. “The bishop has forbidden you to preach,” he said to him, “but my monastery is not under episcopal jurisdiction. You can preach there.” Latimer went into the pulpit at the Augustine’s, and the church could not contain the crowd that flocked to it. At Cambridge, as at Wittemberg, the chapel of the Augustine monks was used for the first struggles of the Gospel. It was here that Latimer delivered some of his best sermons. A very different man from Latimer, and particularly from Barnes, was daily growing in influence among the English reformers: this was Fryth. No one was more humble than he, and on that very account no one was stronger. He was less brilliant than Barnes, but more

solid. He might have penetrated into the highest departments of science, but he was drawn away by the deep mysteries of God's word; the call of conscience prevailed over that of the understanding. He did not devote the energy of his soul to difficult questions; he thirsted for God, for his truth, and for his love. Instead of propagating his particular opinions and forming divisions, he clung only to the faith which saves, and advanced the dominion of true unity. This is the mark of the great servant of God. Humble before the Lord, mild before men, and even in appearance somewhat timid, Fryth in the face of danger displayed an intrepid courage. "My learning is small," he said, "but the little I have I am determined to give to Jesus Christ for the building of his temple."2

Latimer's sermons, Barnes's ardour, and Fryth's firmness, excited fresh zeal at Cambridge. They knew what was going on in Germany and Switzerland; shall the English, ever in front, now remain in the rear? Shall not Latimer, Bilney, Stafford, Barnes, and Fryth do what the servants of God are doing in other places? A secret ferment announced an approaching crisis: every one expected some change for better or for worse. The Evangelicals, confident in the truth, and thinking themselves sure of victory, resolved to fall upon the enemy simultaneously on several points. The Sunday before Christmas, in the year 1525, was chosen for this great attack. While Latimer should address the crowds that continued to fill the Augustine chapel, and others were preaching in other places, Barnes was to deliver a sermon in one of the churches in the town. But nothing compromises the Gospel so much as a disposition turned towards outward things. God, who grants his blessing only to undivided hearts, permitted this general assault, of which Barnes was to be the hero, to be marked by a defeat. The prior, as he went into the pulpit, thought only of Wolsey. As the representative of the popedom in England, the cardinal was the great obstacle to the Reformation. Barnes preached from the epistle for the day: Rejoice in the Lord alway. But instead of announcing Christ and the joy of the Christian, he imprudently declaimed against the luxury, pride, and diversions of the churchmen, and everybody understood that he aimed at the cardinal. He described those magnificent palaces, that brilliant suite, those scarlet robes, and pearls, and gold, and precious stones, and all the prelate's ostentation, so little in keeping (said he) with the stable of Bethlehem. Two fellows of King's College, Robert Ridley and Walter Preston, relations of Tonstall, bishop of London, who were intentionally among the congregation, noted down in their tablets the prior's imprudent expressions. The sermon was scarcely over when the storm broke out. "These people are not satisfied with propagating monstrous heresies," exclaimed their enemies, "but they must find fault with the powers that be. To-day they attack the cardinal, to-morrow they will attack the king!" Ridley and Preston accused Barnes to the vice-chancellor. All Cambridge was in commotion. What! Barnes the Augustine prior, the restorer of letters, accused as a Lollard!… The Gospel was threatened with a danger more formidable than a prison or a scaffold. The friends of the priests, knowing Barnes's weakness, and even his vanity, hoped to obtain of him a disavowal that would cover the evangelical party with shame. "What!" said these dangerous counsellors to him, "the noblest career was open to you, and would you close it?… Do, pray, explain away your sermon." They alarmed, they flattered him; and the poor prior was near yielding to their solicitations. "Next Sunday you will read this declaration," they said to him. Barnes ran over the paper put into his hands, and saw no great harm in it. However he desired to show it to Bilney and Stafford. "Beware of such weakness," said these faithful men. Barnes then recalled his promise, and for a season the enemies of the Gospel were silent. Its friends worked with increased energy. The fall from which one of their companions had so narrowly escaped inspired

them with fresh zeal. The more indecision and weakness Barnes had shown, the more did his brethren flee to God for courage and firmness. It was reported, moreover, that a powerful ally was coming across the sea, and that the Holy Scriptures, translated into the vulgar tongue, were at last to be given to the people. Wherever the word was preached, there the congregation was largest. It was the seed-time of the church; all were busy in the fields to prepare the soil and trace the furrows. Seven colleges at least were in full ferment: Pembroke, St. John's, Queens', King's, Caius, Benet's, and Peterhouse. The Gospel was preached at the Augustine's, at Saint Mary's, (the University church,) and in other places, and when the bells rang to prayers, the streets were alive with students issuing from the colleges, and hastening to the sermon.

There was at Cambridge a house called the White Horse, so situated as to permit the most timid members of King's, Queens', and St. John's Colleges, to enter at the rear without being perceived. In every age Nicodemus has had his followers. Here those persons used to assemble who desired to read the Bible and the works of the German reformers. The priests, looking upon Wittemberg as the focus of the Reformation, named this house Germany: the people will always have their bywords. At first the frequenters of the White Horse were called sophists; and now, whenever a group of "fellows" was seen walking in that direction, the cry was, "There are the Germans going to Germany."—"We are not Germans," was the reply, "neither are we Romans." The Greek New Testament had made them Christians. The Gospel-meetings had never been more fervent. Some attended them to communicate the new life they possessed; others to receive what God had given to the more advanced brethren. The Holy Spirit united them all, and thus, by the fellowship of the saints, were real churches created. To these young Christians the word of God was the source of so much light, that they imagined themselves transported to that heavenly city of which the Scriptures speak, which had no need of the sun, for the glory of God did lighten it. "So oft as I was in the company of these brethren," said a youthful student of St. John's, "methought I was quitely placed in the new glorious Jerusalem."

Similar things were taking place at Oxford. In 1524 and 1525, Wolsey had successively invited thither several Cambridge fellows, and although only seeking the most able, he found that he had taken some of the most pious. Besides John Clark, there were Richard Cox, John Fryer, Godfrey Harman, W. Betts, Henry Sumner, W. Baily, Michael Drumm, Th. Lawney, and, lastly, the excellent John Fryth. These Christians, associating with Clark, with his faithful Dalaber, and with other evangelicals of Oxford, held meetings, like their Cambridge brethren, at which God manifested his presence. The bishops made war upon the Gospel; the king supported them with all his power; but the word had gained the victory; there was no longer any doubt. The church was born again in England. The great movement of the sixteenth century had begun more particularly among the younger doctors and students at Oxford and Cambridge. From them it was necessary that is should be extended to the people, and for that end the New Testament, hitherto read in Latin and in Greek, must be circulated in English. The voices of these youthful evangelists were heard, indeed, in London and in the provinces; but their exhortations would have been insufficient, if the mighty hand which directs all things had not made this Christian activity coincide with that holy work for which it had set Tyndale apart. While all was agitation in England, the waves of ocean were bearing from the continent to the banks of the Thames those Scriptures of God, which, three centuries later, multiplied by thousands and by millions, and translated into a hundred and fifty tongues, were to be wafted from the same banks to the ends of the world. If in the fifteenth

century, and even in the early days of the sixteenth, the English New Testament had been brought to London, it would only have fallen into the hands of a few Lollards. Now, in every place, in the parsonages, the universities, and the palaces, as well as in the cottages of the husbandmen and the shops of the tradesmen, there was an ardent desire to possess the Holy Scriptures. The fiat lux was about to be uttered over the chaos of the church, and light to be separated from darkness by the word of God.

BOOK XIX The English New Testament and the Court of Rome

CHAPTER I

Church and State essentially distinct—Their fundamental Principles—What restores Life to the Church—Separation from Rome necessary—Reform and Liberty—The New Testament crosses the sea—Is hidden in London—Garret's Preaching and Zeal—Dissemination of Scripture—What the People find in it—The Effects it produces—Tyndale's Explanations—Roper, More's Son-in-law—Garret carries Tyndale's Testament to Oxford—Henry and his Valet—The Supplication of the Beggars—Two Sorts of Beggars—Evils caused by Priests—More's Supplications of the Souls in Purgatory. The Church and the State are essentially distinct. They both receive their task from God, but that task is different in each. The task of the church is to lead men to God; the task of the State is to secure the earthly development of a people in conformity with its pecular character. There are certain bounds, traced by the particular spirit of each nation within which the state should confine itself; while the church, whose limits are co-extensive with the human race, has a universal character, which raises it above all national differences. These two distinctive features should be maintained. A state which aims at universality looses itself; a church whose mind and aim are sectarian falls away. Nevertheless, the church and the state, the two poles of social life, while they are in many respects opposed to one another, are far from excluding each other absolutely. The church has need of that justice, order, and liberty, which the state is bound to maintain; but the state has especial need of the church. If Jesus can do without kings to establish his kingdom, kings cannot do without Jesus, if they would have their kingdoms prosper. Justice, which is the fundamental principle of the state, is continually fettered in its progress by the internal power of sin; and as force can do nothing against this power, the state requires the Gospel in order to overcome it. That country will always be the most prosperous where the church is the most evangelical. These two communities having thus need one of the other, we must be prepared, whenever a great religious manifestation takes place in the world, to witness the appearance on the scene not only of the little ones, but of the great ones also, of the state. We must not then be surprised to meet with Henry VIII, but let us endeavour to appreciate accurately the part he played.

If the Reformation, particularly in England, happened necessarily to be mixed up with the state, with the world even, it originated neither in the state nor in the world. There was much worldliness in the age of Henry VIII, passions, violence, festivities, a trial, a divorce; and some historians call that the history of the Reformation in England. We shall not pass by in silence these manifestations of the worldly life; opposed as they are to the Christian life, they are in history, and it is not our business to tear them out. But most assuredly they are not the Reformation. From a very different quarter proceeded the divine light which then rose upon the human race. To say that Henry VIII, was the reformer of his people is to betray our ignorance of his. The kingly power in

England by turns opposed and favoured the reform in the church; but it opposed before it favoured, and much more than it favoured. This great transformation was begun and extended by its own strength, by the Spirit from on high. When the church has lost the life that is peculiar to it, it must again put itself in communication with its creative principle, that is, with the word of God. Just as the buckets of a wheel employed in irrigating the meadows have no sooner discharged their reviving waters, than they dip again into the stream to be re-filled, so every generation, void of the Spirit of Christ, must return to the divine source to be again filled up. The primitive words which created the church have been preserved for us in the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles; and the humble reading of these divine writings will create in every age the communion of saints. God was the father of the Reformation, not Henry VIII. The visible world which then glittered with such brightness; those princes and sports, those noblemen, and trials and laws, far from effecting a reform, were calculated to stifle it. But the light and the warmth came from heaven, and the new creation was completed. In the reign of Henry VIII a great number of citizens, priests, and noblemen possessed that degree of cultivation which favours the action of the holy books. It was sufficient for this divine seed to be scattered on the well-prepared soil for the work of germination to be accomplished. A time not less important also was approaching—that in which the action of the popedom was to come to an end. The hour had not yet struck. God was first creating within by his word a spiritual church, before he broke without by his dispensations the bonds which had so long fastened England to the power of Rome. It was his good pleasure first to give truth and life, and then liberty. It has been said that if the pope had consented to a reform of abuses and doctrines, on condition of his keeping his position, the religious revolution would not have been satisfied at that price, and that after demanding reform, the next demand would have been for liberty. The only reproach that can be made to this assertion is, that it is superabundantly true. Liberty was an integral part of the Reformation, and one of the changes imperatively required was to withdraw religious authority from the pope, and restore it to the word of God. In the sixteenth century there was a great outpouring of the Christian life in France, Italy, and Spain; it is attested by martyrs without number, and history shows that to transform these three great nations, all that the Gospel wanted was liberty. “If we had set to work two months later,” said a grand inquisitor of Spain who had dyed himself in the blood of the saints, “it would have been too late: Spain would have been lost to the Roman church.” We may therefore believe that if Italy, France, and Spain had had some generous king to check the myrmidons of the pope, those three countries, carried along by the renovating power of the Gospel, would have entered upon an era of liberty and faith. The struggles of England with the popedom began shortly after the dissemination of the English New Testament by Tyndale. The epoch at which we are arrived accordingly brings in one view before our eyes both the Testament of Jesus Christ and the court of Rome. We can thus study the men (the reformers and the Romanists) and the works they produce, and arrive at a just valuation of the two great principles which dispute the possession of authority in the church.

It was about the close of the year 1525; the English New Testament was crossing the sea; five pious Hanseatic merchants had taken charge of the books. Captivated by the Holy Scriptures they had taken them on board their ships, hidden them among their merchandise; and then made sail from Antwerp for London.

Thus those precious pages were approaching England, which were to become its light and the source of its greatness. The merchants, whose zeal unhappily cost them dear, were not without

alarm. Had not Cochlæus caused orders to be sent to every port to prevent the entrance of the precious cargo they were bringing to England? They arrived and cast anchor; they lowered the boat to reach the shore; what were they likely to meet there? Tonstall's agents, no doubt, and Wolsey's, and Henry's ready to take away their New Testaments! They landed and soon again returned to the ship; boats passed to and fro, and the vessel was unloaded. No enemy appeared; and no one seemed to imagine that these ships contained so great a treasure.

Just at the time this invaluable cargo was ascending the river, an invisible hand had dispersed the preventive guard. Tonstall, bishop of London, had been sent to Spain; Wolsey was occupied in political combinations with Scotland, France, and the empire; Henry VIII, driven from his capital by an unhealthy winter, was passing the Christmas holidays at Eltham; and even the courts of justice, alarmed by an extraordinary mortality, had suspended their sittings. God, if we may so speak, had sent his angel to remove the guards.

Seeing nothing that could stop them, the five merchants, whose establishment was at the Steel yard in Thames Street, hastened to conceal their precious charge in their warehouses. But who will receive them? Who will undertake to distribute these Holy Scriptures in London, Oxford, Cambridge, and all England? It is a little matter that they have crossed the sea. The principal instrument God was about to use for their dissemination was an humble servant of Christ. In Honey Lane, a narrow thoroughfare adjoining Cheapside, stood the old church of All Hallows, of which Robert Forman was rector. His curate was a plain man of lively imagination, delicate conscience, and timid disposition, but rendered bold by his faith, to which he was to become a martyr. Thomas Garret, for that was his name, having believed in the Gospel, earnestly called his hearers to repentance; he urged upon them that works, however good they might be in appearance, were by no means capable of justifying the sinner, and that faith alone could save him. He maintained that every man had the right to preach the word of God;2 and called those bishops pharisees, who persecuted christian men. Garret's discourses, at once so quickening and so gentle, attracted great crowds; and to many of his hearers, the street in which he preached was rightly named Honey Lane, for there they found the honey out of the rock. But Garret was about to commit a fault still more heinous in the eyes of the priests than preaching faith. The Hanse merchants were seeking some sure place where they might store up the New Testaments and other books sent from Germany; the curate offered his house, stealthily transported the holy deposit thither, hid them in the most secret corners, and kept a faithful watch over this sacred library.4 He did not confine himself to this. Night and day he studied the holy books; he held Gospel meetings, read the word and explained its doctrines to the citizens of London. At last, not satisfied with being at once student, librarian, and preacher, he became a trader, and sold the New Testament to laymen, and even to priests and monks, so that the Holy Scriptures were dispersed over the whole realm. This humble and timid priest was then performing alone the biblical work of England. And thus the word of God, presented by Erasmus to the learned in 1517 was given to the people by Tyndale in 1526. In the parsonages and in the convent cells, but particularly in shops and cottages, a crowd of persons were studying the New Testament. The clearness of the Holy Scriptures struck each reader. None of the systematic or aphoristic forms of the school were to be found there: it was the language of human life which they discovered in those divine writings: here a conversation, there a discourse; here a narrative, and there a comparison; here a command, and there an argument; here a parable, and there a prayer. It was not all doctrine or all history; but

these two elements mingled together made an admirable whole. Above all, the life of our Saviour, so divine and so human, had an inexpressible charm which captivated the simple. One work of Jesus Christ explained another, and the great facts of the redemption, birth, death, and resurrection of the Son of God, and the sending of the Holy Ghost, followed and completed each other. The authority of Christ's teaching, so strongly contrasting with the doubts of the schools, increased the clearness of his discourses to his readers; for the more certain a truth is, the more distinctly it strikes the mind. Academical explanations were not necessary to those noblemen, farmers, and citizens. It is to me, for me, and of me that this book speaks, said each one. It is I whom all these promises and teachings concern. This fall and this restoration … they are mine. That old death and this new life.… I have passed through them. That flesh and that spirit.… I know them. This law and this grace, this faith, these works, this slavery, this glory, this Christ and this Belial … all are familiar to me. It is my own history that I find in this book. Thus by the aid of the Holy Ghost each one had in his own experience a key to the mysteries of the Bible. To understand certain authors and certain philosophers, the intellectual life of the reader must be in harmony with theirs; so must there be an intimate affinity with the holy books to penetrate their mysteries. "The man that has not the Spirit of God," said a reformer, "does not understand one jot or tittle of the Scripture." Now that this condition was fulfilled, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Such at that period were the hermeneutics of England. Tyndale had set the example himself by explaining many of the words which might stop the reader. "The New Testament!" we may suppose some farmer saying, as he took up the book; "what Testament is that?" "Christ," replied Tyndale in his prologue, "commanded his disciples before his death to publish over all the world his last will, which is to give all his goods unto all that repent and believe. He bequeaths them his righteousness to blot out their sins—his salvation to overcome their condemnation; and this is why that document is called the Testament of Jesus Christ."

"The law and the Gospel," said a citizen of London, in his shop; "what is that?" "They are two keys," answered Tyndale. "The law is the key which shuts up all men under condemnation, and the Gospel is the key which opens the door and lets them out. Or, if you like it, they are two salves. The law, sharp and biting, driveth out the disease and killeth it; while the Gospel, soothing and soft, softens the wound and brings life." Every one understood and read, or rather devoured the inspired pages; and the hearts of the elect (to use Tyndale's words), warmed by the love of Jesus Christ, began to melt like wax.2 This transformation was observed to take place even in the most catholic families. Roper, More's son-in-law, having read the New Testament, received the truth. "I have no more need," said he, "of auricular confession, of vigils, or of the invocation of saints. The ears of God are always open to hear us. Faith alone is necessary to salvation. I believe … and I am saved.… Nothing can deprive me of God's favour." The amiable and zealous young man desired to do more. "Father," said he one day to Sir Thomas, "procure for me from the king, who is very fond of you, a license to preach. God hath sent me to instruct the world." More was uneasy. Must this new doctrine, which he detests, spread even to his children? He exerted all his authority to destroy the work begun in Roper's heart. "What," said he with a smile, "is it not sufficient that we that are your friends should know that you are a fool, but you would proclaim your folly to the world? Hold your tongue: I will debate with you no longer." The young man's imagination was struck, but his heart had not been changed. The discussions having ceased, the father's authority

being restored, Roper became less fervent in his faith, and gradually he returned to popery, of which he was afterwards a zealous champion. The humble curate of All Hallows having sold the New Testament to persons living in London and its neighbourhood, and to many pious men who would carry it to the farthest parts of England, formed the resolution to introduce it into the University of Oxford, that citadel of traditional catholicism. It was there he had studied, and he felt towards that school the affection which a son bears to his mother: he set out with his books. Terror occasionally seized him, for he knew that the word of God had many deadly enemies at Oxford; but his inexhaustible zeal overcame his timidity. In concert with Dalaber, he stealthily offered the mysterious book for sale; many students bought it, and Garret carefully entered their names in his register. This was in January 1526; an incident disturbed this Christian activity.

One morning when Edmund Moddis, one of Henry's valets-de-chambre, was in attendance on his master, the prince, who was much attached to him, spoke to him, of the new books come from beyond the sea. "If your grace," said Moddis, "would promise to pardon me and certain individuals, I would present you a wonderful book which is dedicated to your majesty." "Who is the author?" "A lawyer of Gray's Inn named Simon Fish, at present on the continent." "What is he doing there?" "About three years ago, Mr. Row, a fellow-student of Gray's-Inn, composed for a private theatre a drama against my lord the cardinal." The king smiled; when his minister was attacked, his own yoke seemed lighter. "As no one was willing to represent the character employed to give the cardinal his lesson," continued the valet, "Master Fish boldly accepted it. The piece produced a great effect; and my lord being informed of this impertinence, sent the police one night to arrest Fish. The latter managed to escape, crossed the sea, joined one Tyndale, the author of some of the books so much talked of; and, carried away by his friend's example, he composed the book of which I was speaking to your grace." "What's the name of it?" "The Supplication of the Beggars."—"Where did you see it?"—"At two of your tradespeople's, George Elyot and George Robinson; if your grace desires it, they shall bring it you." The king appointed the day and the hour. The book was written for the king, and every body read it but the king himself. At the appointed day, Moddis appeared with Elyot and Robinson, who were not entirely without fear, as they might be accused of proselytism even in the royal palace. The king received them in his private apartments. "What do you want," he said to them. "Sir," replied one of the merchants, "we are come about an extraordinary book that is addressed to you." "Can one of you read it to me?"—"Yes, if it so please your grace," replied Elyot. "You may repeat the contents from memory," rejoined the king … "but, no, read it all; that will be better. I am ready." Elyot began, "The Supplication of the Beggars."

"To the king our sovereign lord,—

"Most lamentably complaineth of their woeful misery, unto your highness, your poor daily bedesmen, the wretched hideous monsters, on whom scarcely, for horror, any eye dare look; the foul unhappy sort of lepers and other sore people, needy, impotent, blind, lame, and sick, that live only by alms; how that their number is daily sore increased, that all the alms of all the well-disposed people of this your realm are not half enough to sustain them, but that for very constraint they die for hunger.

"And this most pestilent mischief is come upon your said poor bedesmen, by the reason that there hath, in the time of your noble predecessors, craftily crept into this your realm, another sort, not of

impotent, but of strong, puissant, and counterfeit, holy and idle beggars and vagabonds, who by all the craft and wiliness of Satan are now increased not only into a great number, but also into a kingdom."

Henry was very attentive: Elyot continued:

"These are not the shepherds, but the ravenous wolves going in shepherds' clothing, devouring the flock: bishops, abbots, priors, deacons, archdeacons, suffragans, priests, monks, canons, friars, pardoners, and sumners.… The goodliest lordships, manors, lands, and territories are theirs. Besides this, they have the tenth part of all the corn, meadow, pasture, grass, wood, colts, calves, lambs, pigs, geese, and chickens. Over and besides, the tenth part of every servant's wages, the tenth part of wool, milk, honey, wax, cheese, and butter. The poor wives must be accountable to them for every tenth egg, or else she getteth not her rights [i.e. absolution] at Easter.… Finally what get they in a year? Summa totalis: £430,333, 6s. 8d. sterling, whereof not four hundred years past they had not a penny.…

"What subjects shall be able to help their prince, that be after this fashion yearly polled? What good Christian people can be able to succour us poor lepers, blind, sore and lame, that be thus yearly oppressed?… The ancient Romans had never been able to have put all the whole world under their obeisance, if they had had at home such an idle sort of cormorants." No subject could have been found more likely to captivate the king's attention. "And what doth all this greedy sort of sturdy idle holy thieves with their yearly exactions that they take of the people? Truly nothing, but translate all rule, power, lordship, authority, obedience, and dignity from your grace unto them. Nothing, but that all your subjects should fall into disobedience and rebellion.… Priests and doves make foul houses; and if you will ruin a state, set up in it the pope with his monks and clergy.… Send these sturdy loobies abroad in the world to take them wives of their own, and to get their living with their labour in the sweat of their faces.… Then shall your commons increase in riches; then shall matrimony be much better kept; then shall not your sword, power, crown, dignity, and obedience of your people be translated from you." When Elyot had finished reading, the king was silent, sunk in thought. The true cause of the ruin of the state had been laid before him; but Henry's mind was not ripe for these important truths. At last he said, with an uneasy manner: "If a man who desires to pull down an old wall, begins at the bottom, I fear the upper part may chance to fall on his head." Thus then, in the king's eyes, Fish by attacking the priests was disturbing the foundations of religion and society. After this royal verdict, Henry rose, took the book, locked it up in his desk, and forbade the two merchants to reveal to any one the fact of their having read it to him.

Shortly after the king had received this copy, on Wednesday the 2nd of February, the feast of Candlemas, a number of persons, including the king himself, were to take part in the procession, bearing wax tapers in their hands. During the night this famous invective was scattered about all the streets through which the procession had to pass. The cardinal ordered the pamphlet to be seized, and immediately waited upon the king. The latter put his hand under his robe, and with a smile took out the so much dreaded work, and then, as if satisfied with this proof of independence, he gave it up to the cardinal.

While Wolsey replied to Fish by confiscation, Sir Thomas More with greater liberality, desiring that press should reply to press, published The Supplications of the Souls in Purgatory. "Suppress,"

said they, “the pious stipends paid to the monks, and then Luther’s gospel will come in, Tyndale’s testament will be read, heresy will preach, fasts will be neglected, the saints will be blasphemed, God will be offended, virtue will be mocked of, vice will run riot, and England will be peopled with beggars and thieves.” The Souls in Purgatory then call the author of the Beggars’ Supplication “a goose, an ass, a mad dog.” Thus did superstition degrade More’s noble genius. Notwithstanding the abuse of the souls in purgatory, the New Testament was daily read more and more in England.

CHAPTER II The two Authorities—Commencement of the Search—Garret at Oxford—His flight—His Return and Imprisonment—Escapes and takes Refuge with Dalaber—Garret and Dalaber at Prayer—The Magnificat—Surprise among the Doctors—Clark’s advice—Fraternal Love at Oxford—Alarm of Dalaber—His Arrest and Examination—He is Tortured—Garret and Twenty Fellows imprisoned—The Cellar—Condemnation and Humiliation.

Wolsey did not stop with Fish’s book. It was not that “miserable pamphlet” only that it was necessary to hunt down; the New Testament in English had entered the kingdom by surprise; there was the danger. The gospellers, who presumed to emancipate man from the priests, and put him in absolute dependence on God, did precisely the reverse of what Rome demands. The cardinal hastened to assemble the bishops, and these (particularly Warham and Tonstall, who had long enjoyed the jests launched against superstition) took the matter seriously when they were shown that the New Testament was circulating throughout England. These priests believed with Wolsey, that the authority of the pope and of the clergy was a dogma to which all others were subordinate. They saw in the reform an uprising of the human mind, a desire of thinking for themselves, of judging freely the doctrines and institutions, which the nations had hitherto received humbly from the hands of the priests. The new doctors justified their attempt at enfranchisement by substituting a new authority for the old. It was the New Testament that compromised the absolute power of Rome. It must be seized and destroyed, said the bishops. London, Oxford, and above all Cambridge, those three haunts of heresy, must be carefully searched. Definitive orders were issued on Saturday, 3rd February, 1526, and the work began immediately. The first visit of the inquisitors was to Honey Lane, to the house of the curate of All Hallows. They did not find Garret; they sought after him at Monmouth’s, and throughout the city, but he could not be met with. “He is gone to Oxford to sell his detestable wares,” the inquisitors were informed, and they set off after him immediately, determined to burn the evangelist and his books; “so burning hot,” says an historian, “was the charity of these holy fathers.” On Tuesday, the 6th of February, Garret was quietly selling his books at Oxford, and carefully noting down his sales in his register, when two of his friends ran to him exclaiming, “Fly! or else you will be taken before the cardinal, and thence … to the Tower.” The poor curate was greatly agitated. “From whom did you learn that?”—“From Master Cole, the clerk of the assembly, who is deep in the cardinal’s favour.” Garret, who saw at once that the affair was serious, hastened to Anthony Dalaber, who held the stock of the Holy Scriptures at Oxford; others followed him; the news had spread rapidly, and those who had bought the book were seized with alarm, for they knew by the history of the Lollards what the Romish clergy could do. They took counsel together. The brethren, “for so did we not only call one another, but were indeed one to another,” says Dalaber, decided that Garret should change his name; that Dalaber should give him a letter for his brother, the rector of Stalbridge, in Dorsetshire, who was in want of a curate; and that, once in this parish, he should seek the first opportunity of crossing the sea. The rector was in truth a “mad papist” (it is Dalaber’s expression), but that did not alter their

resolution. They knew of no other resource. Anthony wrote to him hurriedly; and, on the morning of the 7th of February, Garret left Oxford without being observed.

Having provided for Garret's safety, Dalaber next thought of his own. He carefully concealed in a secret recess of his chamber, at St Alban's Hall, Tyndale's Testament, and the works of Luther, Œcolampadius, and others, on the word of God. Then, disgusted with the scholastic sophisms which he heard in that college, he took with him the New Testament and the Commentary on the gospel of St. Luke, by Lambert of Avignon, the second edition of which had just been published at Strasburg, and went to Gloucester college, where he intended to study the civil law, not caring to have any thing more to do with the church.

During this time, poor Garret was making his way into Dorsetshire. His conscience could not bear the idea of being, although for a short time only, the curate of a bigoted priest,—of concealing his faith, his desires, and even his name. He felt more wretched, although at liberty, than he could have been in Wolsey's prisons. It is better, he said within himself, to confess Christ before the judgment seat, than to seem to approve of the superstitious practices I detest. He went forward a little, then stopped—and then resumed his course. There was a fierce struggle between his fears and his conscience. At length, after a day and a half spent in doubt, his conscience prevailed; unable to endure any longer the anguish that he felt, he retraced his steps, returned to Oxford, which he entered on Friday evening, and lay down calmly in his bed. It was barely past midnight when Wolsey's agents, who had received information of his return, arrived, and dragged him from his bed, and delivered him up to Dr. Cottisford, the commissary of the university. The latter locked him up in one of his rooms, while London and Higdon, dean of Frideswide, "two arch papists" (as the chronicler terms them), announced this important capture to the cardinal. They thought popery was saved, because a poor curate had been taken.

Dalaber, engaged in preparing his new room at Gloucester college, had not perceived all this commotion. On Saturday, at noon, having finished his arrangements, he double-locked his door, and began to read the Gospel according to St. Luke. All of a sudden he hears a knock. Dalaber made no reply; it is no doubt the commissary's officers. A louder knock was given; but he still remained silent. Immediately after, there was a third knock, as if the door would be beaten in. "Perhaps somebody wants me," thought Dalaber. He laid his book aside, opened the door, and to his great surprise saw Garret, who, with alarm in every feature, exclaimed, "I am a lost man! They have caught me!" Dalaber, who thought his friend was with his brother at Stalbridge, could not conceal his astonishment, and at the same time he cast an uneasy glance on a stranger who accompanied Garret. He was one of the college servants who had led the fugitive curate to Dalaber's new room. As soon as this man had gone away, Garret told Anthony everything: "Observing that Dr. Cottisford and his household had gone to prayers, I put back the bolt of the lock with my finger … and here I am." … "Alas! Master Garret," replied Dalaber, "the imprudence you committed in speaking to me before that young man has ruined us both!" At these words, Garret, who had resumed his fear of the priests, now that his conscience was satisfied, exclaimed with a voice interrupted by sighs and tears: "For mercy's sake, help me! Save me!" Without waiting for an answer, he threw off his frock and hood, begged Anthony to give him a sleeved coat, and thus disguised, he said: "I will escape into Wales, and from there, if possible, to Germany and Luther."

Garret checked himself; there was something to be done before he left. The two friends fell on their knees and prayed together; they called upon God to lead his servant to a secure retreat. That done, they embraced each other, their faces bathed with tears, and unable to utter a word.

Silent on the threshold of his door, Dalaber followed both with eyes and ears his friend's retreating footsteps. Having heard him reach the bottom of the stairs, he returned to his room, locked the door, took out his New Testament, and placing it before him, read on his knees the tenth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew, breathing many a heavy sigh: … Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake … but fear them not; the very hairs of your head are all numbered. This reading having revived his courage, Anthony, still on his knees, prayed fervently for the fugitive and for all his brethren: "O God, by thy Holy Spirit endue with heavenly strength this tender and new-born little flock in Oxford. Christ's heavy cross is about to be laid on the weak shoulders of thy poor sheep. Grant that they may bear it with godly patience and unflinching zeal!"

Rising from his knees, Dalaber put away his book, folded up Garret's hood and frock, placed them among his own clothes, locked his room door, and proceeded to the Cardinal's College, (now Christ Church,) to tell Clark and the other brethren what had happened. They were in chapel: the evening service had begun; the dean and canons, in full costume, were chanting in the choir. Dalaber stopped at the door listening to the majestic sounds of the organ at which Taverner presided, and to the harmonious strains of the choristers. They were singing the Magnificat: My soul doth magnify the Lord.… He hath holpen his servant Israel. It seemed to Dalaber that they were singing Garret's deliverance. But his voice could not join in their song of praise. "Alas!" he exclaimed, "all my singing and music is turned into sighing and musing." As he listened, leaning against the entrance into the choir, Dr. Cottisford, the university commissary, arrived with hasty step, "bare headed, and as pale as ashes." He passed Anthony without noticing him, and going straight to the dean appeared to announce some important and unpleasant news. "I know well the cause of his sorrow," thought Dalaber as he watched every gesture. The commissary had scarcely finished his report when the dean arose, and both left the choir with undisguised confusion. They had only reached the middle of the anti-chapel when Dr. London ran in, puffing and chafing and stamping, "like a hungry and greedy lion seeking his prey." All three stopped, questioned each other, and deplored their misfortune. Their rapid and eager movements indicated the liveliest emotion; London above all could not restrain himself. He attacked the commissary, and blamed him for his negligence, so that at last Cottisford burst into tears. "Deeds, not tears," said the fanatical London; and forthwith they despatched officers and spies along every road.

Anthony having left the chapel hurried to Clark's to tell him of the escape of his friend. "We are walking in the midst of wolves and tigers," replied Clark; "prepare for persecution. Prudentia serpentina et simplicitas columbina (the wisdom of serpents and the harmlessness of doves) must be our motto. O God, give us the courage these evil times require." All in the little flock were delighted at Garret's deliverance. Sumner and Betts, who had come in, ran off to tell it to the other brethren in the College, and Dalaber hastened to Corpus Christi. All these pious young men felt themselves to be soldiers in the same army, travellers in the same company, brothers in the same family. Fraternal love nowhere shone so brighly in the days of the Reformation as among the Christians of Great Britain. This is a feature worthy of notice.

Fitzjames, Udal, and Diet were met together in the rooms of the latter, at Corpus Christi college, when Dalaber arrived. They ate their frugal meal, with downcast eyes and broken voices, conversing of Oxford, of England, and of the perils hanging over them. Then rising from table they fell on their knees, called upon God for aid, and separated, Fitzjames taking Dalaber with him to St. Alban's Hall. They were afraid that the servant of Gloucester College had betrayed him. The disciples of the gospel at Oxford passed the night in great anxiety. Garret's flight, the rage of the priests, the dangers of the rising church, the roaring of a storm that filled the air and re-echoed through the long cloisters—all impressed them with terror. On Sunday the 11th of February, Dalaber, who was stirring at five in the morning, set out for his room in Gloucester College. Finding the gates shut, he walked up and down beneath the walls in the mud, for it had rained all night. As he paced to and fro along the solitary street in the obscure dawn, a thousand thoughts alarmed his mind. It was known, he said to himself, that he had taken part in Garret's flight; he would be arrested, and his friend's escape would be revenged on him. He was weighed down by sorrow and alarm; he sighed heavily;2 he imagined he saw Wolsey's commissoners demanding the names of his accomplices, and pretending to draw up a proscription list at his dictation; he recollected that on more than one occasion cruel priests had extorted from the Lollards the names of their brethren, and terrified at the possibility of such a crime, he exclaimed; "O God, I swear to thee that I will accuse no man, … I will tell nothing but what is perfectly well known." At last, after an hour of anguish, he was able to enter the college. He hastened in, but when he tried to open his door, he found that the lock had been picked. The door gave way to a strong push, and what a sight met his eyes! his bedstead overturned, the blankets scattered on the floor, his clothes all confusion in his wardrobe, his study broken into and left open. He doubted not that Garret's dress had betrayed him; and he was gazing at this sad spectacle in alarm, when a monk who occupied the adjoining rooms came and told him what had taken place: "The commissary and two proctors, armed with swords and bills, broke open your door in the middle of the night. They pierced your bed-straw through and through to make sure Garret was not hidden there; they carefully searched every nook and corner, but were not able to discover any traces of the fugitive." At these words Dalaber breathed again … but the monk had not ended. "I have orders," he added, "to send you to the prior." Anthony Dunstan, the prior, was a fanatical and avaricious monk; and the confusion into which this message threw Dalaber was so great, that he went just as he was, all bespattered with mud, to the rooms of his superior. The prior, who was standing with his face towards the door, looked at Dalaber from head to foot as he came in. "Where did you pass the night?" he asked. "At St. Alban's Hall with Fitzjames." The prior with a gesture of incredulity continued: "Was not Master Garret with you yesterday?"—"Yes."—"Where is he now?"—"I do not know." During this examination, the prior had remarked a large double gilt silver ring on Anthony's finger, with the initials A. D. "Show me that," said the prior. Dalaber gave him the ring, and the prior believing it to be of solid gold, put it on his own finger, adding with a cunning leer: "This ring is mine: it bears my name. A is for Anthony, and D for Dunstan." "Would to God," thought Dalaber, "that I were as well delivered from his company, as I am sure of being delivered of my ring" At this moment the chief beadle, with two or three of the commissary's men, entered and conducted Dalaber to the chapel of Lincoln college, where three ill-omened figures were standing beside the altar: they were Cottisford, London, and Higdon. "Where is Garret?" asked London; and pointing to his disordered dress, he continued: "Your shoes and garments covered with mud prove that you have been out all night with him. If you do not say where you have taken him, you will be sent to the

Tower."—"Yes," added Higdon, "to Little-ease [one of the most horrible dungeons in the prison,] and you will be put to the torture, do you hear?" Then the three doctors spent two hours attempting to shake the young man by flattering promises and frightful threats; but all was useless. The commissary then gave a sign, the officers stepped forward, and the judges ascended a narrow staircase leading to a large room situated above the commissary's chamber. Here Dalaber was deprived of his purse and girdle, and his legs were placed in the stocks, so that his feet were almost as high as his head. When that was done, the three doctors devoutly went to mass.

Poor Anthony, left alone in this frightful position, recollected the warning Clark had given him two years before. He groaned heavily and cried to God: "O Father! that my suffering may be for thy glory, and for the consolation of my brethren! Happen what may, I will never accuse one of them." After this noble protest, Anthony felt an increase of peace in his heart; but a new sorrow was reserved for him.

Garret, who had directed his course westwards, with the intention of going to Wales, had been caught at Hinksey, a short distance from Oxford. He was brought back, and thrown into the dungeon in which Dalaber had been placed after the torture. Their gloomy presentiments were to be more than fulfilled. In fact Wolsey was deeply irritated at seeing the college [Christ Church], which he had intended should be "the most glorious in the world," made the haunt of heresy, and the young men, whom he had so carefully chosen, become distributors of the New Testament. By favouring literature, he had had in view the triumph of the clergy, and literature had on the contrary served to the triumph of the Gospel. He issued his orders without delay, and the university was filled with terror. John Clark, John Fryth, Henry Sumner, William Betts, Richard Taverner, Richard Cox, Michael Drumn, Godfrey Harman, Thomas Lawney, Radley, and others besides of Cardinal's College; Udal, Diet, and others of Corpus Christi; Eden and several of his friends of Magdalene; Goodman, William Bayley, Robert Ferrar, John Salisbury of Gloucester, Barnard, and St. Mary's Colleges; were seized and thrown into prison. Wolsey had promised them glory; he gave them a dungeon, hoping in this manner to save the power of the priests, and to repress that awakening of truth and liberty which was spreading from the continent to England.

Under Cardinal's College there was a deep cellar sunk in the earth, in which the butler kept his salt fish. Into this hole these young men, the choice of England, were thrust. The dampness of this cave, the corrupted air they breathed, the horrible smell given out by the fish, seriously affected the prisoners, already weakened by study. Their hearts were bursting with groans, their faith was shaken, and the most mournful scenes followed each other in this foul dungeon. The wretched captives gazed on one another, wept, and prayed. This trial was destined to be a salutary one to them: "Alas!" said Fryth on a subsequent occasion, "I see that besides the word of God, there is indeed a second purgatory … but it is not that invented by Rome; it is the cross of tribulation to which God has nailed us." At last the prisoners were taken out one by one and brought before their judges; two only were released. The first was Betts, afterwards chaplain to Anne Boleyn: they had not been able to find any prohibited books in his room, and he pleaded his cause with great talent. The other was Taverner; he had hidden Clark's books under his school-room floor, where they had been discovered; but his love for the arts saved him: "Pshaw! he is only a musician," said the cardinal.

All the rest were condemned. A great fire was kindled at the top of the market-place; a long procession was marshalled, and these unfortunate men were led out, each bearing a fagot. When they came near the fire, they were compelled to throw into it the heretical books that had been found in their rooms, after which they were taken back to their noisome prison. There seemed to be a barbarous pleasure in treating these young and generous men so vilely. In other countries also, Rome was preparing to stifle in the flames the noblest geniuses of France, Spain, and Italy. Such was the reception letters and the Gospel met with from popery in the sixteenth century.

Every plant of God's must be beaten by the wind, even at the risk of its being uprooted; if it receives only the gentle rays of the sun, there is reason to fear that it will dry up and wither before it produces fruit. Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. There was to arise one day a real church in England, for the persecution had begun.

We have to contemplate still further trials.

CHAPTER III

Persecution at Cambridge—Barnes arrested—A grand Search—Barnes at Wolsey's Palace—Interrogated by the Cardinal—Conversation between Wolsey and Barnes—Barnes threatened with the Stake—His Fall and public Penance—Richard Bayfield—His Faith and Imprisonment—Visits Cambridge—Joins Tyndale—The Confessors in the Cellar at Oxford—Four of them die—The rest liberated.

Cambridge, which had produced Latimer, Bilney, Stafford, and Barnes, had at first appeared to occupy the front rank in the English reformation. Oxford by receiving the crown of persecution seemed now to have outstripped the sister university. And yet Cambridge was to have its share of suffering. The investigation had begun at Oxford on Monday the 5th of February, and on the very same day two of Wolsey's creatures, Dr. Capon, one of his chaplains, and Gibson, a sergeant-at-arms, notorious for his arrogance, left London for Cambridge. Submission, was the pass-word of popery. "Yes, submission," was responded from every part of Christendom by men of sincere piety and profound understanding; "submission to the legitimate authority against which Roman-catholicism has rebelled." According to their views the traditionalism and pelagianism of the Romish church had set up the supremacy of fallen reason in opposition to the divine supremacy of the word and of grace. The external and apparent sacrifice of self which Roman-catholicism imposes,—obedience to a confessor or to the pope, arbitrary penance, ascetic practices, and celibacy,—only served to create, and so to strengthen and perpetuate, a delusion as to the egotistic preservation of a sinful personality. When the Reformation proclaimed liberty, so far as regarded ordinances of human invention, it was with the view of bringing man's heart and life into subjection to their real Sovereign. The reign of God was commencing; that of the priests must needs come to an end. No man can serve two masters. Such were the important truths which gradually dawned upon the world, and which it became necessary to extinguish without delay. On the day after their arrival in Cambridge, on Tuesday the 6th of February, Capon and Gibson went to the convocation house, where several of the doctors were talking together. Their appearance caused some anxiety among the spectators, who looked upon the strangers with distrust. On a sudden Gibson moved forward, put his hand on Barnes, and arrested him in the presence of his friends. The latter were frightened, and this was what the sergeant wanted. "What!" said they, "the prior of the Augustines, the restorer of letters in Cambridge, arrested by a

sergeant!" This was not all. Wolsey's agents were to seize the books come from Germany, and their owners; Bilney, Latimer, Stafford, Arthur, and their friends, were all to be imprisoned, for they possessed the New Testament. Thirty members of the university were pointed out as suspected; and some miserable wretches, who had been bribed by the inquisitors, offered to show the place in every room where the prohibited books were hidden. But while the necessary preparations were making for this search, Bilney, Latimer, and their colleagues, being warned in time, got the books removed; they were taken away not only by the doors but by the windows, even by the roofs, and anxious inquiry was made for sure places in which they could be concealed. This work was hardly ended, when the vice-chancellor of the university, the sergeant-at-arms, Wolsey's chaplain, the proctors, and the informers began their rounds. They opened the first room, entered, searched, and found nothing. They passed on to the second, there was nothing. The sergeant was astonished, and grew angry. On reaching the third room, he ran directly to the place that had been pointed out,—still there was nothing. The same thing occurred every where; never was inquisitor more mortified. He dared not lay hands on the persons of the evangelical doctors; his orders bore that he was to seize the books and their owners. But as no books were found, there could be no prisoners. Luckily there was one man (the prior of the Augustines) against whom there were particular charges. The sergeant promised to compensate himself at Barnes's expense for his useless labours. The next day Gibson and Capon set out for London with, Barnes. During this mournful journey the prior, in great agitation, at one time determined to brave all England, and at another trembled like a leaf. At last their journey was ended; the chaplain left his prisoner at Parnell's house, close by the stocks. Three students (Coverdale, Goodwin, and Field) had followed their master to cheer him with their tender affection. On Thursday (8th February) the sergeant conducted Barnes to the cardinal's palace at Westminster; the wretched prior, whose enthusiasm had given way to objection, waited all day before he could be admitted. What a day! Will no one come to his assistance? Doctor Gardiner, Wolsey's secretary, and Fox, his steward, both old friends of Barnes, passed through the gallery in the evening, and went up to the prisoner, who begged them to procure him an audience with the cardinal. When night had come, these officers introduced the prior into the room where their master was sitting, and Barnes, as was customary, fell on his knees before him. "Is this the Doctor Barnes who is accused of heresy?" asked Wolsey, in a haughty tone, of Fox and Gardiner. They replied in the affirmative. The cardinal then turning to Barnes, who was still kneeling, said to him ironically, and not without reason: "What, master doctor, had you not sufficient scope in the Scriptures to teach the people; but my golden shoes, my poleaxes, my pillars, my golden cushions, my crosses, did so sore offend you, that you must make us a laughing-stock, ridiculum caput, amongst the people? We were jollily that day laughed to scorn. Verily it was a sermon more fit to be preached on a stage than in a pulpit; for at the last you said I wore a pair of red gloves—I should say bloody gloves (quoth you) … Eh! what think you, master doctor?" Barnes, wishing to elude these embarrassing questions, answered vaguely: "I spoke nothing but the truth out of the Scriptures, according to my conscience and according to the old doctors." He then presented to the cardinal a statement of his teaching.

Wolsey received the papers with a smile: "Oh, ho!" said he as he counted the six sheets, "I perceive you intend to stand to your articles and to show your learning." "With the grace of God," said Barnes. Wolsey then began to read them, and stopped at the sixth article, which ran thus: "I will never believe that one man may, by the law of God, be bishop of two or three cities, yea, of a whole country, for it is contrary to St. Paul, who saith: I have left thee behind, to set in every city a

bishop." Barnes did not quote correctly, for the apostle says: "to ordain elders in every city." Wolsey was displeased at this thesis: "Ah! this touches me," he said: "Do you think it wrong (seeing the ordinance of the church) that one bishop should have so many cities underneath him?" "I know of no ordinance of the church," Barnes replied, "as concerning this thing, but Paul's saying only."

Although this controversy interested the cardinal, the personal attack of which he had to complain touched him more keenly. "Good," said Wolsey; and then with a condescension hardly to be expected from so proud a man, he deigned almost to justify himself. "You charge me with displaying a royal pomp; but do you not understand that, being called to represent his majesty, I must strive by these means to strike terror into the wicked?"—"It is not your pomp or your poleaxes," Barnes courageously answered, "that will save the king's person.… God will save him, who said: Per me reges regnant." Barnes, instead of profiting by the cardinal's kindness to present an humble justification, as Dean Colet had formerly done to Henry VIII, dared preach him a second sermon to his face. Wolsey felt the colour mount to his cheeks. "Well, gentlemen," said he, turning to Fox and Gardiner, "you hear him! Is this the wise and learned man of whom you spoke to me?" At these words both steward and secretary fell on their knees, saying: "My lord, pardon him for mercy's sake."—"Can you find ten or even six doctors of divinity willing to swear that you are free from heresy?" asked Wolsey. Barnes offered twenty honest men, quite as learned as himself, or even more so. "I must have doctors in divinity, men as old as yourself."—"That is impossible," said the prior. "In that case you must be burnt," continued the cardinal. "Let him be taken to the Tower." Gardiner and Fox offering to become his sureties, Wolsey permitted him to pass the night at Parnell's.

"It is no time to think of sleeping," said Barnes as he entered the house, "we must write." Those harsh and terrible words, you must be burnt, resounded continually in his ears. He dictated all night to his three young friends a defence of his articles. The next day he was taken before the chapter, at which Clarke, bishop of Bath, Standish, and other doctors were present. His judges laid before him a long statement, and said to him: "Promise to read this paper in public, without omitting or adding a single word." It was then read to him. "I would die first," was his reply. "Will you abjure or be burnt alive?" said his judges; "take your choice." The alternative was dreadful. Poor Barnes, a prey to the deepest agony, shrank at the thought of the stake; then, suddenly his courage revived, and he exclaimed: "I had rather be burnt than abjure." Gardiner and Fox did all they could to persuade him. "Listen to reason," said they craftily: "your articles are true; that is not the question. We want to know whether by your death you will let error triumph, or whether you would rather remain to defend the truth, when better days may come."

They entreated him; they put forward the most plausible motives; from time to time they uttered the terrible words, burnt alive! His blood froze in his veins; he knew not what he said or did … they placed a paper before him—they put a pen in his hand—his head was bewildered, he signed his name with a deep sigh. This unhappy man was destined at a later period to be a faithful martyr of Jesus Christ; but he had not yet learnt to "resist even unto blood." Barnes had fallen. On the following morning (Sunday, 11th February) a solemn spectacle was preparing at St. Paul's. Before daybreak, all were astir in the prison of the poor prior; and at eight o'clock, the knight-marshal with his tipstaves, and the warden of the Fleet prison, with his billmen, conducted Barnes to St. Paul's, along with four of the Hanse merchants who had first brought to London the New Testament of

Jesus Christ in English. The fifth of these pious merchants held an immense taper in his hands. A persevering search had discovered that it was these men to whom England was indebted for the so much dreaded book; their warehouses were surrounded and their persons arrested. On the top of St. Paul's steps was a platform, and on the platform a throne, and on the throne the cardinal, dressed in scarlet—like a "bloody antichrist," says the chronicler. On his head glittered the hat of which Barnes had spoken so ill; around him were thirty-six bishops, abbots, priors, and all his doctors, dressed in damask and satin; the vast cathedral was full. The bishop of Rochester having gone into a pulpit placed at the top of the steps, Barnes and the merchants, each bearing a faggot, were compelled to kneel and listen to a sermon intended to cure these poor creatures of that taste for insurrection against popery which was beginning to spread in every quarter. The sermon ended, the cardinal mounted his mule, took his station under a magnificent canopy, and rode off. After this Barnes and his five companions walked three times round a fire, lighted before the cross at the north gate of the cathedral. The dejected prior, with downcast head, dragged himself along, rather than walked. After the third turn, the prisoners threw their faggots into the flames; some "heretical" books also were flung in; and the bishop of Rochester having given absolution to the six penitents, they were led back to prison to be kept there during the lord cardinal's pleasure. Barnes could not weep now; the thought of his relapse, and of the effects so guilty an example might produce, had deprived him of all moral energy. In the month of August, he was led out of prison and confined in the Augustine convent.

Barnes was not the only man at Cambridge upon whom the blow had fallen. Since the year 1520, a monk named Richard Bayfield had been an inmate of the abbey of Bury St. Edmunds. His affability delighted every traveller. One day, when engaged as chamberlain in receiving Barnes, who had come to visit Doctor Ruffam, his fellow-student at Louvain, two men entered the convent. They were pious persons, and of great consideration in London, where they carried on the occupation of brick-making, and had risen to be wardens of their guild. Their names were Maxwell and Stacy, men "well grafted in the doctrine of Christ," says the historian, who had led many to the Saviour by their conversation and exemplary life. Being accustomed to travel once a-year through the counties to visit their brethren, and extend a knowledge of the Gospel, they used to lodge, according to the usages of the time, in the convents and abbeys. A conversation soon arose between Barnes, Stacy, and Maxwell, which struck the lay-brother. Barnes, who had observed his attention, gave him, as he was leaving the convent, a New Testament in Latin, and the two brick-makers added a New Testament in English, with The Wicked Mammon and The Obedience of a Christian Man. The lay-brother ran and hid the books in his cell, and for two years read them constantly. At last he was discovered, and reprimanded; but he boldly confessed his faith. Upon this the monks threw him into prison, set him in the stocks, put a gag in his mouth, and cruelly whipped him, to prevent his speaking of grace. The unhappy Bayfield remained nine months in this condition. When Barnes repeated his visit to Bury at a later period, he did not find the amiable chamberlain at the gates of the abbey. Upon inquiry he learnt his condition, and immediately took steps to procure his deliverance. Dr. Ruffam came to his aid: "Give him to me," said Barnes, "I will take him to Cambridge." The prior of the Augustines was at that time held in high esteem; his request was granted, in the hope that he would lead back Bayfield to the doctrines of the church. But the very reverse took place: intercourse with the Cambridge brethren strengthened the young monk's faith. On a sudden his happiness vanished. Barnes, his friend and benefactor, was carried to London, and the monks of Bury St. Edmunds, alarmed at the noise this affair created,

summoned him to return to the abbey. But Bayfield, resolving to submit to their yoke no longer, went to London, and lay concealed at Maxwell and Stacy's. One day, having left his hiding-place, he was crossing Lombard Street, when he met a priest named Pierson and two other religious of his order, with whom he entered into a conversation which greatly scandalized them. "You must depart forthwith," said Maxwell and Stacy to him on his return. Bayfield received a small sum of money from them, went on board a ship, and as soon as he reached the continent, hastened to find Tyndale. During this time scenes of a very different nature from those which had taken place at Cambridge, but not less heart-rending, were passing at Oxford. The storm of persecution was raging there with more violence than at Cambridge. Clark and the other confessors of the name of Christ were still confined in their under-ground prison. The air they breathed, the food they took (and they ate nothing but salt fish), the burning thirst this created, the thoughts by which they were agitated, all together combined to crush these noble-hearted men. Their bodies wasted day by day; they wandered like spectres up and down their gloomy cellar. Those animated discussions in which the deep questions then convulsing Christendom were so eloquently debated were at an end; they were like shadow meeting shadow. Their hollow eyes cast a vague and haggard glance on one another, and after gazing for a moment, they passed on without speaking. Clark, Sumner, Bayley, and Goodman, consumed by fever, feebly crawled along, leaning against their dungeon walls. The first, who was also the eldest, could not walk without the support of one of his fellow-prisoners. Soon he was quite unable to move, and lay stretched upon the damp floor. The brethren gathered round him, sought to discover in his features whether death was not about to cut short the days of him who had brought many of them to the knowledge of Christ. They repeated to him slowly the words of Scripture, and then knelt down by his side and uttered a fervent prayer.

Clark, feeling his end draw near, asked for the communion. The jailors conveyed his request to their master; the noise of the bolts was soon heard, and a turnkey, stepping into the midst of the disconsolate band, pronounced a cruel no! On hearing this, Clark looked towards heaven, and exclaimed with a father of the church: Crede et manducasti, Believe and thou hast eaten. He was lost in thought: he contemplated the crucified Son of God; by faith he ate and drank the flesh and blood of Christ, and experienced in his inner life the strengthening action of the Redeemer. Men might refuse him the host, but Jesus had given him his body; and from that hour he felt strengthened by a living union with the King of heaven. Not alone did Clark descend into the shadowy valley: Sumner, Bayley, and Goodman were sinking rapidly. Death, the gloomy inhabitant of this foul prison, had taken possession of these four friends. Their brethren addressed fresh solicitations to the cardinal, at that time closely occupied in negotiations with France, Rome, and Venice. He found means, however, to give a moment to the Oxford martyrs; and just as these Christians were praying over their four dying companions, the commissioner came and informed them, that "his lordship, of his great goodness, permitted the sick persons to be removed to their own chambers." Litters were brought, on which the dying men were placed and carried to their rooms;2 the doors were closed again upon those whose lives this frightful dungeon had not yet attacked.

It was the middle of August. The wretched men who had passed six months in the cellar were transported in vain to their chambers and their beds; several members of the university ineffectually tried by their cares and their tender charity to recall them to life. It was too late. The

severities of popery had killed these noble witnesses. The approach of death soon betrayed itself; their blood grew cold, their limbs stiff, and their bedimmed eyes sought only Jesus Christ, their everlasting hope. Clark, Sumner, and Bayley died in the same week. Goodman followed close upon them. This unexpected catastrophe softened Wolsey. He was cruel only as far as his interest and the safety of the church required. He feared that the death of so many young men would raise public opinion against him, or that these catastrophes would damage his college; perhaps even some sentiment of humanity may have touched his heart. “Set the rest at liberty,” he wrote to his agents, “but upon condition that they do not go above ten miles from Oxford.” The university beheld these young men issue from their living tomb pale, wasted, weak, and with faltering steps. At that time they were not men of mark; it was their youth that touched the spectators’ hearts; but in after-years they all occupied an important place in the church. They were Cox, who became Bishop of Ely, and tutor to Edward the Prince Royal; Drumm, who under Cranmer became one of the six preachers at Canterbury; Udal, afterwards master of Westminster and Eton schools; Salisbury, dean of Norwich, and then bishop of Sodor and Man, who in all his wealth and greatness often recalled his frightful prison at Oxford as a title to glory; Ferrar, afterwards Cranmer’s chaplain, bishop of St. David’s, and a martyr even unto death, after an interval of thirty years; Fryth, Tyndale’s friend, to whom this deliverance proved only a delay; and several others. When they came forth from their terrible dungeon, their friends ran up to them, supported their faltering steps, and embraced them amidst floods of tears. Fryth quitted the university not long after and went to Flanders. Thus was the tempest stayed which had so fearfully ravaged Oxford. But the calm was of no long duration; an unexpected circumstance became perilous to the cause of the Reformation.

CHAPTER IV

Luther’s Letter to the King—Henry’s Anger—His Reply—Luther’s Resolution—Persecutions—Barnes escapes—Proclamations against the New Testament—W. Roy to Caiaphas—Third Edition of the New Testament—The Triumph of Law and Liberty—Hacket attacks the Printer—Hacket’s Complaints—A Seizure—The Year 1526 in England.

Henry was still under the impression of the famous Supplication of the Beggars, when Luther’s interference increased his anger. The letter which, at the advice of Christiern, king of Denmark, this reformer had written to him in September 1525, had miscarried. The Wittemberg doctor hearing nothing of it, had boldly printed it, and sent a copy to the king. “I am informed,” said Luther, “that your Majesty is beginning to favour the Gospel, and to be disgusted with the perverse race that fights against it in your noble kingdom.… It is true that, according to Scripture, the kings of the earth take counsel together against the Lord, and we cannot, consequently, expect to see them favourable to the truth. How fervently do I wish that this miracle may be accomplished in the person of your Majesty.”

We may imagine Henry’s wrath as he read this letter. “What!” said he, “does this apostate monk dare print a letter addressed to us, without having even sent it, or at the least without knowing if we have ever received it?… And as if that were not enough, he insinuates that we are among his partisans.… He wins over also one or two wretches, born in our kingdom, and engages them to translate the New Testament into English, adding thereto certain prefaces and poisonous glosses.” Thus spoke Henry. The idea that his name should be associated with that of the

Wittemberg monk called all the blood into his face. He will reply right royally to such unblushing impudence. He summoned Wolsey forthwith. “Here!” said he, pointing to a passage concerning the prelate, “here! read what is said of you!” And then he read aloud: “Illud monstrum et publicum odium Dei et hominum, cardinalis Eboracensis, pestis illa regni tui. You see, my lord, you are a monster, an object of hatred both to God and man, the scourge of my kingdom!” The king had hitherto allowed the bishops to do as they pleased, and observed a sort of neutrality. He now determined to lay it aside and begin a crusade against the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but he must first answer this impertinent letter. He consulted Sir Thomas More, shut himself in his closet, and dictated to his secretary a reply to the reformer: “You are ashamed of the book you have written against me,” he said, “I would counsel you to be ashamed of all that you have written. They are full of disgusting errors and frantic heresies; and are supported by the most audacious obstinacy. Your venemous pen mocks the church, insults the fathers, abuses the saints, despises the apostles, dishonours the holy virgin, and blasphemes God, by making him the author of evil.… And after all that, you claim to be an author whose like does not exist in the world!”

“You offer to publish a book in my praise.… I thank you!… You will praise me most by abusing me; you will dishonour me beyond measure if you praise me. I say with Seneca: Tam turpe tibi sit laudari a turpibus, quam si lauderis ob turpia.” This letter, written by the king of the English to the king of the heretics, was immediately circulated throughout England bound up with Luther’s epistle. Henry, by publishing it, put his subjects on their guard against the unfaithful translations of the New Testament, which were besides about to be burnt everywhere. “The grapes seem beautiful,” he said, “but beware how you wet your lips with the wine made from them, for the adversary hath mingled poison with it.”

Luther, agitated by this rude lesson, tried to excuse himself. “I said to myself, There are twelve hours in the day. Who knows? perhaps I may find one lucky hour to gain the King of England. I therefore laid my humble epistle at his feet; but alas! the swine have torn it. I am willing to be silent … but as regards my doctrine, I cannot impose silence on it. It must cry aloud, it must bite. If any king imagines he can make me retract my faith, he is a dreamer. So long as one drop of blood remains in my body, I shall say no. Emperors, kings, the devil, and even the whole universe, cannot frighten me when faith is concerned. I claim to be proud, very proud, exceedingly proud. If my doctrine had no other enemies than the king of England, Duke George, the pope and their allies, all these soap-bubbles … one little prayer would long ago have worsted them all. Where are Pilate, Herod, and Caiaphas now? Where are Nero, Domitian, and Maximilian? Where are Arius, Pelagius, and Manes?—Where are they?… Where all our scribes and all our tyrants will soon be.—But Christ? Christ is the same always.

“For a thousand years the Holy Scriptures have not shone in the world with so much brightness as now. I wait in peace for my last hour; I have done what I could. O princes, my hands are clean from your blood; it will fall on your own heads.”

Bowing before the supreme royalty of Jesus Christ, Luther spoke thus boldly to King Henry, who contested the rights of the word of God. A letter written against the reformer was not enough for the bishops. Profiting by the wound Luther had inflicted on Henry’s self-esteem, they urged him to put down this revolt of the human understanding, which threatened (as they averred) both the popedom and the monarchy. They commenced the persecution. Latimer was summoned before

Wolsey, but his learning and presence of mind procured his dismissal. Bilney also, who had been ordered to London, received an injunction not to preach Luther's doctrines. "I will not preach Luther's doctrines, if there are any peculiar to him," he said; "but I can and I must preach the doctrine of Jesus Christ, although Luther should preach it too." And finally Garret, led into the presence of his judges, was seized with terror, and fell before the cruel threats of the bishop. When restored to liberty, he fled from place to place, endeavouring to hide his sorrow, and to escape from the despotism of the priests, awaiting the moment when he should give his life for Jesus Christ. The adversaries of the Reformation were not yet satisfied. The New Testament continued to circulate, and depots were formed in several convents. Barnes, a prisoner in the Augustine monastery in London, had regained his courage, and loved his Bible more and more. One day about the end of September, as three or four friends were reading in his chamber, two simple peasants, John Tyball and Thomas Hilles, natives of Bumpstead in Essex, came in. "How did you come to a knowledge of the truth?" asked Barnes. They drew from their pockets some old volumes containing the Gospels, and a few of the Epistles in English. Barnes returned them with a smile. "They are nothing," he told them, "in comparison with the new edition of the New Testament," a copy of which the two peasants bought for three shillings and two-pence. "Hide it carefully," said Barnes. When this came to the ears of the clergy, Barnes was removed to Northampton to be burnt at the stake; but he managed to escape; his friends reported that he was drowned; and while strict search was making for him during a whole week along the sea-coast, he secretly went on board a ship, and was carried to Germany. "The cardinal will catch him even now," said the bishop of London, "whatever amount of money it may cost him." When Barnes was told of this, he remarked: "I am a poor simple wretch, not worth the tenth penny they will give for me. Besides, if they burn me, what will they gain by it?… The sun and the moon, fire and water, the stars and the elements—yea, and also stones shall defend this cause against them, rather than the truth should perish." Faith had returned to Barnes's feeble heart. His escape added fuel to the wrath of the clergy. They proclaimed, throughout the length and breadth of England, that, the Holy Scriptures contained an infectious poison, and ordered a general search after the word of God. On the 24th of October, 1526, the bishop of London enjoined on his archdeacons to seize all translations of the New Testament in English with or without glosses; and, a few days later, the archbishop of Canterbury issued a mandate against all the books which should contain "any particle of the New Testament." The primate remembered that a spark was sufficient to kindle a large fire. On hearing of this order, William Roy, a sarcastic writer, published a violent satire, in which figured Judas (Standish), Pilate (Wolsey), and Caiaphas (Tonstall). The author exclaimed with energy:

God, of his goodness, grudged not to die, Man to deliver from deadly damnation; Whose will is, that we should know perfectly What he here hath done for our salvation.

O cruel Caiaphas! full of crafty conspiration, How durst thou give them false judgment To burn God's word—the Holy Testament. The efforts of Caiaphas and his colleagues were indeed useless: the priests were undertaking a work beyond their strength. If by some terrible revolution all social forms should be destroyed in the world, the living church of the elect, a divine institution in the midst of human institutions, would still exist by the power of God, like a rock in the midst of the tempest, and would transmit to future generations the seeds of Christian life and civilization. It is the same with the word, the creative principle of the church. It cannot perish here below. The

priests of England had something to learn on this matter.

While the agents of the clergy were carrying out the archiepiscopal mandate, and a merciless search was making everywhere for the New Testaments from Worms, a new edition was discovered, fresh from the press, of a smaller and more portable, and consequently more dangerous size. It was printed by Christopher Eyndhoven of Antwerp, who had consigned it to his correspondents in London. The annoyance of the priests was extreme, and Hackett, the agent of Henry VIII in the Low Countries, immediately received orders to get this man punished. “We cannot deliver judgment without inquiry into the matter,” said the lords of Antwerp; “we will therefore have the book translated into Flemish.” “God forbid,” said Hackett in alarm, “What! would you also on your side of the ocean translate this book into the language of the people?” “Well then,” said one of the judges, less conscientious than his colleagues, “let the king of England send us a copy of each of the books he has burnt, and we will burn them likewise.” Hackett wrote to Wolsey for them, and as soon as they arrived the court met again. Eyndhoven’s counsel called upon the prosecutor to point out the heresies contained in the volume. The margrave (an officer of the imperial government) shrank from the task, and said to Hackett, “I give up the business!” The charge against Eyndhoven was dismissed.

Thus did the Reformation awaken in Europe the slumbering spirit of law and liberty. By enfranchising thought from the yoke of popery, it prepared the way for other enfranchisements; and by restoring the authority of the word of God, it brought back the reign of the law among nations long the prey of turbulent passions and arbitrary power. Then, as at all times, religious society forestalled civil society, and gave it those two great principles of order and liberty, which popery compromises or annuls. It was not in vain that the magistrates of a Flemish city, enlightened by the first dawn of the Reformation, set so noble an example; the English, who were very numerous in the Hanse Towns, thus learnt once more the value of that civil and religious liberty which is the time-honoured right of England, and of which they were in after-years to give other nations the so much needed lessons.

“Well then,” said Hackett, who was annoyed at their setting the law above his master’s will, “I will go and buy all these books, and send them to the cardinal, that he may burn them.” With these words he left the court. But his anger evaporating, he set off for Malines to complain to the regent and her council of the Antwerp decision. “What!” said he, “you punish those who circulate false money, and you will not punish still more severely the man who coins it?—in this case, he is the printer.” “But that is just the point in dispute,” they replied; “we are not sure the money is false.”—“How can it be otherwise,” answered Henry’s agent, “since the bishops of England have declared it so?” The imperial government, which was not very favourably disposed towards England, ratified Eyndhoven’s acquittal, but permitted Hackett to burn all the copies of the New Testament he could seize. He hastened to profit by this concession, and began hunting after the Holy Scriptures, while the priests eagerly came to his assistance. In their view, as well as in that of their English colleagues, the supreme decision in matter of faith rested not with the word of God but with the pope; and the best means of securing this privilege to the pontiff was to reduce the Bible to ashes.

Notwithstanding these trials, the year 1526 was a memorable one for England. The English New Testament had been circulated from the shores of the Channel to the borders of Scotland, and the

Reformation had begun in that island by the word of God. The revival of the sixteenth century was in no country less than in England the emanation of a royal mandate. But God, who had disseminated the Scriptures over Britain, in defiance of the rulers of the nation, was about to make use of their passions to remove the difficulties which opposed the final triumph of his plans. We here enter upon a new phasis in the history of the Reformation; and having studied the work of God in the faith of the little ones, we proceed to contemplate the work of man in the intrigues of the great ones of the earth.

CHAPTER V

Wolsey desires to be revenged—The Divorce suggested—Henry's Sentiments towards the Queen—Wolsey's first Steps—Longland's Proceedings—Refusal of Margaret of Valois—Objection of the Bishop of Tarbes—Henry's uneasiness—Catherine's Alarm—Mission to Spain.

Wolsey, mortified at not being able to obtain the pontifical throne, to which he had so ardently aspired, and being especially irritated by the ill-will of Charles V, meditated a plan which, entirely unsuspected by him, was to lead to the enfranchisement of England from the papal yoke. "They laugh at me, and thrust me into the second rank," he had exclaimed. "So be it! I will create such a confusion in the world as has not been seen for ages.… I will do it, even should England be swallowed up in the tempest!" Desirous of exciting imperishable hatred between Henry VIII and Charles V, he had undertaken to break the marriage which Henry VII and Ferdinand the Catholic had planned to unite for ever their families and their crowns. His hatred of Charles was not his only motive. Catherine had reproached him for his dissolute life,2 and he had sworn to be revenged. There can be no doubt about Wolsey's share in the matter. "The first terms of the divorce were put forward by me," he told the French ambassador. "I did it," he added, "to cause a lasting separation between the houses of England and Burgundy." The best informed writers of the sixteenth century, men of the most opposite parties, Pole, Polydore, Virgil, Tyndale, Meteren, Pallavicini, Sanders, and Roper, More's son-in-law, all agree in pointing to Wolsey as the instigator of that divorce, which has become so famous. He desired to go still farther, and after inducing the king to put away his queen, he hoped to prevail on the pope to depose the emperor.2 It was not his passion for Anne Boleyn, as so many of the Romish fabulists have repeated; but the passion of a cardinal for the triple crown which gave the signal of England's emancipation. Offended pride is one of the most active principles of human nature.

Wolsey's design was a strange one, and difficult of execution, but not impossible. Henry was living apparently on the best terms with Catherine; on more than one occasion Erasmus had spoken of the royal family of England as the pattern of the domestic virtues. But the most ardent of Henry's desires was not satisfied; he had no son; those whom the queen had borne him had died in their infancy, and Mary alone survived. The deaths of these little children, at all times so heart-rending, were particularly so in the palace of Greenwich. It appeared to Catherine that the shade of the last Plantagenet, immolated on her marriage altar, came forth to seize one after another the heirs she gave to the throne of England, and to carry them away to his tomb. The queen shed tears almost unceasingly, and implored the divine mercy, while the king cursed his unhappy fate. The people seemed to share in the royal sorrow; and men of learning and piety (Longland was among their number) declared against the validity of the marriage. They said that "the papal dispensations had no force when in opposition to the law of God." Yet hitherto Henry had rejected every idea of a

divorce.4 The times had changed since 1509. The king had loved Catherine: her reserve, mildness, and dignity, had charmed him. Greedy of pleasure and applause, he was delighted to see his wife content to be the quiet witness of his joys and of his triumphs. But gradually the queen had grown older, her Spanish gravity had increased, her devout practices were multiplied, and her infirmities, become more frequent, had left the king no hope of having a son. From that hour, even while continuing to praise her virtues, Henry grew cold towards her person, and his love by degrees changed into repugnance. And then he thought that the death of his children might be a sign of God's anger. This idea had taken hold of him, and induced him to occupy apartments separate from the queen's.

Wolsey judged the moment favourable for beginning the attack. It was in the latter months of 1526, when calling Longland, the king's confessor, to him, and concealing his principal motive, he said: "You know his majesty's anguish. The stability of his crown and his everlasting salvation seem to be compromised alike. To whom can I unbosom myself, if not to you, who must know the inmost secrets of his soul?" The two bishops resolved to awaken Henry to the perils incurred by his union with Catherine; but Longland insisted that Wolsey should take the first steps. The cardinal waited upon the king, and reminded him of his scruples before the betrothal; he exaggerated those entertained by the nation, and speaking with unusual warmth, he entreated the king to remain no longer in such danger: "The holiness of your life and the legitimacy of your succession are at stake." "My good father," said Henry, "you would do well to consider the weight of the stone that you have undertaken to move.4 The queen is a woman of such exemplary life that I have no motive for separating from her." The cardinal did not consider himself beaten; three days later he appeared before the king accompanied by the bishop of Lincoln. "Most mighty prince," said the confessor, who felt bold enough to speak after the cardinal, "you cannot, like Herod, have your brother's wife. I exhort and conjure you, as having the care of your soul,6 to submit the matter to competent judges." Henry consented, and perhaps not unwillingly.

It was not enough for Wolsey to separate Henry from the emperor; he must, for greater security, unite him to Francis I. The King of England shall repudiate the aunt of Charles V, and then marry the sister of the French king. Proud of the success he had obtained in the first part of his plan, Wolsey entered upon the second. "There is a princess," he told the king, "whose birth, graces, and talents charm all Europe. Margaret of Valois, sister of King Francis, is superior to all of her sex, and no one is worthier of your alliance." Henry made answer that it was a serious matter, requiring deliberate examination. Wolsey, however, placed in the king's hands a portrait of Margaret, and it has been imagined that he even privily caused her sentiments to be sounded. Be that as it may, the sister of Francis I having learnt that she was pointed at as the future queen of England, rebelled at the idea of taking from an innocent woman a crown she had worn so nobly. "The French king's sister knows too much of Christ to consent unto such wickedness," said Tyndale.2 Margaret of Valois replied: "Let me hear no more of a marriage that can be effected only at the expense of Catherine of Aragon's happiness and life." The woman who was destined in future years to fill the throne of England was then residing at Margaret's court. Shortly after this, on the 24th of January 1527, the sister of Francis I, married Henry d'Albret, king of Navarre.

Henry VIII, desirous of information with regard to his favourite's suggestion, commissioned Fox, his almoner, Pace, dean of St. Paul's, and Wakefield, professor of Hebrew at Oxford, to study the passages of Leviticus and Deuteronomy which related to marriage with a brother's wife.

Wakefield, who had no wish to commit himself, asked whether Henry was for or against the divorce. Pace replied to this servile hebraist that the king wanted nothing but the truth. But who would take the first public step in an undertaking so hazardous? Every one shrank back; the terrible emperor alarmed them all. It was a French bishop that hazarded the step; bishops meet us at every turn in this affair of the divorce, with which bishops have so violently reproached the Reformation. Henry, desirous of excusing Wolsey, pretended afterwards that the objections of the French prelate had preceded those of Longland and the cardinal. In February 1527, Francis I, had sent an embassy to London, at the head of which was Gabriel de Grammont, bishop of Tarbes, with the intention to procure the hand of Mary of England. Henry's ministers having inquired whether the engagements of Francis with the queen dowager of Portugal did not oppose the commission with which the French bishop was charged, the latter answered: "I will ask you in turn what has been done to remove the impediments which opposed the marriage of which the Princess Mary is issue." They laid before the ambassador the dispensation of Julius II, which he returned, saying, that the bull was not sufficient, seeing that such a marriage was forbidden jure divino, and he added: "Have you English a different gospel from ours?"3 The king, when he heard these words (as he informs us himself), was filled with fear and horror. Three of the most respected bishops of Christendom united to accuse him of incest! He began to speak of it to certain individuals: "The scruples of my conscience have been terribly increased (he said) since the bishop spoke of this matter before my council in exceedingly plain words."5 There is no reason to believe that these terrible troubles of which the king speaks were a mere invention on his part. A disputed succession might again plunge England into civil war. Even if no pretenders should spring up, might they not sec a rival house, a French prince for instance, wedded to Henry's daughter, reigning over England? The king, in his anxiety, had recourse to his favourite author, Thomas Aquinas, and this angel of the schools declared his marriage unlawful. Henry next opened the Bible, and found this threat against the man who took his brother's wife: "He shall be childless!" The denunciation increased his trouble, for he had no heir. In the midst of this darkness a new perspective opened before him. His conscience might be unbound; his desire to have a younger wife might be gratified; he might have a son!… The king resolved to lay the matter before a commission of lawyers, and this commission soon wrote volumes.

During all this time Catherine, suspecting no evil, was occupied in her devotions. Her heart, bruised by the death of her children and by the king's coldness, sought consolation in prayer both privately and in the royal chapel. She would rise at midnight and kneel down upon the cold stones, and never missed any of the canonical services. But one day (probably in May or June 1527) some officious person informed her of the rumours circulating in the city and at court. Bursting with anger and alarm, and all in tears, she hastened to the king, and addressed him with the bitterest complaints. Henry was content to calm her by vague assurances; but the unfeeling Wolsey, troubling himself still less than his master about Catherine's emotion, called it, with a smile, "a short tragedy." The offended wife lost no time: it was necessary that the emperor should be informed promptly, surely, and accurately of this unprecedented insult. A letter would be insufficient, even were it not intercepted. Catherine therefore determined to send her servant Francis Philip, a Spaniard, to her nephew; and to conceal the object of his journey, they proceeded, after the tragedy, to play a comedy in the Spanish style. "My mother is sick and desires to see me," said Philip. Catherine begged the king to refuse her servant's prayer; and Henry, divining the stratagem, resolved to employ trick against trick. "Philip's request is very

proper," he made answer; and Catherine, from regard to her husband, consented to his departure. Henry meantime had given orders that, "notwithstanding any safe conduct, the said Philip should be arrested and detained at Calais, in such a manner, however, that no one should know whence the stoppage proceeded."

It was to no purpose that the queen indulged in a culpable dissimulation; a poisoned arrow had pierced her heart, and her words, her manners, her complaints, her tears, the numerous messages she sent, now to one and now to another, betrayed the secret which the king wished still to conceal. Her friends blamed her for this publicity; men wondered what Charles would say when he heard of his aunt's distress; they feared that peace would be broken; but Catherine, whose heart was "rent in twain," was not to be moved by diplomatic considerations. Her sorrow did not check Henry; with the two motives which made him eager for a divorce—the scruples of his conscience and the desire of an heir—was now combined a third still more forcible. A woman was about to play an important part in the destinies of England.

CHAPTER VI

Anne Boleyn appointed Maid of Honour to Catherine—Lord Percy becomes attached to her—Wolsey separates them—Anne enters Margaret's Household—Siege of Rome; Cromwell—Wolsey's Intercession for the Popedom—He demands the Hand of Renée of France for Henry—Failure—Anne re-appears at Court—Repels the king's Advances—Henry's Letter—He resolves to accelerate the Divorce—Two Motives which induce Anne to refuse the Crown—Wolsey's Opposition.

Anne Boleyn; who had been placed by her father at the court of France, had returned to England with Sir Thomas, then ambassador at Paris, at the time that an English army made an incursion into Normandy (1522.) It would appear that she was presented to the queen about this period, and appointed one of Catherine's maids of honour. The following year was a memorable one to her from her first sorrow.

Among the young noblemen in the cardinal's household was Lord Perey, eldest son of the Earl of Northumberland. While Wolsey was closeted with the king, Perey was accustomed to resort to the queen's apartments, where he passed the time among her ladies. He soon felt a sincere passion for Anne, and the young maid of honour, who had been cold to the addresses of the gentlemen at the court of Francis, replied to the affections of the heir of Northumberland. The two young people already indulged in day-dreams of a quiet, elegant, and happy life in their noble castles of the north; but such dreams were fated to be of short duration.

Wolsey hated the Norfolks, and consequently the Boleyns. It was to counterbalance their influence that he had been first introduced at court. He became angry, therefore, when he saw one of his household suing for the hand of the daughter and niece of his enemies. Besides, certain partisans of the clergy accused Anne of being friendly to the Reformation. … It is generally believed that even at this period Wolsey had discovered Henry's eyes turned complacently on the young maid of honour, and that this induced him to thwart Percy's love; but this seems improbable. Of all the women in England, Anne was the one whose influence Wolsey would have had most cause to fear, and he really did fear it; and he would have been but too happy to see her married to Percy. It has been asserted that Henry prevailed on the cardinal to thwart the affection of the two young

people; but in that case did he confide to Wolsey the real motive of his opposition? Did the latter entertain criminal intentions? Did he undertake to yield up to dishonour the daughter and niece of his political adversaries? This would be horrible, but it is possible, and may even be deduced from Cavendish's narrative; yet we will hope that it was not so. If it were, Anne's virtue successfully baffled the infamous plot. But be that as it may, one day when Percy was in attendance upon the cardinal, the latter rudely addressed him: "I marvel at your folly, that you should attempt to contract yourself with that girl without your father's or the king's consent. I command you to break with her." Percy burst into tears, and besought the cardinal to plead his cause. "I charge you to resort no more into her company," was Wolsey's cold reply, after which he rose up and left the room. Anne received an order at the same time to leave the court. Proud and bold, and ascribing her misfortune to Wolsey's hatred, she exclaimed as she quitted the palace, "I will be revenged for this insult." But she had scarcely taken up her abode in the gothic Halls of Hever Castle, when news still more distressing overwhelmed her. Percy was married to Lady Mary Talbot. She wept long and bitterly, and vowed against the young nobleman who had deserted her a contempt equal to her hatred of the cardinal. Anne was reserved for a more illustrious, but more unhappy fate. This event necessarily rendered her residence in this country far from attractive to Anne Boleyn. "She did not stay long in England," says Burnet, following Camden; "she served queen Claude of France till her death, and after that she was taken into service by King Francis' sister." Anne Boleyn, lady-in-waiting to Margaret of Valois, was consoled at last. She indulged in gaieties with all the vivacity of her age, and glittered among the youngest and the fairest at all the court festivities. In Margaret's house she met the most enlightened men of the age, and her understanding and heart were developed simultaneously with the graces. She began to read, without thoroughly understanding it, the holy book in which her mistress (as Brantome informs us) found consolation and repose, and to direct a few light and passing thoughts to that "mild Emmanuel," to whom Margaret addressed such beautiful verses. At last Anne returned definitively to England. It has been asserted that the queen-regent, fearing that Henry after the battle of Pavia would invade France, had sent Anne to London to dissuade him from it. But it was a stronger voice than hers which stopped the king of England. "Remain quiet," wrote Charles V to him; "I have the stag in my net, and we have only to think of sharing the spoils." Margaret of Valois having married the king of Navarre at the end of January 1527, and quitted Paris and her brother's court, it is supposed that Sir Thomas Boleyn, who was unwilling that his daughter should take up her abode in the Pyrenees, recalled her to England probably in the winter or spring of the same year. "There is not the least evidence that she came to it earlier," says a modern author. She appeared once more at court, and the niece of the Duke of Norfolk soon eclipsed her companions, "by her excellent gesture and behaviour,"2 as we learn from a contemporary unfriendly to the Boleyns. All the court was struck by the regularity of her features, the expression of her eyes, the gentleness of her manners, and the majesty of her carriage. "She was a beautiful creature," says an old historian, "well proportioned, courteous, amiable, very agreeable, and a skilful musician.4

While entertainments were following close upon each other at the court of Henry VIII, a strange rumour filled all England with surprise. It was reported that the imperialist soldiers had taken Rome by assault, and that some Englishmen were among those who had mounted the breach. One Thomas Cromwell was specially named—the man who nearly twenty years before had obtained certain indulgences from Julius II, by offering him some jars of English confectionary. This soldier carried with him the New Testament of Erasmus, and he is said to have learnt it by heart during

the campaign. Being gay, brave, and intelligent, he entertained, from reading the gospel and seeing Rome, a great aversion for the policy, superstitions, and disorders of the popedom. The day of the 7th May 1527 decided the tenor of his life. To destroy the papal power became his dominant idea. On returning to England he entered the cardinal's household.

However, the captive pope and cardinals wrote letters "filled with tears and groans." Full of zeal for the papacy, Wolsey ordered a public fast. "The emperor will never release the pope, unless he be compelled," he told the king. "Sir, God has made you defender of the faith; save the church and its head!"—"My lord," answered the king with a smile, "I assure you that this war between the emperor and the pope is not for the faith, but for temporal possessions and dominions." But Wolsey would not be discouraged; and, on the 3rd of July, he passed through the streets of London, riding a richly caparisoned mule, and resting his feet on gilt stirrups, while twelve hundred gentlemen accompanied him on horseback. He was going to entreat Francis to aid his master in saving Clement VII. He had found no difficulty in prevailing upon Henry; Charles talked of carrying the pope to Spain, and of permanently establishing the apostolic see in that country. Now, how could they obtain the divorce from a Spanish pope. During the procession, Wolsey seemed oppressed with grief, and even shed tears; but he soon raised his head and exclaimed: "My heart is inflamed, and I wish that it may be said of the pope per secula sempiterna, "Rediit Henrici octavi virtute serena."

Desirous of forming a close union between France and England for the accomplishment of his designs, he had cast his eyes on the princess Renée, daughter of Louis XII, and sister-in-law to Francis I, as the future wife of Henry VIII. Accordingly the treaty of alliance between the two crowns having been signed at Amiens on the 18th of August (1527), Francis, with his mother and the cardinal, proceded to Compiégne, and there Wolsey, styling Charles the most obstinate defender of Lutheranism, promising "perpetual conjunction on the one hand [between France and England], and perpetual disjunction on the other." [between England and Germany], demanded Renée's hand for king Henry. Staffileo, dean of Rota, affirmed that the pope had been able to permit the marriage between Henry and Catherine only by an error of the keys of St. Peter.6 This avowal, so remarkable on the part of the dean of one of the first jurisdictions of Rome, induced Francis' mother to listen favourably to the cardinal's demand. But whether this proposal was displeasing to Renée, who was destined on a future day to profess the pure faith of the Gospel with greater earnestness than Margaret of Valois, or whether Francis was not over-anxious for a union that would have given Henry rights over the duchy of Brittany, she was promised to the son of the Duke of Ferrara. It was a check to the cardinal; but it was his ill fortune to receive one still more severe on his return to England. The daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn, (who had been created Viscount Rochford in 1525,) was constantly at court, "where she flourished in great estimation and favour," says Cavendish, "having always a private indignation against the cardinal for breaking off the pre-contract made between Lord Percy and her," little suspecting that Henry had had any share in it. Her beauty, her graceful carriage, her black hair, oval face, and bright eyes, her sweet voice in singing, her skill and dignity in the dance, her desire to please which was not entirely devoid of coquetry, her sprightliness, the readiness of her repartees, and above all the amiability of her character, won every heart. She brought to Greenwich and to London the polished manners of the court of Francis I. Every day (it was reported) she invented a new style of dress, and set the fashion in England. But to all these qualities, she added modesty, and even imposed it on others

by her example. The ladies of the court, who had hitherto adopted a different fashion (says her greatest enemy), covered the neck and bosom as she did;2 and the malicious, unable to appreciate Anne's motives, ascribed this modesty on the young lady's part to a desire to hide a secret deformity. Numerous admirers once more crowded round Anne Boleyn, and among others, one of the most illustrious noblemen and poets of England, Sir Thomas Wyatt, a follower of Wickliffe. He however, was not the man destined to replace the son of the Percies.

Henry, absorbed in anxiety about his divorce from Catherine, had become low-spirited and melancholy. The laughter, songs, repartees, and beauty of Anne Boleyn struck and captivated him, and his eyes were soon fixed complacently on the young maid of honour. Catherine was more than forty years old, and it was hardly to be expected that so susceptible a man as Henry would have made, as Job says, a covenant with his eyes not to think upon a maid. Desirous of showing his admiration, he presented Anne, according to usage, with a costly jewel; she accepted and wore it, and continued to dance, laugh, and chatter as before, without attaching particular importance to the royal present. Henry's attentions became more continuous; and he took advantage of a moment when he found Anne alone to declare his sentiments. With mingled emotion and alarm, the young lady fell trembling at the king's feet, and exclaimed, bursting into tears: "I think, most noble and worthy king, your majesty speaks these words in mirth to prove me…. I will rather lose my life than my virtue." Henry gracefully replied, that he should at least continue to hope. But Anne, rising up, proudly made answer: "I understand not, most mighty king, how you should retain any such hope; your wife I cannot be, both in respect of mine own unworthiness, and also because you have a queen already. Your mistress I will not be." Anne kept her word. She continued to show the king, even after this interview, all the respect that was due to him; but on several occasions she proudly, violently even, repelled his advances.2 In this age of gallantry, we find her resisting for nearly six years all the seductions Henry scattered round her. Such an example is not often met with in the history of courts. The books she had read in Margaret's palace gave her a secret strength. All looked upon her with respect; and even the queen treated her with politeness. Catherine showed, however, that she had remarked the king's preference. One day, as she was playing at cards with her maid of honour, while Henry was in the room, Anne frequently holding the king, she said: "My Lady Anne, you have good hap to stop ever at a king; but you are not like others, you will have all or none." Anne blushed: from that moment Henry's attentions acquired more importance; she resolved to withdraw from them, and quitted the court with Lady Rochford. The king, who was not accustomed to resistance, was extremely grieved; and having learnt that Anne would not return to the court either with or without her mother, sent a courier to Hever with a message and a letter for her. If we recollect the manners of the age of Henry VIII, and how far the men, in their relations with the gentler sex, were strangers to that reserve which society now imposes upon them, we cannot but be struck by the king's respectful tone: He writes thus in French:—

"As the time seems to me very long since I heard from you or concerning your health, the great love I have for you has constrained me to send this bearer to be better informed both of your health and pleasure; particularly, because since my last parting with you, I have been told that you have entirely changed the mind in which I left you, and that you neither mean to come to court with your mother nor any other way; which report, if true, I cannot enough marvel at, being persuaded in my own mind that I have never committed any offence against you; and it seems hard, in return

for the great love I bear you, to be kept at a distance from the person and presence of the woman in the world that I value the most. And if you love me with as much affection as I hope you do, I am sure the distance of our two persons would be equally irksome to you, though this does not belong so much to the mistress as to the servant.

“Consider well, my mistress, how greatly your absence afflicts me. I hope it is not your will that it should be so; but if I heard for certain that you yourself desired it, I could but mourn my ill-fortune, and strive by degrees to abate of my great folly.

“And so for lack of time I make an end of this rude letter, beseeching you to give the bearer credence in all he will tell you from me. Written by the hand of your entire servant, “H. R.” The word servant (serviteur) employed in this letter explains the sense in which Henry used the word mistress. In the language of chivalry, the latter term expressed a person to whom the lover had surrendered his heart.

It would seem that Anne’s reply to this letter was the same she had made to the king from the very first; and Cardinal Pole mentions more than once her obstinate refusal of an adulterous love. At last Henry understood Anne’s virtue; but he was far from abating of his great folly, as he had promised. That tyrannical selfishness, which the prince often displayed in his life, was shown particularly in his amours. Seeing that he could not attain his end by illegitimate means, he determined to break, as quickly as possible, the bonds which united him to the queen. Anne’s virtue was the third cause of Henry’s divorce. His resolution being once taken, it must needs be carried out. Henry having succeeded in bringing Anne back to court, procured a private interview with her, offered her his crown, and seizing her hand, took off one of her rings. But Anne, who would not be the king’s mistress, refused also to be his wife. The glory of a crown could not dazzle her, said Wyatt, and two motives in particular counterbalanced all the prospects of greatness which were set before her eyes. The first was her respect for the queen: “How could I injure a princess of such great virtue?” she exclaimed. The second was the fear that a union with “one that was her lord and her king,” would not give her that freedom of heart and that liberty which she would enjoy by marrying a man of the same rank with herself.2

Yet the noblemen and ladies of Henry’s court whispered to one another that Anne would certainly become queen of England. Some were tormented by jealousy; others, her friends, were delighted at the prospect of a rapid advancement. Wolsey’s enemies in particular were charmed at the thought of ruining the favourite. It was at the very moment when all these emotions were so variously agitating the court that the cardinal, returning from his embassy to Francis, re-appeared in London, where an unexpected blow struck him.

Wolsey was expressing his grief to Henry at having failed in obtaining either Margaret or Renée for him, when the king interrupted him: “Console yourself, I shall marry Anne Boleyn.” The cardinal remained speechless for a moment. What would become of him, if the king placed the crown of England on the head of the daughter and niece of his greatest enemies? What would become of the church, if a second Anne of Bohemia should ascend the throne? Wolsey threw himself at the feet of his master, and entreated him to renounce so fatal a project. It was then no doubt that he remained (as he afterwards said) an hour or two on his knees before the king in his privy chamber, but without prevailing on Henry to give up his design. Wolsey, persuaded that if he continued openly to oppose Henry’s will, he would for ever lose his confidence, dissembled his vexation,

waiting an opportunity to get rid of this unfortunate rival by some intrigue. He began by writing to the pope, informing him that a young lady, brought up by the queen of Navarre, and consequently tainted by the Lutheran heresy, had captivated the king's heart; and from that hour Anne Boleyn became the object of the hatred and calumnies of Rome. But at the same time, to conceal his intentions, Wolsey received Henry at a series of splendid entertainments, at which Anne outshone all the ladies of the court.

CHAPTER VII

Bilney's Preaching—His arrest—Arthur's Preaching and Imprisonment—Bilney's Examination—Contest between the Judge and the Prisoner—Bilney's weakness and Fall—His Terrors—Two Wants—Arrival of the Fourth Edition of the New Testament—Joy among the Believers.

While these passions were agitating Henry's palace, the most moving scenes, produced by Christian faith, were stirring the nation. Bilney, animated by that courage which God sometimes gives to the weakest men, seemed to have lost his natural timidity, and preached for a time with an energy quite apostolic. He taught that all men should first acknowledge their sins and condemn them, and then hunger and thirst after that righteousness which Jesus Christ gives. To this testimony borne to the truth, he added his testimony against error. "These five hundred years," he added, "there hath been no good pope; and in all the times past we can find but fifty: for they have neither preached nor lived well, nor conformably to their dignity; wherefore, unto this day, they have borne the keys of simony."3 As soon as he descended from the pulpit, this pious scholar, with his friend Arthur, visited the neighbouring towns and villages. "The Jews and Saracens would long ago have become believers," he once said at Wilsdown, "had it not been for the idolatry of Christian men in offering candles, wax, and money to stocks and stones." One day when he visited Ipswich, where there was a Franciscan convent, he exclaimed: "The cowl of St. Francis wrapped round a dead body hath no power to take away sins.… Ecce agnus Dei qui tollit peccata mundi." (John 1:29) The poor monks, who were little versed in Scripture, had recourse to the Almanac to convict the Bible of error. "St. Paul did rightly affirm," said Friar John Brusierd, "that there is but one mediator of God and man, because as yet there was no saint canonized or put into the calendar."—"Let us ask of the Father in the name of the Son," rejoined Bilney, "and he will give unto us."—"You are always speaking of the Father and never of the saints," replied the friar; "you are like a man who has been looking so long upon the sun that he can see nothing else." As he uttered these words the monk seemed bursting with anger. "If I did not know that the saints would take everlasting vengeance upon you, I would surely with these nails of mine be your death." Twice in fact did two monks pull him out of his pulpit. He was arrested and taken to London.

Arthur, instead of fleeing, began to visit the flocks which his friend had converted. "Good people," said he, "if I should suffer persecution for the preaching of the Gospel, there are seven thousand more that would preach it as I do now. Therefore, good people! good people!" (and he repeated these words several times in a sorrowful voice) "think not that if these tyrants and persecutors put a man to death, the preaching of the Gospel therefore is to be forsaken. Every Christian man, yea every layman, is a priest. Let our adversaries preach by the authority of the cardinal; others by the authority of the university; others by the pope's; we will preach by the authority of God. It is not the man who brings the word that saves the soul, but the word which the man brings. Neither bishops

nor popes have the right to forbid any man to preach the Gospel; and if they kill him he is not a heretic but a martyr."4 The priests were horrified at such doctrines. In their opinion, there was no God out of their church, no salvation out of their sacrifices. Arthur was thrown into the same prison as Bilney. On the 27th of November 1527 the cardinal and the archbishop of Canterbury, with a great number of bishops, divines, and lawyers, met in the chapter-house of Westminster, when Bilney and Arthur were brought before them. But the king's prime minister thought it beneath his dignity to occupy his time with miserable heretics. Wolsey had hardly commenced the examination, when he rose, saying: "The affairs of the realm call me away; all such as are found guilty, you will compel them to abjure, and those who rebel you will deliver over to the secular power." After a few questions proposed by the bishop of London, the two accused men were led back to prison.

Abjuration or death—that was Wolsey's order. But the conduct of the trial was confided to Tonstall; Bilney conceived some hope. "Is it possible," he said to himself, "that the bishop of London, the friend of Erasmus, will gratify the monks?… I must tell him that it was the Greek Testament of his learned master that led me to the faith." Upon which the humble evangelist having obtained paper and ink, set about writing to the bishop from his gloomy prison those admirable letters which have been transmitted to posterity. Tonstall, who was not a cruel man, was deeply moved, and then a strange struggle took place: a judge wishing to save the prisoner, the prisoner desiring to give up his life. Tonstall, by acquitting Bilney, had no desire to compromise himself. "Submit to the church," said the bishop, "for God speaks only through it." But Bilney, who knew that God speaks in the Scriptures, remained inflexible. "Very well, then," said Tonstall, taking up the prisoner's eloquent letters, "in discharge of my conscience I shall lay these letters before the court." He hoped, perhaps, that they would touch his colleagues, but he was deceived. He determined, therefore, to make a fresh attempt. On the 4th of December, Bilney was brought again before the court. "Abjure your errors," said Tonstall. Bilney refusing by a shake of the head, the bishop continued: "Retire into the next room and consider." Bilney withdrew, and returning shortly after with joy beaming in his eyes, Tonstall thought he had gained the victory. "You will return to the church, then?" said he…. The doctor answered calmly: "Fiat judicium in nomine Domini." "Be quick," continued the bishop, "this is the last moment, and you will be condemned." "Hæc est dies quam fecit Dominus," answered Bilney, "exultemus et lœtemur in ea!" (Psalms 118:24). Upon this Tonstall took off his cap, and said: "In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti…. Exsurgat Deus et dissipentur inimici ejus!" (Psalms 68:1). Then making the sign of the cross on his forehead and on his breast, he gave judgment: "Thomas Bilney, I pronounce thee convicted of heresy." He was about to name the penalty … a last hope restrained him; he stopped: "For the rest of the sentence we take deliberation until to-morrow." Thus was the struggle prolonged between two men, one of whom desired to walk to the stake, the other to bar the way as it were with his own body.

"Will you return to the unity of the church?" asked Tonstall the next day. "I hope I was never separated from the church," answered Bilney. "Go and consult with some of your friends," said the bishop, who was resolved to save his life; "I will give you till one o'clock in the afternoon." In the afternoon Bilney made the same answer. "I will give you two nights' respite to deliberate," said the bishop; "on Saturday at nine o'clock in the forenoon, the court will expect a plain definitive answer." Tonstall reckoned on the night with its dreams, its anguish, and its terrors, to bring about Bilney's recantation. This extraordinary struggle occupied many minds both in court and city. Anne

Boleyn and Henry VIII watched with interest the various phases of this tragic history. What will happen? was the general question. Will he give way? Shall we see him live or die? One day and two nights still remained; everything was tried to shake the Cambridge doctor. His friends crowded to his prison; he was overwhelmed with arguments and examples; but an inward struggle, far more terrible than those without, agitated the pious Bilney. “Whoever will save his soul shall lose it,” Christ had said. That selfish love of his soul, which is found even in the advanced Christian,—that self, which after his conversion had been not absorbed, but overruled by the Spirit of God, gradually recovered strength in his heart, in the presence of disgrace and death. His friends who wished to save him, not understanding that the fallen Bilney would be Bilney no longer, conjured him with tears to have pity on himself; and by these means his firmness was overcome. The bishop pressed him, and Bilney asked himself: “Can a young soldier like me know the rules of war better than an old soldier like Tonstall? Or can a poor silly sheep know his way to the fold better than the chief pastor of London?” His friends quitted him neither night nor day, and entangled by their fatal affection, he believed at last that he had found a compromise which would set his conscience at rest. “I will preserve my life,” he said, “to dedicate it to the Lord.” This delusion had scarcely laid hold of his mind before his views were confused, his faith was vailed, the Holy Ghost departed from him, God gave him over to his carnal thoughts, and under the pretext of being useful to Jesus Christ for many years, Bilney disobeyed him at the present moment. Being led before the bishops on the morning of Saturday the 7th of December, at nine o’clock, he fell.… (Arthur had fallen before him), and whilst the false friends who had misled him hardly dared raise their eyes, the living church of Christ in England uttered a cry of anguish. “If ever you come in danger,” said Latimer, “for God’s quarrel, I would advise you, above all things, to abjure all your friendships; leave not one unabjured. It is they that shall undo you, and not your enemies. It was his very friends that brought Bilney to it.” On the following day (Sunday, 8th December) Bilney was placed at the head of a procession, and the fallen disciple, bareheaded, with a fagot on his shoulders, stood in front of St. Paul’s cross, while a priest from the pulpit exhorted him to repentance; after which he was led back to prison.

What a solitude for the wretched man! At one time the cold darkness of his cell appeared to him as a burning fire; at another he fancied he heard accusing voices crying to him in the silence of the night. Death, the very enemy he had wished to avoid, fixed his icy glance upon him and filled him with fear. He strove to escape from the horrible spectre, but in vain. Then the friends who had dragged him into this abyss, crowded round and endeavoured to console him; but if they gave utterance to any of Christ’s gentle promises, Bilney started back with affright and shrank to the farthest part of the dungeon, with a cry “as though a man had run him through the heart with a sword.” Having denied the word of God, he could no longer endure to hear it. The curse of the Apoealypse: Ye mountains, hide me from the wrath, of the Lamb! was the only passage of Scripture in harmony with his soul. His mind wandered, the blood froze in his veins, he sank under his terrors; he lost all sense, and almost his life, and lay motionless in the arms of his astonished friends. “God,” exclaimed those unhappy individuals who had caused his fall, “God, by a just judgment, delivers up to the tempests of their conscience all who deny his truth.” This was not the only sorrow of the church. As soon as Richard Bayfield, the late chamberlain of Bury, had joined Tyndale and Fryth, he said to them: “I am at your disposal; you shall be my head and I will be your hand; I will sell your books and those of the German reformers in the Low Countries, France, and England.” It was not long indeed before he returned to London. But Pierson, the priest whom he

had formerly met in Lombard Street, found him again, and accused him to the bishop. The unhappy man was brought before Tonstall. “You are charged,” said the prelate, “with having asserted that praise is due to God alone, and not to saints or creatures.” Bayfield acknowledged the charge to be true. “You are accused of maintaining that every priest may preach the word of God by the authority of the Gospel without the license of the pope or cardinals.” This also Bayfield acknowledged. A penance was imposed on him; and then he was sent back to his monastery with orders to show himself there on the 25th of April. But he crossed the sea once more, and hastened to join Tyndale. The New Testaments, however, sold by him and others, remained in England. At that time the bishops subscribed to suppress the Scriptures, as so many persons have since done to circulate them; and, accordingly, a great number of the copies brought over by Bayfield and his friends were brought up. A scarcity of food was erelong added to the scarcity of the word of God; for as the cardinal was endeavouring to foment a war between Henry and the emperor, the Flemish ships ceased to enter the English ports. It was in consequence of this that the lord mayor and aldermen of London hastened to express their apprehensions to Wolsey almost before he had recovered from the fatigues of his return from France. “Fear nothing,” he told them; “the king of France assured me, that if he had three bushels of wheat, England should have two of them.” But none arrived, and the people were on the point of breaking Out into violence, when a fleet of ships suddenly appeared off the mouth of the Thames. They were German and Flemish vessels laden with corn, in which the worthy people of the Low Countries had also concealed the New Testament. An Antwerp bookseller, named John Raimond or Ruremond, from his birthplace, place, had printed a fourth edition more beautiful than the previous ones. It was enriched with references and engravings on wood, and each page bordered with red lines. Raimond himself had embarked on board one of the ships with five hundred copies of his New Testament. About Christmas 1527, the book of God was circulated in England along with the bread that nourishes the body. But certain priests and monks having discovered the Scriptures among the sacks of corn, they carried several copies to the bishop of London, who threw Raimond into prison. The greater part, however, of the new edition escaped him. The New Testament was read everywhere, and even the court did not escape the contagion. Anne Boleyn, notwithstanding her smiling face, often withdrew to her closet at Greenwich or at Hampton Court, to study the Gospel. Frank, courageous, and proud, she did not conceal the pleasure she found in such reading; her boldness astonished the courtiers, and exasperated the clergy. In the city things went still farther: the New Testament was explained in frequent conventicles, particularly in the house of one Russell, and great was the joy among the faithful. “It is sufficient only to enter London,” said the priests, “to become a heretic!” The Reformation was taking root among the people before it arrived at the upper classes.

CHAPTER VIII The Papacy intercepts the Gospel—The King consults Sir Thomas More—Ecclesiastical Conferences about the Divorce—The Universities—Clark—The Nun of Kent—Wolsey decides to do the king’s Will—Mission to the Pope—Four Documents—Embarrassment of Charles V—Francis Philip at Madrid—Distress and Resolution of Charles—He turns away from the Reformation—Conference at the Castle of St. Angelo—Knight arrives in Italy—His Flight—Treaty between the Pope and the Emperor—Escape of the Pope—Confusion of Henry VIII—Wolsey’s Orders—His Entreaties. The sun of the word of God, which daily grew brighter in the sky of the sixteenth century, was sufficient to scatter all the darkness in England; but popery, like an immense wall, intercepted its rays. Britain had hardly

received the Scriptures in Greek and Latin, and then in English, before the priests began to make war upon them with indefatigable zeal. It was necessary that the wall should be thrown down in order that the sun might penetrate freely among the Anglo-Saxon people. And new events were ripening in England, destined to make a great breach in popery. The negotiations of Henry VIII with Clement VII play an important part in the Reformation. By showing up the Court of Rome, they destroyed the respect which the people felt for it; they took away that power and strength as Scripture says, which the monarchy had given it; and the throne of the pope once fallen in England, Jesus Christ uplifted and strengthened his own.

Henry, ardently desiring an heir, and thinking that he had found the woman that would ensure his own and England's happiness, conceived the design of severing the ties that united him to the queen, and with this view he consulted his most favourite councillors about the divorce. There was one in particular whose approval he coveted: this was Sir Thomas More. One day as Erasmus's friend was walking with his master in the beautiful gallery at Hampton Court, giving him an account of a mission he had just executed on the continent, the king suddenly interrupted him: "My marriage to the queen," he said, "is contrary to the laws of God, of the church, and of nature." He then took up the Bible, and pointed out the passages in his favour. "I am not a theologian," said More, somewhat embarrassed; "your majesty should consult a council of doctors.

Accordingly, by Henry's order, Warham assembled the most learned canonists at Hampton Court; but weeks passed away before they could agree. Most of them quoted in the king's favour those passages in Leviticus (Leviticus 18:16; Leviticus 20:21) which forbid a man to take his brother's wife. But Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and the other opponents of the divorce, replied that, according to Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 25:5) when a woman is left a widow without children, her brother-in-law ought to take her to wife, to perpetuate his brother's name in Israel. "This law concerned the Jews only," replied the partisans of the divorce; they added that its object was "to maintain the inheritances distinct, and the genealogies intact, until the coming of Christ. The Judaical dispensation has passed away; but the law of Leviticus, which is a moral law, is binding upon all men in all ages." To free themselves from their embarrassment, the bishops demanded that the most eminent universities should be consulted; and commissioners were forthwith despatched to Oxford, Cambridge, Paris, Orleans, Toulouse, Louvain, Padua, and Bologna, furnished with money to reward the foreign doctors for the time and trouble this question would cost them. This caused some little delay, and every means was now to be tried to divert the king from his purpose.

Wolsey, who was the first to suggest the idea of a divorce, was now thoroughly alarmed. It appeared to him that a nod from the daughter of the Boleyns would hurl him from the post he had so laboriously won, and this made him vent his ill-humour on all about him, at one time threatening Warham, and at another persecuting Pace. But fearing to oppose Henry openly, he summoned from Paris, Clarke, bishop of Bath and Wells, at that time ambassador to the French court. The latter entered into his views, and after cautiously preparing the way, he ventured to say to the king: "The progress of the inquiry will be so slow, your majesty, that it will take more than seven years to bring it to an end!"—"Since my patience has already held out for eighteen years," the king replied coldly, "I am willing to wait four or five more." As the political party had failed, the clerical party set in motion a scheme of another kind. A young woman, Elizabeth Barton, known as the holy maid of Kent, had been subject from childhood to epileptic fits. The priest of her parish, named Masters,

had persuaded her that she was inspired of God, and confederating with one Bocking, a monk of Canterbury, he turned the weakness of the prophetess to account. Elizabeth wandered over the country, passing from house to house, and from convent to convent; on a sudden her limbs would become rigid, her features distorted; violent convulsions shook her body, and strange unintelligible sounds fell from her lips, which the amazed by-standers received as revelations from the Virgin and the saints. Fisher, bishop of Rochester, Abel, the queen's ecclesiastical agent, and even Sir Thomas More, were among the number of Elizabeth's partisans. Rumours of the divorce having reached the saint's ears, an angel commanded her to appear before the cardinal. As soon as she stood in his presence, the colour fled from her cheeks, her limbs trembled, and falling into an ecstasy, she exclaimed: "Cardinal of York, God has placed three swords in your hand: the spiritual sword, to range the church under the authority of the pope; the civil sword, to govern the realm; and the sword of justice, to prevent the divorce of the king.… If you do not wield these three swords faithfully, God will lay it sore to your charge." After these words the prophetess withdrew. But other influences were then dividing Wolsey's breast: hatred, which induced him to oppose the divorce; and ambition, which foreboded his ruin in this opposition. At last ambition prevailed, and he resolved to make his objections forgotten by the energy of his zeal.

Henry hastened to profit by this change. "Declare the divorce yourself," said he to Wolsey, "has not the pope named you his vicar-general." The cardinal was not anxious to raise himself so high. "If I were to decide the affair," said he, "the queen would appeal to the pope; we must therefore either apply to the holy father for special powers, or persuade the queen to retire to a nunnery. And if we fail in either of these expedients, we will obey the voice of conscience, even in despite of the pope."3 It was arranged to begin with the more regular attempt, and Gregory Da Casale, secretary Knight, and the prothonotary Gambara, were appointed to an extraordinary mission at the pontifical court. Casale was Wolsey's man, and Knight was Henry's. Wolsey told the envoys: "You will demand of the pope, 1stly, a commission authorizing me to inquire into this matter; 2ndly, his promise to pronounce the nullity of Catherine's marriage with Henry, if we should find that her marriage with Arthur was consummated; and 3rdly, a dispensation permitting the king to marry again." In this manner Wolsey hoped to make sure of the divorce without damaging the papal authority. It was insinuated that false representations, with regard to the consummation of the first marriage, had been sent from England to Julius II, which had induced the pontiff to permit the second. The pope being deceived as to the fact, his infallibility was untouched. Wolsey desired something more; knowing that no confidence could be put in the good faith of the pontiff, he demanded a fourth instrument by which the pope should bind himself never to recall the other three; he only forgot to take precautions in case Clement should withdraw the fourth. "With these four snares, skilfully combined," said the cardinal, "I shall catch the hare; if he escapes from one, he will fall into the other." The courtiers anticipated a speedy termination of the affair. Was not the emperor the declared enemy of the pontiff? Had not Henry, on the contrary, made himself protector of the Clementine league? Could Clement hesitate, when called upon, to choose between his jailor and his benefactor?

Indeed, Charles V, at this moment, was in a very embarrassing position. It is true, his guards were posted at the gates of the castle of St. Angelo, where Clement was a prisoner, and people in Rome said to one another with a smile: "Now indeed it is true, Papa non potest errare." But it was not possible to keep the pope a prisoner in Rome; and then what was to be done with him? The

viceroy of Naples proposed to Alercon, the governor of St. Angelo, to remove Clement to Gæta; but the affrighted colonel exclaimed: “Heaven forbid that I should drag after me the very body of God!” Charles thought one time of transporting the pontiff to Spain; but might not an enemy’s fleet carry him off on the road? The pope in prison was far more embarrassing to Charles than the pope at liberty.

It was at this critical time that Francis Philip, Queen Catherine’s servant, having escaped the snares laid by Henry VIII and Wolsey, arrived at Madrid, where he passed a whole day in conference with Charles V. This prince was at first astonished, shocked even, by the designs of the king of England. The curse of God seemed to hang over his house. His mother was a lunatic; his sister of Denmark expelled from her dominions; his sister of Hungary made a widow by the battle of Mohacz; the Turks were encroaching upon his territories; Lautree was victorious in Italy, and the catholics, irritated by the pope’s captivity, detested his ambition. This was not enough. Henry VIII was striving to divorce his aunt, and the pope would naturally give his aid to this criminal design. Charles must choose between the pontiff and the king. The friendship of the king of England might aid him in breaking the league formed to expel him from Italy, and by sacrificing Catherine he would be sure to obtain his support; but placed between reasons of state and his aunt’s honour, the emperor did not hesitate; he even renounced certain projects of reform that he had at heart. He suddenly decided for the pope, and from that very hour followed a new course.

Charles, who possessed great discernment, had understood his age; he had seen that concessions were called for by the movement of the human mind, and would have desired to carry out the change from the middle ages to modern times by a carefully managed transition. He had consequently demanded a council to reform the church and weaken the Romish dominion in Europe. But very different was the result. If Charles turned away from Henry, he was obliged to turn towards Clement; and after having compelled the head of the church to enter a prison, it was necessary to place him once more upon the throne. Charles V sacrificed the interests of Christian society to the interests of his own family. This divorce, which in England has been looked upon as the ruin of the popedom, was what saved it in continental Europe. But how could the emperor win the heart of the pontiff, filled as it was with bitterness and anger? He selected for this difficult mission a friar of great ability, De Angelis, general of the Spanish Observance, and ordered him to proceed to the castle of St. Angelo under the pretext of negotiating the liberation of the holy father. The cordelier was conducted to the strongest part of the fortress, called the Rock, where Clement was lodged; and the two priests brought all their craft to bear on each other. The monk, assisted by the artful Moncade, adroitly mingled together the pope’s deliverance and Catherine’s marriage. He affirmed that the emperor wished to open the gates of the pontiff’s prison, and had already given the order; and then he added immediately: “The emperor is determined to maintain the rights of his aunt, and will never consent to the divorce.”2—“If you are a good shepherd to me,” wrote Charles to the pope with his own hand on the 22nd of November, “I will be a good sheep to you.” Clement smiled as he read these words; he understood his position; the emperor had need of the priest, Charles was at his captive’s feet; Clement was saved! The divorce was a rope fallen from the skies which could not fail to drag him out of the pits; he had only to cling to it quietly in order to reascend his throne. Accordingly from that hour Clement appeared less eager to quit the castle than Charles to liberate him. “So long as the divorce is in suspense,” thought the crafty De’ Medici, “I have two great friends; but as soon as I declare for one, I shall have a mortal enemy in the

other.” He promised the monk to come to no decision in the matter without informing the emperor.

Meantime Knight, the envoy of the impatient monarch, having heard, as he crossed the Alps, that the pope was at liberty, hastened on to Parma, where he met Gambara: “He is not free yet,” replied the prothonotary; “but the general of the Franciscans hopes to terminate his captivity in a few days. Continue your journey,” he added. Knight could not do so without great danger. He was told at Foligno, sixty miles from the metropolis, that if he had not a safe-conduct he could not reach Rome without exposing his life; Knight halted. Just then a messenger from Henry brought him despatches more pressing than ever; Knight started again with one servant and a guide. At Monte Rotondo he was nearly murdered by the inhabitants; but on the next day (25th November), protected by a violent storm of wind and rain, Henry’s envoy entered Rome at ten o’clock without being observed, and kept himself concealed.

It was impossible to speak with Clement, for the emperor’s orders were positive. Knight, therefore, began to practise upon the cardinals; he gained over the Cardinal of Pisa, by whose means his despatches were laid before the pontiff. Clement after reading them laid them down with a smile of satisfaction. “Good!” said he, “here is the other coming to me now!” But night had hardly closed in before the Cardinal of Pisa’s secretary hastened to Knight and told him: “Don Alercon is informed of your arrival; and the pope entreats you to depart immediately.” This officer had scarcely left him, when the prothonotary Gambara arrived in great agitation: “His holiness presses you to leave; as soon as he is at liberty, he will attend to your master’s request.” Two hours after this, two hundred Spanish soldiers arrived, surrounded the house in which Knight had concealed himself, and searched it from top to bottom, but to no purpose; the English agent had escaped.

Knight’s safety was not the true motive which induced Clement to urge his departure. The very day on which the pope received the message from the king of England, he signed a treaty with Charles V, restoring him, under certain conditions, to both his powers. At the same time the pontiff, for greater security, pressed the French general Lautrec to hasten his march to Rome in order to save him from the hands of the emperor. Clement, a disciple of Machiavelli, thus gave the right hand to Charles and the left to Francis; and as he had not another for Henry, he made him the most positive promises. Each of the three princes could reckon on the pope’s friendship, and on the same grounds. The 10th of December (1527) was the day on which Clement’s imprisonment would terminate; but he preferred owing his freedom to intrigue rather than to the emperor’s generosity. He therefore procured the dress of a tradesman, and, on the evening before the day fixed for his deliverance, his ward being already much relaxed, he escaped from the castle, and, accompanied only by Louis of Gonzago in his flight, he made his way to Orvieto.

While Clement was experiencing all the joy of a man just escaped from prison, Henry was a prey to the most violent agitation. Having ceased to love Catherine, he persuaded himself that he was the victim of his father’s ambition, a martyr to duty, and the champion of conjugal sanctity. His very gait betrayed his vexation, and even among the gay conversation of the court, deep sighs would escape from his bosom. He had frequent interviews with Wolsey. “I regard the safety of my soul above all things,” he said; “but I am concerned also for the peace of my kingdom. For a long while an unceasing remorse has been gnawing at my conscience,2 and my thoughts dwell upon my marriage with unutterable sorrow. God, in his wrath, has taken away my sons, and if I persevere in this unlawful union, he will visit me with still more terrible chastisements.4 My only hope is in the

holy father." Wolsey replied with a low bow: "Please your majesty, I am occupied with this business, as if it were my only means of winning heaven." And indeed he redoubled his exertions. He wrote to Sir Gregory Da Casale on the 5th of December (1527): "You will procure an audience of the pope at any price. Disguise yourself, appear before him as the servant of some nobleman, or as a messenger from the duke of Ferrara. Scatter money plentifully; sacrifice every thing, provided you procure a secret interview with his holiness; ten thousand ducats are at your disposal. You will explain to Clement the king's scruples, and the necessity of providing for the continuance of his house and the peace of his kingdom. You will tell him that in order to restore him to liberty, the king is ready to declare war against the emperor, and thus show himself to all the world to be a true son of the church."

Wolsey saw clearly that it was essential to represent the divorce to Clement VII, as a means likely to secure the safety of the popedom. The cardinal, therefore, wrote again to Da Casale on the 6th of December: "Night and day, I revolve in my mind the actual condition of the church, and seek the means best calculated to extricate the pope from the gulf into which he has fallen. While I was turning these thoughts over in my mind during a sleepless night … one way suddenly occurred to me. I said to myself, the king must be prevailed upon to undertake the defence of the holy father. This was no easy matter, for his majesty is strongly attached to the emperor;2 however, I set about my task. I told the king that his holiness was ready to satisfy him; I staked my honour; I succeeded.… To save the pope, my master will sacrifice his treasures, subjects, kingdom, and even his life. … I therefore conjure his holiness to entertain our just demand."

Never before had such pressing entreaties been made to a pope.

CHAPTER IX The English Envoys at Orvieto—Their Oration to the Pope—Clement gains Time—The Envoys and Cardinal Sanctorum Quatuor—Stratagem of the Pope—Knight discovers it and returns—The Transformations of Antichrist—The English obtain a new Document—Fresh Stratagem—Demand of a second Cardinal-legate—The Pope's new Expedient—End of the Campaign. The envoys of the king of England appeared in the character of the saviours of Rome. This was doubtless no stratagem; and Wolsey probably regarded that thought as coming from heaven, which had visited him during the weary sleepless night. The zeal of his agents increased. The pope was hardly set at liberty, before Knight and Da Casale appeared at the foot of the precipitous rock on which Orvieto is built, and demanded to be introduced to Clement VII. Nothing could be more compromising to the pontiff than such a visit. How could he appear on good terms with England, when Rome and all his states were still in the hands of Catherine's nephew? The pope's mind was utterly bewildered by the demand of the two envoys. He recovered however; to reject the powerful hand extended to him by England, was not without its danger; and as he well knew how to bring a difficult negotiation to a successful conclusion, Clement regained confidence in his skill, and gave orders to introduce Henry's ambassador's. Their discourse was not without eloquence; "Never was the church in a more critical position," said they. "The unmeasured ambition of the kings who claim to dispose of spiritual affairs at their own pleasure (this was aimed at Charles V) holds the apostolical bark suspended over an abyss. The only port open to it in the tempest is the favour of the august prince whom we represent, and who has always been the shield of the faith. But, alas! this monarch, the impregnable bulwark of your holiness, is himself the prey of tribulations almost equal to your own. His conscience torn by remorse, his crown without an heir, his kingdom without security, his people exposed oncemore to perpetual disorders.… Nay,

the whole Christian world given up to the most cruel discord. … Such are the consequences of a fatal union which God has marked with his displeasure … There are also," they added in a lower tone, "certain things of which his majesty cannot speak in his letter … certain incurable disorders under which the queen suffers, which will never permit the king to look upon her again as his wife.2 If your holiness puts an end to such wretchedness by annulling his unlawful marriage, you will attach his majesty by an indissoluble bond. Assistance, riches, armies, crown, and even life—the king our master is ready to employ all in the service of Rome. He stretches out his hand to you, most holy father … stretch out yours to him; by your union the church will be saved, and Europe will be saved with it."

Clement was cruelly embarrassed. His policy consisted in holding the balance between the two princes, and he was now called upon to decide in favour of one of them. He began to regret that he had ever received Henry's ambassadors. "Consider my position," he said to them, "and entreat the king to wait until more favourable events leave me at liberty to act."—"What!" replied Knight proudly, "has not your holiness promised to consider his majesty's prayer? If you fail in your promise now, how can I persuade the king that you will keep it some future day?" Da Casale thought the time had come to strike a decisive blow. "What evils," he exclaimed, "what inevitable misfortunes your refusal will create!… The emperor thinks only of depriving the church of its power, and the king of England alone has sworn to maintain it." Then speaking lower, more slowly, and dwelling upon every word, he continued: "We fear that his majesty, reduced to such extremities … of the two evils will choose the least, and supported by the purity of his intentions, will do of his own authority … what he now so respectfully demands.… What should we see then?… I shudder at the thought.… Let not your holiness indulge in a false security which will inevitably drag you into the abyss.… Read all … remark all … divine all … take note of all. … Most holy father, this is a question of life and death." And Da Casale's tone said more than his words.

Clement understood that a positive refusal would expose him to lose England. Placed between Henry and Charles, as between the hammer and the forge, he resolved to gain time. "Well then," he said to Knight and Da Casale, "I will do what you ask; but I am not familiar with the forms these dispensations require.… I will consult the Cardinal Sanctorum Quatuor on the subject … and then will inform you."

Knight and Da Casale, wishing to anticipate Clement VII, hastened to Lorenzo Pucci, cardinal Sanctorum Quatuor, and intimated to him that their master would know how to be grateful. The cardinal assured the deputies of his affection for Henry VIII, and they, in the fulness of their gratitude, laid before him the four documents which they were anxious to get executed. But the cardinal had hardly looked at the first—the proposal that Wolsey should decide the matter of the divorce in England—when he exclaimed: "Impossible!… a bull in such terms would cover with eternal disgrace not only his holiness and the king, but even the cardinal of York himself." The deputies were confounded, for Wolsey had ordered them to ask the pope for nothing but his signature. Recovering themselves, they rejoined: "All that we require is a competent commission." On his part, the pope wrote Henry a letter, in which he managed to say nothing. Of the four required documents there were two on whose immediate despatch Knight and Da Casale insisted: these were the commission to pronounce the divorce, and the dispensation to contract a second marriage. The dispensation without the commission was of no value; this the pope knew well; accordingly he resolved to give the dispensation only. It was as if Charles had granted Clement

when in prison permission to visit his cardinals, but denied him liberty to leave the castle of St. Angelo. It is in such a manner as this that a religious system transformed into a political system has recourse, when it is without power, to stratagem. “The commission,” said the artful Medici to Knight, “must be corrected according to the style of our court; but here is the dispensation.” Knight took the document; it was addressed to Henry VIII and ran thus: “We accord to you, in case your marriage with Catherine shall be declared null, free liberty to take another wife, provided she have not been the wife of your brother….” The Englishman was duped by the Italian. “To my poor judgment,” he said, “this document will be of use to us.” After this Clement appeared to concern himself solely about Knight’s health, and suddenly manifested the greatest interest for him. “It is proper that you should hasten your departure,” said he, “for it is necessary that you should travel at your ease. Gambara will follow you post, and bring the commission.” Knight thus mystified, took leave of the pope, who got rid of Da Casale and Gambara in a similar manner. He then began to breathe once more. There was no diplomacy in Europe which Rome, even in its greatest weakness, could not easily dupe.

It had now become necessary to clude the commission. While the king’s envoys were departing in good spirits, reckoning on the document that was to follow them, the general of the Spanish Observance reiterated to the pontiff in every tone: “Be careful to give no document authorising the divorce, and above all, do not permit this affair to be judged in Henry’s states.” The cardinals drew up the document under the influence of De Angelis, and made it a masterpiece of insignificance. If good theology ennobles the heart, bad theology, so fertile in subtleties, imparts to the mind a skill by no means common; and hence the most celebrated diplomatists have often been churchmen. The act being thus drawn up, the pope despatched three copies, to Knight, to Da Casale, and to Gambara. Knight was near Bologna when the courier overtook him. He was stupefied, and taking post-horses returned with all haste to Orvieto. Gambara proceeded through France to England with the useless dispensation which the pope had granted.

Knight had thought to meet with more good faith at the court of the pope than with kings, and he had been outwitted. What would Wolsey and Henry say of his folly? His wounded self-esteem began to make him believe all that Tyndale and Luther said of the popedom. The former had just published the Obedience of a Christian Man, and the Parable of the Wicked Mammon, in which he represented Rome as one of the transformations of Antichrist. “Antichrist,” said he in the latter treatise, “is not a man that should suddenly appear with wonders; he is a spiritual thing, who was in the Old Testament, and also in the time of Christ and the apostles, and is now, and shall (I doubt not) endure till the world’s end. His nature is (when he is overcome with the Word of God) to go out of the play for a season, and to disguise himself, and then to come in again with a new name and new raiment. The Scribes and Pharisees in the gospel were very Antichrists; popes, cardinals, and bishops have gotten their new names, but the thing is all one. Even so now, when we have uttered [detected] him, he will change himself once more, and turn himself into an angel of light. Already the beast, seeing himself now to be sought for, roareth and seeketh new holes to hide himself in, and changeth himself into a thousand fashions.” This idea, paradoxical at first, gradually made its way into men’s minds. The Romans, by their practices, familiarized the English to the somewhat coarse descriptions of the reformers. England was to have many such lessons, and thus by degrees learn to set Rome aside for the sake of her own glory and prosperity.

Knight and Da Casale reached Orvieto about the same time. Clement replied with sighs: “Alas! I am the emperor’s prisoner. The imperialists are every day pillaging towns and castles in our neighbourhood. … Wretch that I am! I have not a friend except the king your master, and he is far away.… If I should do anything now to displease Charles, I am a lost man.… To sign the commission would be to sign an eternal rupture with him.” But Knight and Da Casale pleaded so effectually with Cardinal Sanctorum Quatuor, and so pressed Clement, that the pontiff, without the knowledge of the Spaniard De Angelis, gave them a more satisfactory document, but not such as Wolsey required. “In giving you this commission,” said the pope, “I am giving away my liberty, and perhaps my life. I listen not to the voice of prudence, but to that of affection only. I confide in the generosity of the king of England, he is the master of my destiny.” He then began to weep,2 and seemed ready to faint. Knight, forgetting his vexation, promised Clement that the king would do everything to save him.—“Ah!” said the pope, “there is one effectual means.”—“What is that?” inquired Henry’s agents.—“M. Lautrec, who says daily that he will come, but never does,” replied Clement, “has only to bring the French army promptly before the gates of Orvieto; then I could excuse myself by saying that he constrained me to sign the commission.”—“Nothing is easier,” replied the envoys, “we will go and hasten his arrival.”

Clement was not even now at ease. The safety of the Roman church troubled him not less than his own.… Charles might discover the trick and make the popedom suffer for it. There was danger on all sides. If the English spoke of independence, did not the Emperor threaten a reform?… The catholic princes, said the papal councillors, are capable, without perhaps a single exception, of supporting the cause of Luther to gratify a criminal ambition. The pope reflected, and withdrawing his word, promised to give the commission when Lautrec was under the walls of Orvieto; but the English agents insisted on having it immediately. To conciliate all, it was agreed that the pope should give the required document at once, but as soon as the French army arrived, he should send another copy bearing the date of the day on which he saw Lautrec. “Beseech the king to keep secret the commission I give you,” said Clement VII to Knight; “if he begins the process immediately he receives it, I am undone forever.”2 The pope thus gave permission to act, on condition of not acting at all. Knight took leave on the 1st of January 1528; he promised all the pontiff desired, and then, as if fearing some fresh difficulty, he departed the same day. Da Casale, on his side, after having offered the Cardinal Sanctorum Quatuor a gift of 4000 crowns, which he refused, repaired to Lautrec, to beg him to constrain the pope to sign a document which was already on its way to England. But while the business seemed to be clearing at Rome, it was becoming more complicated in London. The king’s project got wind, and Catherine gave way to the liveliest sorrow. “I shall protest,” said she, “against the commission given to the cardinal of York. Is he not the king’s subject, the vile flatterer of his pleasures?” Catherine did not resist alone; the people, who hated the cardinal, could not with pleasure see him invested with such authority. To obviate this inconvenience, Henry resolved to ask the pope for another cardinal, who should be empowered to terminate the affair in London with or without Wolsey. The latter agreed to the measure: it is even possible that he was the first to suggest it, for he feared to bear alone the responsibility of so hateful an inquiry. Accordingly, on the 27th of December, he wrote to the king’s agents at Rome: “Procure the envoy of a legate, and particularly of an able, easy, manageable legate … desirous of meriting the king’s favour, Campeggio for instance. You will earnestly request the cardinal who may be selected, to travel with all diligence, and you will assure him that the king will behave liberally towards him.”4

Knight reached Asti on the 10th of January, where he found letters with fresh orders. This was another check: at one time it is the pope who compels him to retrograde, at another it is the king. Henry's unlucky valetudinarian secretary, a man very susceptible of fatigue, and already wearied and exhausted by ten painful journeys, was in a very bad humour. He determined to permit Gambara to carry the two documents to England; to commission Da Casale, who had not left the pope's neighbourhood, to solicit the despatch of the legate; and as regarded himself, to go and wait for further orders at Turin:—"If it be thought good unto the king's highness that I do return unto Orvieto, I shall do as much as my poor carcass may endure." When Da Casale reached Bologna, he pressed Lautree to go and constrain the pontiff to sign the act which Gambara was already bearing to England. On receiving the new despatches he returned in all haste to Orvieto, and the pope was very much alarmed when he heard of his arrival. He had feared to grant a simple paper, destined to remain secret; and now he is required to send a prince of the church! Will Henry never be satisfied? "The mission you desire would be full of dangers," he replied; "but we have discovered another means, alone calculated to finish this business. Mind you do not say that I pointed it out to you," added the pope in a mysterious tone; "but that it was suggested by Cardinal Sanctorum Quatuor and Simonetta." Da Casale was all attention. "There is not a doctor in the world who can better decide on this matter, and on its most private circumstances, than the king himself. If therefore he sincerely believes that Catherine had really become his brother's wife, let him empower the cardinal of York to pronounce the divorce, and let him take another wife without any further ceremony;3 he can then afterwards demand the confirmation of the consistory. The affair being concluded in this way, I will take the rest upon myself."—"But," said Da Casale, somewhat dissatisfied with this new intrigue, "I must fulfil my mission, and the king demands a legate."—"And whom shall I send," asked Clement. "Da Monte? he cannot move. De Cæsis? he is at Naples. Ara Cœli? he has the gout. Piccolomini? he is of the imperial party.… Campeggio would be the best, but he is at Rome, where he supplies my place, and cannot leave without peril to the church." … And then with some emotion he added, "I throw myself into his majesty's arms. The emperor will never forgive what I am doing. If he hears of it he will summon me before his council; I shall have no rest until he has deprived me of my throne and my life."

Da Casale hastened to forward to London the result of the conference. Clement being unable to untie the knot, requested Henry to cut it. Will this prince hesitate to employ so easy a means, the pope (Clement declared it himself) being willing to ratify everything?

Here closes Henry's first campaign in the territories of the popedom. We shall now see the results of so many efforts.

CHAPTER X

Disappointment in England—War declared against Charles V—Wolsey desires to get him deposed by the Pope—A new Scheme—Embassy of Fox and Gardiner—Their Arrival at Orvieto—Their first interview with Clement—The Pope reads a treatise by Henry—Gardiner's Threats and Clement's Promise—The Modern Fabius—Fresh Interview and Menaces—The pope has not the key—Gardiner's Proposition—Difficulties and delays of the Cardinals—Gardiner's last Blows—Reverses of Charles V in Italy—The Pope's Terror and Concession—The Commission granted—Wolsey demands the Engagement—A Loophole—The Pope's Distress.

Never was disappointment more complete than that felt by Henry and Wolsey after the arrival of Gambara with the commission; the king was angry, the cardinal vexed. What Clement called the sacrifice of his life was in reality but a sheet of paper fit only to be thrown into the fire. “This commission is of no value,” said Wolsey.—“And even to put it into execution,” added Henry, “we must wait until the imperialists have quitted Italy! The pope is putting us off to the Greek calends.”—“His holiness,” observed the cardinal, “does not bind himself to pronounce the divorce; the queen will therefore appeal from our judgment.”—“And even if the pope had bound himself,” added the king, “it would be sufficient for the emperor to smile upon him, to make him retract what he had promised.”—“It is all a cheat and a mockery,” concluded both king and minister.

What was to be done next? The only way to make Clement ours, thought Wolsey, is to get rid of Charles; it is time his pride was brought down. Accordingly, on the 21st of January 1528, France and England declared hostilities against the emperor. When Charles heard of this proceeding he exclaimed: “I know the hand that has flung the torch of war into the midst of Europe. My crime is not having placed the cardinal of York on St. Peter’s throne.” A mere declaration of war was not enough for Wolsey; the bishop of Bayonne, ambassador from France, seeing him one day somewhat excited, whispered in his ear: “In former times popes have deposed emperors for smaller offences.” Charles’s deposition would have delivered the king of France from a troublesome rival; but Du Bellay, fearing to take the initiative in so bold an enterprise, suggested the idea to the cardinal. Wolsey reflected: such a thought had never before occurred to him. Taking the ambassador aside to a window, he there swore stoutly, said Du Bellay, that he should be delighted to use all his influence to get Charles deposed by the pope. “No one is more likely than yourself,” replied the bishop, “to induce Clement to do it.”—“I will use all my credit,” rejoined Wolsey, and the two priests separated. This bright idea the cardinal never forgot. Charles had robbed him of the tiara; he will retaliate by depriving Charles of his crown. An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. Staffileo, dean of the Rota, was then in London, and still burning with resentment against the author of the Sack of Rome, he favourably received the suggestions Wolsey made to him; and, finally, the envoy from John Zapolya, king-elect of Hungary, supported the project. But the kings of France and England were not so easily induced to put the thrones of kings at the disposal of the priests. It appears, however, that the pope was sounded on the subject; and if the emperor had been beaten in Italy, it is probable that the bull would have been fulminated against him. His sword preserved his crown, and the plot of the two bishops failed. The king’s councillors began to seek for less heroic means. “We must prosecute the affair at Rome,” said some.—“No,” said others, “in England. The pope is too much afraid of the emperor to pronounce the divorce in person.”—“If the pope fears the emperor more than the king of England,” exclaimed the proud Tudor, “we shall find some other way to set him at ease.” Thus, at the first contradiction, Henry placed his hand on his sword, and threatened to sever the ties which bound his kingdom to the throne of the Italian pontiff.

“I have hit it!” said Wolsey at length; “we must combine the two clans—judge the affair in London, and at the same time bind the Pontiff at Rome.” And then the able cardinal proposed the draft of a bull, by which the pope, delegating his authority to two legates, should declare that the acts of that delegation should have a perpetual effect, notwithstanding any contrary decrees that might subsequently emanate from his infallible authority. A new mission was decided upon for the accomplishment of this bold design.

Wolsey, annoyed by the folly of Knight and his colleagues, desired men of another stamp. He therefore cast his eyes on his own secretary, Stephen Gardiner, an active man, intelligent, supple, and crafty, a learned canonist, desirous of the king's favour, and, above all, a good Romanist, which at Rome was not without its advantage. Gardiner was in small the living image of his master; and hence the cardinal sometimes styled him the half of himself. Edward Fox, the chief almoner, was joined with him—a moderate, influential man, a particular friend of Henry's, and a zealous advocate of the divorce. Fox was named first in the commission; but it was agreed that Gardiner should be the real head of the embassy. "Repeat without ceasing," Wolsey told them, "that his majesty cannot do otherwise than separate from the queen. Attack each one on his weak side. Declare to the pope that the king promises to defend him against the emperor; and to the cardinals that their services will be nobly rewarded.3 If that does not suffice, let the energy of your words be such as to excite a wholesome fear in the pontiff."

Fox and Gardiner, after a gracious reception at Paris (23rd February), by Francis I, arrived at Orvieto on the 20th of March, after many perils, and with their dress in such disorder, that no one could have taken them for the ambassadors of Henry VIII. "What a city!" they exclaimed, as they passed through its streets; "what ruins, what misery! It is indeed truly called Orvieto (urbs vetus)!" The state of the town gave them no very grand idea of the state of the popedom, and they imagined that with a pontiff so poorly lodged, their negotiation could not be otherwise than easy. "I give you my house," said Da Casale, to whom they went, "my room and my own bed;" and as they made some objections, he added: "It is not possible to lodge you elsewhere; I have even been forced to borrow what was necessary to receive you." Da Casale, pressing them to change their clothes, which were still dripping (they had just crossed a river on their mules), they replied, that being obliged to travel post, they had not been able to bring a change of raiment. "Alas!" said Casale, "what is to be done? there are few persons in Orvieto who have more garments than one; even the shopkeepers have no cloth for sale; this town is quite a prison. People say the pope is at liberty here. A pretty liberty indeed! Want, impure air, wretched lodging, and a thousand other inconveniences keep the holy father closer than when he was in the Castle of St. Angelo. Accordingly, he told me the other day, it was better to be in captivity at Rome than at liberty here."2 In two days, however, they managed to procure some new clothing; and being now in a condition to show themselves, Henry's agents were admitted to an after-dinner audience on Monday the 22nd of March (1528).

Da Casale conducted them to an old building in ruins. "This is where his holiness lives," he said. They looked at one another with astonishment, and crossing the rubbish lying about, passed through three chambers whose ceilings had fallen in, whose windows were curtainless, and in which thirty persons "riff-raff were standing against the bare walls for a garnishment." This was the pope's court. At length the ambassadors reached the pontiff's room, and placed Henry's letters in his hands. "Your holiness," said Gardiner, "when sending the king a dispensation, was pleased to add, that if this document were not sufficient, you would willingly give a better. It is that favour the king now desires." The pope with embarrassment strove to soften his refusal. "I am informed," he said, "that the king is led on in this affair by a secret inclination, and that the lady he loves is far from being worthy of him." Gardiner replied with firmness: "The king truly deserves to marry again after the divorce, that he may have an heir to the crown; but the woman he proposes to take is animated by the noblest sentiments; the cardinal of York and all England do homage to her

virtues." The pope appeared convinced. "Besides," continued Gardiner, "the king has written a book on the motives of his divorce."—"Good! come and read it to me to-morrow," rejoined Clement. The next day the English envoys had hardly appeared, before Clement took Henry's book, ran over it as he walked up and down the room, and then seating himself on a long bench covered with an old carpet, "not worth twenty pence," says an annalist, he read the book aloud. He counted the number of arguments, made objections as if Henry were present, and piled them one upon another without waiting for an answer. "The marriages forbidden in Leviticus," said he, in a short and quick tone of voice, "are permitted in Deuteronomy; now Deuteronomy coming after Leviticus, we are bound by the latter. The honour of Catherine and the emperor is at stake, and the divorce would give rise to a terrible war." The pope continued speaking, and whenever the Englishmen attempted to reply, he bade them be silent, and kept on reading. "It is an excellent book," said he, however, in a courteous tone, when he had ended; "I shall keep it to read over again at my leisure." Gardiner then presenting a draft of the commission which Henry required, Clement made answer: "It is too late to look at it now; leave it with me."—"But we are in haste," added Gardiner.—"Yes, yes, I know it," said the pope. All his efforts tended to protract the business. On the 28th of March, the ambassadors were conducted to the room in which the pope slept; the cardinals Sanctorum Quatuor and De Monte, as well as the councillor of the Rota, Simonetta, were then with him. Chairs were arranged in a semicircle. "Be seated," said Clement, who stood in the middle. "Master Gardiner, now tell me what you want."—"There is no question between us but one of time. You promised to ratify the divorce, as soon as it was pronounced; and we require you to do before what you engage to do after. What is right on one day, must be right on another." Then, raising his voice, the Englishman added: "If his majesty perceives that no more respect is paid to him than to a common man, he will have recourse to a remedy which I will not name, but which will not fail in its effect." The pope and his councillors looked at one another in silence; they had understood him. The imperious Gardiner, remarking the effect which he had produced, then added in an absolute tone: "We have our instructions, and are determined to keep to them."—"I am ready to do everything compatible with my honour," exclaimed Clement, in alarm.—"What your honour would not permit you to grant," said the proud ambassador, "the honour of the king, my master, would not permit him to to ask." Gardiner's language became more imperative every minute. "Well, then," said Clement, driven to extremity, "I will do what the king demands, and if the emperor is angry, I cannot help it." The interview, which had commenced with a storm, finished with a gleam of sunshine. That bright gleam soon disappeared: Clement, who imagined he saw in Henry a Hannibal at war with Rome, wished to play the temporizer, the Fabius Conctator. "Bis dat qui cito dat," said Gardiner sharply, who observed this manœuvre.—"It is a question of law," replied the pope, "and as I am very ignorant in these matters, I must give the doctors of the canon law the necessary time to make it all clear."—"By his delays Fabius Maximus saved Rome," rejoined Gardiner; "you will destroy it by yours."2—"Alas!" exclaimed the pope, "if I say the king is right, I shall have to go back to prison."—"When truth is concerned," said the ambassador, "of what consequence are the opinions of men?" Gardiner was speaking at his ease, but Clement found that the castle of St. Angelo was not without weight in the balance. "You may be sure that I shall do everything for the best," replied the modern Fabius. With these words the conference terminated.

Such were the struggles of England with the popedom—struggles which were to end in a definitive rupture. Gardiner knew that he had a skilful adversary to deal with; too cunning to allow himself to

be irritated, he coolly resolved to frighten the pontiff: that was in his instructions. On the Friday before Palm Sunday, he was ushered into the pope's closet; there he found Clement attended by De Monte, Sanctorum Quatuor, Simonetta, Staffileo, Paul, auditor of the Rota, and Gambara. "It is impossible," said the cardinals, "to grant a decretal commission in which the pope pronounces de jure in favour of the divorce, with a promise of confirmation de facto." Gardiner insisted; but no persuasion, "neither dulce nor poynante," could move the pontiff. The envoy judged the moment had come to discharge his strongest battery. "O perverse race," said he to the pontiff's ministers, "instead of being harmless as doves, you are as full of dissimulation and malice as serpents; promising everything but performing nothing.5 England will be driven to believe that God has taken from you the key of knowledge, and that the laws of the popes, ambiguous to the popes themselves, are only fit to be cast into the fire. The king has hitherto restrained his people, impatient of the Romish yoke; but he will now give them the rein." A long and gloomy silence followed. Then the Englishman, suddenly changing his tone, softly approached Clement, who had left his seat, and conjured him in a low voice to consider carefully what justice required of him. "Alas!" replied Clement, "I tell you again, I am ignorant in these matters. According to the maxims of the canon law the pope carries all laws in the tablets of his heart, but unfortunately God has never given me the key that opens them." As he could not escape by silence, Clement retreated under cover of a jest, and heedlessly pronounced the condemnation of the popedom. If he had never received the famous key, there was no reason why other pontiffs should have possessed it. The next day he found another loophole; for when the ambassadors told him that the king would carry on the matter without him, he sighed, drew out his handkerchief, and said as he wiped his eyes: "Would to God that I were dead!" Clement employed tears as a political engine.

"We shall not get the decretal commission," (that which pronounced the divorce) said Fox and Gardiner after this, "and it is not really necessary. Let us demand the general commission (authorizing the legates to pronounce it), and exact a promise that shall supply the place of the act which is denied us." Clement, who was ready to make all the promises in the world, swore to ratify the sentence of the legates without delay. Fox and Gardiner then presented to Simonetta a draft of the act required. The dean, after reading it, returned it to the envoys, saying, "It is very well, I think, except the end; show it Sanctorum Quatuor." The next morning they carried the draft to that cardinal: "How long has it been the rule for the patient to write the prescription? I always thought it was the physician's business."—"No one knows the disease so well as the patient," replied Gardiner; "and this disease may be of such a nature that the doctor cannot prescribe the remedy without taking the patient's advice." Sanctorum Quatuor read the prescription, and then returned it, saying: "It is not bad, with the exception of the beginning. Take the draft to De Monte and the other councillors." The latter liked neither beginning, middle, nor end. "We will send for you this evening," said De Monte.

Three or four days having elapsed, Henry's envoys again waited on the pope, who showed them the draft prepared by his councillors. Gardiner remarking in it additions, retrenchments, and corrections, threw it disdainfully from him, and said coldly: "Your holiness is deceiving us; you have selected these men to be the instruments of your duplicity." Clement, in alarm, sent for Simonetta; and after a warm discussion, the envoys, more discontented than ever, quitted the pope at one in the morning. The night brings wisdom. "I only desire two little words more in the commission," said Gardiner next day to Clement and Simonetta. The pope requested Simonetta to wait upon the

cardinals immediately; the latter sent word that they were at dinner, and adjourned the business until the morrow. When Gardiner heard of this Epicurean message, he thought the time had come for striking a decisive blow. A new tragedy began. “We are deceived,” exclaimed he, “you are laughing at us. This is not the way to gain the favour of princes. Water mixed with wine spoils it;3 your corrections nullify our document. These ignorant and suspicious priests have spelled over our draft as if a scorpion was hidden under every word.—You made us come to Italy,” said he to Staffileo and Gambara, “like hawks which the fowler lures by holding out to them a piece of meat;5 and now that we are here, the bait has disappeared, and, instead of giving us what we sought, you pretend to lull us to sleep by the sweet voice of the sirens.” Then, turning to Clement, the English envoy added, “Your holiness will have to answer for this.” The pope sighed and wiped away his tears. “It was God’s pleasure,” continued Gardiner, whose tone became more threatening every minute, “that we should see with our own eyes the disposition of the people here. It is time to have done. Henry is not an ordinary prince,—bear in mind that you are insulting the defender of the faith.… You are going to lose the favour of the only monarch who protects you, and the apostolical chair, already tottering, will fall into dust, and disappear entirely amidst the applause of all Christendom.”

Gardiner paused. The pope was moved. The state of Italy seemed to confirm but too strongly the sinister predictions of the envoy of Henry VIII. The imperial troops, terrified and pursued by Lautrec, had abandoned Rome and retired on Naples. The French general was following up this wretched army of Charles V, decimated by pestilence and debanchery; Doria, at the head of his galleys, had destroyed the Spanish fleet; Gaeta and Naples only were left to the imperialists; and Lautrec, who was besieging the latter place, wrote to Henry on the 26th of August that all would soon be over. The timid Clement VII had attentively watched all these catastrophes. Accordingly, Gardiner had hardly denounced the danger which threatened the popedom, before he turned pale with affright, rose from his seat, stretched out his arms in terror, as if he had desired to repel some monster ready to devour him, and exclaimed, “Write, write! Insert whatever words you please.” As he said this, he paced up and down the room, raising his hands to heaven and sighing deeply, while Fox and Gardiner, standing motionless, looked on in silence. A tempestuous wind seemed to be stirring the depths of the abyss; the ambassadors waited until the storm was abated. At last Clement recovered himself, made a few trivial excuses, and dismissed Henry’s ministers. It was an hour past midnight.

It was neither morality, nor religion, nor even the laws of the church which led Clement to refuse the divorce; ambition and fear were his only motives. He would have desired that Henry should first constrain the emperor to restore him his territories. But the king of England, who felt himself unable to protect the pope against Charles, required, however, this unhappy pontiff to provoke the emperor’s anger. Clement reaped the fruits of that fatal system which had transformed the church of Jesus Christ into a pitiful combination of policy and cunning. On the next day, the tempest having thoroughly abated, Sanctorum Quatuor corrected the commission. It was signed, completed by a leaden seal attached to a piece of string, and then handed to Gardiner, who read it. The bull was addressed to Wolsey, and “authorized him, in case he should acknowledge the nullity of Henry’s marriage, to pronounce judicially the sentence of divorce, but without noise or display of judgment;3 for that purpose he might take any English bishop for his colleague.”—“All that we can do, you can do,” said the pope. “We are very doubtful,” said the importunate Gardiner

after reading the bull, “whether this commission, without the clauses of confirmation and revocation, will satisfy his majesty; but we will do all in our power to get him to accept it.”—“Above all, do not speak of our altercations,” said the pope. Gardiner, like a discreet diplomist, did not scruple to note down every particular in cipher in the letters whence these details are procured. “Tell the king,” continued the pontiff, “that this commission is on my part a declaration of war against the emperor, and that I now place myself under his majesty’s protection.” The chief-almoner of England departed for London with the precious document. But one storm followed close upon another. Fox had not long quitted Orvieto when new letters arrived from Wolsey, demanding the fourth of the acts previously requested, namely, the engagement to ratify at Rome whatever the commissioners might decide in England. Gardiner was to set about it in season and out of season; the verbal promise of the pope counted for nothing; this document must be had, whether the pope was ill, dying, or dead. “Ego et Rex meus, his majesty and I command you;” said Wolsey; “this divorce is of more consequence to us than twenty popedoms.” The English envoy renewed their demand. “Since you refuse the decretal,’ he said, “there is the greater reason why you should not refuse the engagement.” This application led to fresh discussion and fresh tears. Clement gave way once more; but the Italians, more crafty than Gardiner, reserved a loophole in the document through which the pontiff might escape. The messenger Thaddeus carried it to London; and Gardiner left Orvieto for Rome to confer with Campeggio.

Clement was a man of penetrating mind, and although he knew as well as any how to deliver a clever speech, he was irresolute and timid; and accordingly the commission had not long been despatched before he repented. Full of distress, he paced the ruined chambers of his old palace, and imagined he saw hanging over his head that terrible sword of Charles the Fifth, whose edge he had already felt. “Wretch that I am,” said he; “cruel wolves surround me; they open their jaws to swallow me up.… I see none but enemies around me. At their head is the emperor.… What will he do? Alas! I have yielded that fatal commission which the general of the Spanish observance had enjoined me to refuse. Behind Charles come the Venetians, the Florentines, the duke of Ferrara.… They have cast lots upon my vesture. … Next comes the king of France, who promises nothing, but looks on with folded arms; or rather, what perfidy! calls upon me at this critical moment to deprive Charles V of his crown.… And last, but not least, Henry VIII, the defender of the faith, indulges in frightful menaces against me.… The emperor desires to maintain the queen on the throne of England; the latter, to put her away.… Would to God that Catherine were in her grave! But, alas! she lives … to be the apple of discord dividing the two greatest monarchies, and the inevitable cause of the ruin of the popedom.… Wretched man that I am! how cruel is my perplexity, and around me, I can see nothing but horrible confusion.”

CHAPTER XI

Fox’s Report to Henry and Anne—Wolsey’s Impression—He demands the Decretal—One of the Cardinal’s petty Manœuvres—He sets his Conscience at Rest—Gardiner fails at Rome—Wolsey’s new perfidy—The King’s Anger against the Pope—Sir T. More predicts Religious Liberty—Immorality of Ultramontane Socialism—Erasmus in-invited—Wolsey’s last Flight—Energetic Efforts at Rome—Clement grants all—Wolsey triumphs—Union of Rome and England.

During this time Fox was making his way to England. On the 27th of April he reached Paris; on the 2nd of May he landed at Sandwich, and hastened to Greenwich, where he arrived the next day at five in the evening, just as Wolsey had left for London. Fox's arrival was an event of great importance. "Let him go to Lady Anne's apartments," said the king, "and wait for me there." Fox told Anne Boleyn of his and Gardiner's exertions, and the success of their mission, at which she expressed her very great satisfaction. Indeed, more than a year had elapsed since her return to England, and she no longer resisted Henry's project. "Mistress Anne always called me Master Stephen," wrote Fox to Gardiner, "her thoughts were so full of you." The king appeared and Anne withdrew.

"Tell me as briefly as possible what you have done," said Henry. Fox placed in the king's hands the pope's insignificant letter, which he bade his almoner read; then that from Staffileo, which was put on one side; and lastly Gardiner's letter, which Henry took hastily and read himself. "The pope has promised us," said Fox, as he terminated his report, "to confirm the sentence of the divorce, as soon as it has been pronounced by the commissioners."—"Excellent!" exclaimed Henry; and then he ordered Anne to be called in. "Repeat before this lady," he said to Fox, "what you have just told me." The almoner did so. "The pope is convinced of the justice of your cause," he said in conclusion, "and the cardinal's letter has convinced him that my lady is worthy of the throne of England."—"Make your report to Wolsey this very night," said the king.

It was ten o'clock when the chief almoner reached the cardinal's palace; he had gone to bed, but immediate orders were given that Fox should be conducted to his room. Being a churchman, Wolsey could understand the pope's artifices better than Henry; accordingly, as soon as he learnt that Fox had brought the commission only, he became alarmed at the task imposed upon him. "What a misfortune!" he exclaimed; "your commission is no better than Gambara's.… However, go and rest yourself; I will examine these papers to-morrow." Fox withdrew in confusion. "It is not bad," said Wolsey the next day, "but the whole business still falls on me alone!—Never mind, I must wear a contented look, or else.…" In the afternoon he summoned into his closet Fox, Dr. Bell, and Viscount Rochford: "Master Gardiner has surpassed himself," said the crafty supple cardinal; "What a man! what an inestimable treasure! what a jewel in our kingdom!"

He did not mean a word he was saying. Wolsey was dissatisfied with every thing,—with the refusal of the decretal, and with the drawing up of the commission, as well as of the engagement (which arrived soon after in good condition, so far as the outside was concerned). But the king's ill humour would infallibly recoil on Wolsey; so putting a good face on a bad matter, he ruminated in secret on the means of obtaining what had been refused him. "Write to Gardiner," said he to Fox, "that every thing makes me desire the pope's decretal—the need of unburdening my conscience, of being able to reply to the calumniators who will attack my judgment, and the thought of the accidents to which the life of man is exposed. Let his holiness, then, pronounce the divorce himself; we engage on our part to keep his resolution secret. But order Master Stephen to employ every kind of persuasion that his rhetoric can imagine." In case the pope should positively refuse the decretal, Wolsey required that at least Campeggio should share the responsibility of the divorce with him. This was not all: while reading the engagement, Wolsey discovered the loophole which had escaped Gardiner, and this is what he contrived:—"The engagement which he pope has sent us," he wrote to Gardiner, "is drawn up in such terms that he can retract it at pleasure; we must therefore find some good way to obtain another. You may do it under this pretence. You will

appear before his holiness with a dejected air, and tell him that the courier, to whom the conveyance of the said engagement was intrusted, fell into the water with his despatches, so that the rescripts were totally defaced and illegible; that I have not dared deliver it into the king's hands, and unless his holiness will grant you a duplicate, some notable blame will be imputed unto you for not taking better care in its transmission. And further, you will continue: I remember the expressions of the former document, and to save your holiness trouble, I will dictate them to your secretary. Then," added Wolsey, "while the secretary is writing, you will find means to introduce, without its being perceived, as many fat, pregnant, and available words as possible, to bind the pope and enlarge my powers, the politic handling of which the king's highness and I commit unto your good discretion."

Such was the expedient invented by Wolsey. The papal secretary, imagining he was making a fresh copy of the original document (which was, by the way, in perfect condition), was at the dictation of the ambassador to draw up another of a different tenor. The "politic handling" of the cardinal-legate, which was not very unlike forgery, throws a disgraceful light on the policy of the sixteenth century.

Wolsey read this letter to the chief-almoner; and then, to set his conscience at rest, he added piously: "In an affair of such high importance, on which, depends the glory or the ruin of the realm,—my honour or my disgrace—the condemnation of my soul or my everlasting merit—I will listen solely to the voice of my conscience, and I shall act in such a manner as to be able to render an account to God without fear."

Wolsey did more; it seems that the boldness of his declarations reassured him with regard to the baseness of his works. Being at Greenwich on the following Sunday, he said to the king in the presence of Fox, Bell, Wolman, and Tuke: "I am bound to your royal person more than any subject was ever bound to his prince. I am ready to sacrifice my goods, my blood, my life for you.… But my obligations towards God are greater still. For that cause, rather than act against his will, I would endure the extremest evils. I would suffer your royal indignation, and, if necessary, deliver my body to the executioners that they might cut it in pieces." What could be the spirit then impelling Wolsey? Was it blindness or impudence? He may have been sincere in the words he addressed to Henry; at the bottom of his heart he may have desired to set the pope above the king, and the church of Rome above the kingdom of England; and this desire may have appeared to him a sublime virtue, such as would hide a multitude of sins. What the public conscience would have called treason, was heroism to the Romish priest. This zeal for the papacy is sometimes met with in conjunction with the most flagrant immorality. If Wolsey deceived the pope, it was to save popery in the realm of England. Fox, Bell, Wolman, and Tuke listened to him with astonishment.2 Henry, who thought he knew his man, received these holy declarations without alarm, and the cardinal having thus eased his conscience, proceeded boldly to his iniquities. It seems, however, that the inward reproaches which he silenced in public, had their revenge in secret. One of his officers entering his closet shortly afterwards, presented a letter addressed to Campeggio for his signature. It ended thus: "I hope all things shall be done according to the will of God, the desire of the king, the quiet of the kingdom, and to our honour with a good conscience." The cardinal having read the letter, dashed out the four last words. Conscience has a sting from which none can escape, not even a Wolsey.

However, Gardiner lost no time in Italy. When he met Campeggio (to whom Henry VIII had given a palace at Rome, and a bishopric in England), he entreated him to go to London and pronounce the divorce. This prelate, who was to be empowered in 1530 with authority to crush Protestantism in Germany, seemed bound to undertake a mission that would save Romanism in Britain. But proud of his position at Rome, where he acted as the pope's representative, he cared not for a charge that would undoubtedly draw upon him either Henry's hatred or the emperor's anger. He begged to be excused. The pope spoke in a similar tone. When he was informed of this, the terrible Tudor, beginning to believe that Clement desired to entangle him, as the hunter entangles the lion in his toils, gave vent to his anger on Tuke, Fox, and Gardiner, but particularly on Wolsey. Nor were reasons wanting for this explosion. The cardinal, perceiving that his hatred against Charles had carried him too far, pretended that it was without his orders that Clarencieux, bribed by France, had combined with the French ambassador to declare war against the emperor; and added that he would have the English king-at-arms put to death as he passed through Calais. This was an infallible means of preventing disagreeable revelations. But the herald, who had been forewarned, crossed by way of Boulogne, and, without the cardinal's knowledge, obtained an interview with Henry, before whom he placed the orders he had received from Wolsey in three consecutive letters. The king, astonished at his minister's impudence, exclaimed profanely: "O Lord Jesu, the man in whom I had most confidence told me quite the contrary." He then summoned Wolsey before him, and reproached him severely for his falsehoods. The wretched man shook like a leaf. Henry appeared to pardon him, but the season of his favour had passed away. Henceforward he kept the cardinal as one of those instruments we make use of for a time, and then throw away when we have no further need of them. The king's anger against the pope far exceeded that against Wolsey; he trembled from head to foot, rose from his seat, then sat down again, and vented his wrath in the most violent language:—"What!" he exclaimed, "I shall exhaust my political combinations, empty my treasury, make war upon my friends, consume my forces … and for whom?… for a heartless priest who, considering neither the exigencies of my honour, nor the peace of my conscience, nor the prosperity of my kingdom, nor the numerous benefits which I have lavished on him, refuses me a favour, which he ought, as the common father of the faithful, to grant even to an enemy.… Hypocrite!… You cover yourself with the cloak of friendship, you flatter us by crafty practices, but you give us only a bastard document, and you say like Pilate: It matters little to me if this king perishes, and all his kingdom with him; take him and judge him according to your law!… I understand you … you wish to entangle us in the briers, to catch us in a trap, to lure us into a pitfall.… But we have discovered the snare; we shall escape from your ambuscade, and brave your power."

Such was the language then heard at the court of England, says an historian. The monks and priests began to grow alarmed, while the most enlightened minds already saw in the distance the first gleams of religious liberty. One day, at a time when Henry was proving himself a zealous follower of the Romish doctrines, Sir Thomas More was sitting in the midst of his family, when his son-in-law, Roper, now become a warm papist, exclaimed: "Happy kingdom of England, where no heretic dares show his face!"—"That is true, son Roper," said More; "we seem to sit now upon the mountains, treading the heretics under our feet like ants; but I pray God that some of us do not live to see the day when we gladly would wish to be at league with them, to suffer them to have their churches quietly to themselves, so that they would be content to let us have ours peaceably to ourselves." Roper angrily replied:3 "By my word, sir, that is very desperately spoken!" More,

however, was in the right; genius is sometimes a great diviner. The Reformation was on the point of inaugurating religious liberty, and by that means placing civil liberty on an immovable foundation.

Henry himself grew wiser by degrees. He began to have doubts about the Roman hierarchy, and to ask himself, whether a priest-king, embarrassed in all the political complications of Europe, could be the head of the church of Jesus Christ. Pious individuals in his kingdom recognized in Scripture and in conscience a law superior to the law of Rome, and refused to sacrifice at the command of the church their moral convictions, sanctioned by the revelation of God. The hierarchical system, which claims to absorb man in the papacy, had oppressed the consciences of Christians for centuries. When the Romish Church had required from such as Berengarius, John Huss, Savonarola, John Wesel, and Luther, the denial of their consciences enlightened by the word, that is to say, by the voice of God, it had shown most clearly how great is the immorality of ultramontane socialism. “If the Christian consents to this enormous demand of the hierarchy,” said the most enlightened men; “if he renounces his own notions of good and evil in favour of the clergy; if he reserves not his right to obey God, who speaks to him in the Bible, rather than men, even if their agreement were universal; if Henry VIII, for instance, should silence his conscience, which condemns his union with his brother’s widow, to obey the clerical voice which approves of it; by that very act he renounces truth, duty, and even God himself.” But we must add, that if the rights of conscience were beginning to be understood in England, it was not about such holy matters as these that the pope and Henry were contending. They were both intriguers—both dissatisfied, the one desirous of love, the other of power. Be that as it may, a feeling of disgust for Rome then took root in the king’s heart, and nothing could afterwards eradicate it. He immediately made every exertion to attract Erasmus to London. Indeed, if Henry separated from the pope, his old friends, the humanists, must be his auxiliaries, and not the heretical doctors. But Erasmus, in a letter dated 1st June, alleged the weak state of his health, the robbers who infested the roads, the wars and rumours of wars then afloat. “Our destiny leads us,” he said; “let us yield to it.” It is a fortunate thing for England that Erasmus was not its reformer.

Wolsey noted this movement of his master’s, and resolved to make a strenuous effort to reconcile Clement and Henry; his own safety was at stake. He wrote to the pope, to Campeggio, to Da Casale, to all Italy. He declared that if he was ruined, the popedom would be ruined too, so far at least as England was concerned: “I would obtain the decretal bull with my own blood, if possible,” he added. “Assure the holy father on my life that no mortal eye shall see it.” Finally, he ordered the chief-almoner to write to Gardiner: “If Campeggio does not come, you shall never return to England;” an infallible means of stimulating the secretary’s zeal. This was the last effort of Henry VIII. Bourbon and the Prince of Orange had not employed more zeal a year before in scaling the walls of Rome. Wolsey’s fire had inflamed his agents; they argued, entreated, stormed, and threatened. The alarmed cardinals and theologians, assembling at the pope’s call, discussed the matter, mixing political interests with the affairs of the church. At last they understood what Wolsey now communicated to them. “Henry is the most energetic defender of the faith,” they said. “It is only by acceding to his demand that we can preserve the kingdom of England to the popedom. The army of Charles is in full flight, and that of Francis triumphs.” The last of these arguments decided the question; the pope suddenly felt a great sympathy for Wolsey and for the English Church; the emperor was beaten; therefore he was wrong. Clement granted everything.

First, Campeggio was desired to go to London. The pontiff knew that he might reckon on his intelligence and inflexible adhesion to the interests of the hierarchy; even the cardinal's gout was of use, for it might help to innumerable delays. Next, on the 8th of June, the pope, then at Viterbo, gave a new commission, by which he conferred on Wolsey and Campeggio the power to declare null and void the marriage between Henry and Catherine, with liberty for the king and queen to form new matrimonial ties. A few days later he signed the famous decretal by which he himself annulled the marriage between Henry and Catherine; but instead of intrusting it to Gardiner, he gave it to Campeggio, with orders not to let it go out of his hands. Clement was not sure of the course of events: if Charles should decidedly lose his power, the bull would be published in the face of Christendom; if he should recover it, the bull would be burnt. In fact the flames did actually consume some time afterwards this decree which Clement had wetted with his tears as he put his name to it. Finally, on the 23rd of July, the pope signed a valid engagement, by which he declared beforehand that all retractation of these acts should be null and void. Campeggio and Gardiner departed. Charles's defeat was as complete at Rome as at Naples; the justice of his cause had vanished with his army.

Nothing, therefore, was wanting to Henry's desires. He had Campeggio, the commission, the decretal bull of divorce signed by the pope, and the engagement giving an irrevocable value to all these acts. Wolsey was conqueror,—the conqueror of Clement!… He had often wished to mount the restive courser of the popedom and to guide it at his will, but each time the unruly steed had thrown him from the saddle. Now he was firm in his seat, and held the horse in hand. Thanks to Charles's reverses, he was master at Rome. The popedom, whether it was pleased or not, must take the road he had chosen, and before which it had so long recoiled. The king's joy was unbounded, and equalled only by Wolsey's. The cardinal, in the fulness of his heart, wishing to show his gratitude to the officers of the Roman court, made them presents of carpets, horses, and vessels of gold. All near Henry felt the effects of his good humour. Anne smiled; the court indulged in amusements; the great affair was about to be accomplished; the New Testament to be delivered to the flames. The union between England and the popedom appeared confirmed for ever, and the victory which Rome seemed about to gain in the British isles might secure her triumph in the west. Vain omens! far different were the events in the womb of the future.

BOOK XX The Two Divorces

CHAPTER I

Progress of the Reformation—The two Divorces—Entreaties to Anne Boleyn—The Letters in the Vatican—Henry to Anne—Henry's Second Letter—Third—Fourth—Wolsey's Alarm—His fruitless Proceedings—He turns—The Sweating Sickness—Henry's Fears—New Letters to Anne—Anne falls sick; her Peace—Henry writes to her—Wolsey's Terror—Campeggio does not arrive—All dissemble at Court.

While England seemed binding herself to the court of Rome, the general course of the church and of the world gave stronger presage every day of the approaching emancipation of Christendom. The respect which for so many centuries had hedged in the Roman Pontiff was everywhere shaken; the Reform, already firmly established in several states of Germany and Switzerland, was extending in France, the Low Countries, and Hungary, and beginning in Sweden, Denmark, and Scotland. The South of Europe appeared indeed submissive to the Romish church; but Spain, at

heart, cared little for the pontifical infallibility; and even Italy began to inquire whether the papal dominion was not an obstacle to her prosperity. England, notwithstanding appearances, was also going to throw off the yoke of the bishops of the Tiber, and many faithful voices might already be heard demanding that the word of God should be acknowledged the supreme authority in the church. The conquest of Christian Britain by the papacy occupied all the seventh century, as we have seen. The sixteenth was the counterpart of the seventh. The struggle which England then had to sustain, in order to free herself from the power that had enslaved her during nine hundred years, was full of sudden changes; like those of the times of Augustine and Oswy. This struggle indeed took place in each of the countries where the church was reformed; but nowhere can it be traced in all its diverse phases so distinctly as in Great Britain. The positive work of the Reformation—that which consisted in recovering the truth and life so long lost—was nearly the same everywhere; but as regards the negative work—the struggle with the popedom—we might almost say that other nations committed to England the task by which they were all to profit. An unenlightened piety may perhaps look upon the relations of the court of London with the court of Rome, at the period of the Reformation, as void of interest to the faith; but history will not think the same. It has been too often forgotten that the main point in this contest was not the divorce (which was only the occasion), but the contest itself and its important consequences. The divorce of Henry Tudor and Catherine of Aragon is a secondary event; but the divorce of England and the popedom is a primary event, one of the great evolutions of history, a creative act (so to speak) which still exercises a normal influence over the destinies of mankind. And accordingly everything connected with it is full of instruction for us. Already a great number of pious men had attached themselves to the authority of God; but the king, and with him that part of the nation, strangers to the evangelical faith, clung to Rome, which Henry had so valiantly defended. The word of God had spiritually separated England from the papacy; the great matter separated it materially. There is a close relationship between these two divorces, which gives extreme importance to the process between Henry and Catherine. When a great revolution is to be effected in the bosom of a people (we have the Reformation particularly in view), God instructs the minority by the Holy Scriptures, and the majority by the dispensations of the divine government. Facts undertake to push forward those whom the more spiritual voice of the word leaves behind. England, profiting by this great teaching of facts, has thought it her duty ever since to avoid all contact with a power that had deceived her; she has thought that popery could not have the dominion over a people without infringing on its vitality, and that it was only by emancipating themselves from this priestly dictatorship that modern nations could advance safely in the paths of liberty, order, and greatness. For more than a year, as Henry's complaints testify, Anne continued deaf to his homage. The despairing king saw that he must set other springs to work, and taking Lord Rochford aside, he unfolded his plans to him. The ambitious father promised to do all in his power to influence his daughter. "The divorce is a settled thing," he said to her; "you have no control over it. The only question is, whether it shall be you or another who shall give an heir to the crown. Bear in mind that terrible revolutions threaten England, if the king has no son." Thus did every thing combine to weaken Anne's resolution. The voice of her father, the interests of her country, the king's love, and doubtless some secret ambition, influenced her to grasp the proffered sceptre. These thoughts haunted her in society, in solitude, and even in her dreams. At one time she imagined herself on the throne, distributing to the people her charities and the word of God; at another, in some obscure exile, leading a useless life, in tears and ignominy. When, in the sports of her imagination,

the crown of England appeared all glittering before her, she at first rejected it; but afterwards that regal ornament seemed so beautiful, and the power it conferred so enviable, that she repelled it less energetically. Anne still refused, however, to give the so ardently solicited assent.

Henry, vexed by her hesitation, wrote to her frequently, and almost always in French. As the court of Rome makes use of these letters, which are kept in the Vatican, to abuse the Reformation, we think it our duty to quote them. The theft committed by a cardinal has preserved them for us; and we shall see that, far from supporting the calumnies that have been spread abroad, they tend, on the contrary, to refute them. We are far from approving their contents as a whole; but we cannot deny to the young lady, to whom they are addressed, the possession of noble and generous sentiments.

Henry, unable to support the anguish caused by Anne's refusal, wrote to her, as it is generally supposed, in May 1528:

"By revolving in my mind the contents of your last letters, I have put myself into great agony, not knowing how to interpret them, whether to my disadvantage, as I understand some passages, or not, as I conclude from others. I beseech you earnestly to let me know your real mind as to the love between us two. It is needful for me to obtain this answer of you, having been for a whole year wounded with the dart of love, and not yet assured whether I shall succeed in finding a place in your heart and affection. This uncertainty has hindered me of late from declaring you my mistress, lest it should prove that you only entertain for me an ordinary regard. But if you please to do the duty of a true and loyal mistress, I promise you that not only the name shall be given to you, but also that I will take you for my mistress, casting off all others that are in competition with you, out of my thoughts and affection, and serving you only. I beg you to give an entire answer to this my rude letter, that I may know on what and how far I may depend. But if it does not please you to answer me in writing, let me know some place where I may have it by word of mouth, and I will go thither with all my heart. No more for fear of tiring you. Written by the hand of him who would willingly remain yours, "H. Rex."

Such were the affectionate, and we may add (if we think of the time and the man) the respectful terms employed by Henry in writing to Anne Boleyn. The latter, without making any promises, betrayed some little affection for the king, and added to her reply an emblematical jewel, representing "a solitary damsel in a boat tossed by the tempest," wishing thus to make the prince understand the dangers to which his love exposed her. Henry was ravished and immediately replied:—

"For a present so valuable, that nothing could be more (considering the whole of it,) I return you my most hearty thanks, not only on account of the costly diamond, and the ship in which the solitary damsel is tossed about, but chiefly for the fine interpretation, and the too humble submission which your goodness hath made to me. Your favour I will always seek to preserve, and this is my firm intention and hope, according to the matter, aut illic aut nullibi.

"The demonstrations of your affections are such, the fine thoughts of your letter so cordially expressed, that they oblige me for ever to honour, love, and serve you sincerely. I beseech you to continue in the same firm and constant purpose, and assuring you that, on my part, I will not only make you a suitable return, but outdo you, so great is the loyalty of the heart that desires to please

you. I desire, also, that if, at any time before this, I have in any way offended you, that you would give me the same absolution that you ask, assuring you, that hereafter my heart shall be dedicated to you alone. I wish my person were so too. God can do it, if he pleases, to whom I pray once a-day for that end, hoping that at length my prayers will be heard. I wish the time may be short, but I shall think it long till we see one another. Written by the hand of that secretary, who in heart, body, and will, is “Your loyal and most faithful Servant, “H. T. Rex.”

Henry was a passionate lover, and history is not called upon to vindicate that cruel prince; but in the preceding letter we cannot discover the language of a seducer. It is impossible to imagine the king praying to God once a-day, for anything but a lawful union. These daily prayers seem to present the matter in a different light from that which Romanist writers have imagined.

Henry thought himself more advanced than he really was. Anne then shrank back; embarrassed by the position she held at court, she begged for one less elevated. The king submitted, although very vexed at first:

“Nevertheless that it belongeth not to a gentleman,” he wrote to her, “to put his mistress in the situation of a servant, yet, by following your wishes, I would willingly concede it, if by that means you are less uncomfortable in the place you shall choose than in that where you have been placed by me. I thank you most cordially that you are pleased still to bear me in your remembrance.

“H. T.”

Anne, having retired in May to Hever castle, her father’s residence, the king wrote to her as follows:—

“My Mistress and my Friend,

“My heart and I surrender ourselves into your hands, and we supplicate to be commended to your good graces, and that by absence your affections may not be diminished to us. For that would be to augment our pain, which would be a great pity, since absence gives enough, and more than I ever thought could be felt. This brings to my mind a fact in astronomy, which is, that the longer the days are, the farther off is the sun, and yet the more scorching is his heat. Thus is it with our love; absence has placed distance between us, nevertheless fervour increases, at least on my part. I hope the same from you, assuring you that in my case the anguish of absence is so great that it would be intolerable were it not for the firm hope I have of your indissoluble affection towards me. In order to remind you of it, and because I cannot in person be in your presence, I send you the thing which comes nearest that is possible, that is to say, my picture, and the whole device, which you already know of, set in bracelets; wishing myself in their place when it pleases you. This is from the hand of “Your Servant and Friend, “H. T. Rex.”

Pressed by her father, her uncles, and by Henry, Anne’s firmness was shaken. That crown, rejected by Renée and by Margaret, dazzled the young Englishwoman; every day she found some new charm in it; and gradually familiarizing herself with her new future, she said at last: “If the king becomes free, I shall be willing to marry him.” This was a great fault; but Henry was at the height of joy. The courtiers watched with observant eyes these developments of the king’s affection, and were already preparing the homage which they proposed to lay at Anne Boleyn’s feet. But there was one man at court whom Henry’s resolution filled with sorrow; this was Wolsey. He had been

the first to suggest to the king the idea of separating from Catherine; but if Anne is to succeed her, there must be no divorce. He had first alienated Catherine's party; he was now going to irritate that of the Boleyns; accordingly he began to fear that whatever might be the issue of this affair, it would cause his ruin. He took frequent walks in his park at Hampton Court, accompanied by the French ambassador, the confidant of his sorrows: "I would willingly lose one of my fingers," he said, "if I could only have two hours' conversation with the king of France." At another time, fancying all England was pursuing him, he said with alarm, "The king my master and all his subjects will cry murder against me; they will fall upon me more fiercely than on a Turk, and all Christendom will rise against me!" The next day Wolsey, to gain the French ambassador, gave him a long history of what he had done for France against the wishes of all England: "I need much dexterity in my affairs," he added, "and must use a terrible alchymy." But alchymy could not save him. Rarely has so much anguish been veiled beneath such grandeur. Du Bellay was moved with pity at the sight of the unhappy man's sufferings. "When he gives way," he wrote to Montmorency, "it lasts a day together;—he is continually sighing.—You have never seen a man in such anguish of mind." In truth Wolsey's reason was tottering. That fatal idea of the divorce was the cause of all his woes, and to be able to recall it, he would have given, not a finger only, but an arm, and perhaps more. It was too late; Henry had started his car down the steep, and whoever attempted to stop it would have been crushed beneath its wheels. However, the cardinal tried to obtain something. Francis I had intercepted a letter from Charles V in which the emperor spoke of the divorce as likely to raise the English nation in revolt. Wolsey caused this letter to be read to the king, in the hope that it would excite his serious apprehensions; but Henry only frowned, and Du Bellay, to whom the monarch ascribed the report on these troubles foreboded by Charles, received "a gentle lash." This was the sole result of the manœuvre.

Wolsey now resolved to broach this important subject in a straightforward manner. The step might prove his ruin; but if he succeeded he was saved and the popedom with him. Accordingly one day (shortly before the sweating sickness broke out, says Du Bellay, probably in June 1528) Wolsey openly prayed the king to renounce his design; his own reputation, he told him, the prosperity of England, the peace of Europe, the safety of the church,—all required it; besides the pope would never grant the divorce. While the cardinal was speaking, Henry's face grew black; and before he had concluded the king's anger broke out. "The king used terrible words," said Du Bellay. He would have given a thousand Wolseys for one Anne Boleyn. "No other than God shall take her from me," was his most decided resolution.

Wolsey, now no longer doubting of his disgrace, began to take his measures accordingly. He commenced building in several places, in order to win the affections of the common people; he took great care of his bishoprics, in order that they might ensure him an easy retreat; he was affable to the courtiers; and thus covered the earth with flowers to deaden his fall. Then he would sigh as if he were disgusted with honours, and would celebrate the charms of solitude. He did more than this. Seeing plainly that the best way of recovering the king's favour would be to conciliate Anne Boleyn, he made her the most handsome presents, and assured her that all his efforts would now be directed to raise her to the throne of England. Anne believing these declarations replied, that she would help him in her turn, "As long as any breath was in her body."2 Even Henry had no doubt that the cardinal had profited by his lesson.

Thus were all parties restless and uneasy—Henry desiring to marry Lady Anne, the courtiers to get rid of Wolsey, and the latter to remain in power—when a serious event appeared to put every one in harmony with his neighbour. About the middle of June, the terrible sweating sickness (sudor anglicus) broke out in England. The citizens of London, “thick as flies,” said Du Bellay, suddenly feeling pains in the head and heart, rushed from the streets or shops to their chambers, began to sweat, and took to their beds. The disease made frightful and rapid progress, a burning heat preyed on their limbs; if they chanced to uncover themselves, the perspiration ceased, delirium came on, and in four hours the victim was dead and “stiff as a wall,”4 says the French ambassador. Every family was in mourning. Sir Thomas More, kneeling by his daughter’s bedside, burst into tears, and called upon God to save his beloved Margaret. Wolsey, who was at Hampton Court, suspecting nothing amiss, arrived in London as usual to preside in the court of Chancery; but he ordered his horses to be saddled again immediately and rode back. In four days, 2000 persons died in London. The court was at first safe from the contagion; but on the fourth day one of Anne Boleyn’s ladies was attacked; it was as if a thunderbolt had fallen on the palace. The king removed with all haste, and staid at a place twelve miles off, for he was not prepared to die. He ordered Anne to return to her father, invited the queen to join him, and took up his residence at Waltham. His real conscience awoke only in the presence of death. Four of his attendants and a friar, Anne’s confessor, as it would appear, falling ill, the king departed for Hunsdon. He had been there two days only when Powis, Carew, Carton, and others of his court, were carried off in two or three hours. Henry had met an enemy whom he could not vanquish. He quitted the place attacked by the disease; he removed to another quarter; and when the sickness laid hold of any of his attendants in his new retreat, he again left that for a new asylum. Terror froze his blood; he wandered about pursued by that terrible scythe whose sweep might perhaps reach him; he cut off all communication, even with his servants; shut himself up in a room at the top of an isolated tower; ate all alone, and would see no one but his physician; he prayed, fasted, confessed, became reconciled with the queen; took the sacrament every Sunday and feast day; received his Maker, to use the words of a gentleman of his chamber; and the queen and Wolsey did the same. Nor was that all: his councillor, Sir Brian Tuke, was sick in Essex; but that mattered not; the king ordered him to come to him, even in his litter; and on the 20th of June, Henry after hearing three masses (he had never done so much before in one day) said to Tuke: “I want you to write my will.” He was not the only one who took that precaution. “There were a hundred thousand made,” says Du Bellay.

During this time, Anne in her retirement at Hever was calm and collected; she prayed much, particularly for the king and for Wolsey. But Henry, far less submissive, was very anxious. “The uneasiness my doubts about your health gave me,” he wrote to her, “disturbed and frightened me exceedingly; but now, since you have as yet felt nothing, I hope it is with you as it is with us.… I beg you, my entirely beloved, not to frighten yourself, or be too uneasy at our absence, for wherever I am, I am yours. And yet we must sometimes submit to our misfortunes, for whoever will struggle against fate, is generally but so much the farther from gaining his end. Wherefore, comfort yourself and take courage, and make this misfortune as easy to you as you can.”4 As he received no news, Henry’s uneasiness increased; he sent to Anne a messenger and a letter: “to acquit myself of the duty of a true servant, I send you this letter, beseeching you to apprize me of your welfare, which I pray may continue as long as I desire mine own.”

Henry's fears were well founded; the malady became more severe; in four hours eighteen persons died at the archbishop of Canterbury's; Anne Boleyn herself and her brother also caught the infection. The king was exceedingly agitated; Anne alone appeared calm; the strength of her character raised her above exaggerated fears; but her enemies ascribed her calmness to other motives. "Her ambition is stronger than death," they said. "The king, queen, and cardinal tremble for their lives, but she … she would die content if she died a queen." Henry once more changed his residence. All the gentlemen of his privy-chamber were attacked with one exception; "he remained alone, keeping himself apart," says Du Bellay, and confessed every day. He wrote again to Anne, sending her his physician, Dr. Butts: "The most displeasing news that could occur came to me suddenly at night. On three accounts I must lament it. One, to hear of the illness of my mistress, whom I esteem more than all the world, and whose health I desire as I do my own. I would willingly bear half of what you suffer to cure you. The second, from the fear that I shall have to endure my wearisome absence much longer, which has hitherto given me all the vexation that was possible; and when gloomy thoughts filled my mind, then I pray God to remove far from me such troublesome and rebellious ideas. The third, because my physician, in whom I have most confidence, is absent. Yet, from the want of him, I send you my second, and hope that he will soon make you well. I shall then love him more than ever. I beseech you to be guided by his advice in your illness. By your doing this, I hope soon to see you again, which will be to me a greater comfort than all the precious jewels in the world." The pestilence soon broke out with more violence around Henry; he fled in alarm to Hatfield, taking with him only the gentleman of his chamber; he next quitted this place for Tittenhanger, a house belonging to Wolsey, whence he commanded general processions throughout the kingdom in order to avert this scourge of God. At the same time he wrote to Wolsey: "As soon as any one falls ill in the place where you are, fly to another; and go thus from place to place." The poor cardinal was still more alarmed than Henry. As soon as he felt the slightest perspiration, he fancied himself a dead man. "I entreat your highness," he wrote trembling to the king on the 5th of July, "to show yourself full of pity for my soul; these are perhaps the last words I shall address to you … the whole world will see by my last testament that you have not bestowed your favour upon an ungrateful man." The king, perceiving that Wolsey's mind was affected, bade him "put apart fear and fantasies," and wear a cheerful humour in the midst of death. At last the sickness began to diminish, and immediately the desire to see Anne revived in Henry's bosom. On the 18th of August she re-appeared at court, and all the king's thoughts were now bent on the divorce. But this business seemed to proceed in inverse ratio to his desires. There was no news of Campeggio; was he lost in the Alps or at sea? Did his gout detain him in some village, or was the announcement of his departure only a feint? Anne Boleyn herself was uneasy, for she attached great importance to Campeggio's coming. If the church annulled the king's first marriage, Anne seeing the principal obstacle removed, thought she might accept Henry's hand. She therefore wrote to Wolsey: "I long to hear from you news of the legate, for I do hope (an' they come from you) they shall be very good." The king added in a postscript: "The not hearing of the legate's arrival in France causeth us somewhat to muse. Notwithstanding we trust by your diligence and vigilancy (with the assistance of Almighty God) shortly to be eased out of that trouble." But still there was no news. While waiting for the long desired ambassador, every one at the English court played his part as well as he could. Anne, whether from conscience, prudence, or modesty, refused the honours which the king would have showered upon her, and never approached Catherine but with marks of profound respect. Wolsey

had the look of desiring the divorce, while in reality he dreaded it, as fated to cause his ruin and that of the popedom. Henry strove to conceal the motives which impelled him to separate from the queen; to the bishops, he spoke of his conscience, to the nobility of an heir, and to all of the sad obligation which compelled him to put away so justly beloved a princess. In the meanwhile, he seemed to live on the best terms with her, from what Du Bellay says. But Catherine was the one who best dissembled her sentiments; she lived with the king as during their happiest days, treated Anne with every kindness, adopted an elegant costume, encouraged music and dancing in her apartments, often appeared in public, and seemed desirous of captivating by her gracious smiles the good-will of England. This was a mournful comedy, destined to end in tragedy full of tears and agony.

CHAPTER II

Coverdale and Inspiration—He undertakes to translate the Scriptures—His Joy and Spiritual Songs—Tyball and the Laymen—Coverdale preaches at Bumpstead—Revival at Colchester—Incomplete Societies and the New Testament—Persecution—Monmouth arrested and released.

While these scenes were acting in the royal palaces, far different discussions were going on among the people. After having dwelt for some time on the agitations of the court, we gladly return to the lowly disciples of the divine word. The Reformation of England (and this is its characteristic) brings before us by turns the king upon his throne, and the laborious artisan in his humble cottage; and between these two extremes we meet with the doctor in his college, and the priest in his pulpit.

Among the young men trained at Cambridge under Barnes's instruction, and who had aided him at the time of his trial, was Miles Coverdale, afterwards bishop of Exeter, a man distinguished by his zeal for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Some time after the prior's fall, on Easter Eve, 1527, Coverdale and Cromwell met at the house of Sir Thomas More, when the former exhorted the Cambridge student to apply himself to the study of sacred learning. The lapse of his unhappy master had alarmed Coverdale, and he felt the necessity of withdrawing from that outward activity which had proved so fatal to Barnes. He therefore turned to the Scriptures, read them again and again, and perceived, like Tyndale, that the reformation of the church must be effected by the word of God. The inspiration of that word, the only foundation of its sovereign authority, had struck Coverdale. "Wherever the Scripture is known it reformeth all things. And why? Because it is given by the inspiration of God." This fundamental principle of the Reformation in England must, in every age, be that of the church.

Coverdale found happiness in his studies: "Now," he said, "I begin to taste of Holy Scriptures! Now, honour be to God! I am set to the most sweet smell of holy letters. He did not stop there, but thought it his duty to attempt in England the work which Tyndale was prosecuting in Germany. The Bible was so important in the eyes of these Christians, that two translations were undertaken simultaneously. "Why should other nations," said Coverdale, "be more plenteously provided for with the Scriptures in their mother-tongue than we?"2—"Beware of translating the Bible!" exclaimed the partisans of the schoolmen; "your labour will only make divisions in the faith and in the people of God."—"God has now given his church," replied Coverdale, "the gifts of translating and of printing; we must improve them." And if any friends spoke of Tyndale's translation, he

answered: “Do not you know that when many are starting together, every one doth his best to be nighest the mark?”4—“But Scripture ought to exist in Latin only,” objected the priests.—“No,” replied Coverdale again, “the Holy Ghost is as much the author of it in the Hebrew, Greek, French, Dutch, and English, as in Latin.… The word of God is of like authority, in what language soever the Holy Ghost speaketh it.” This does not mean that translations of Holy Scripture are inspired, but that the word of God, faithfully translated, always possesses a divine authority.

Coverdale determined therefore to translate the Bible, and, to procure the necessary books, he wrote to Cromwell, who, during his travels, had made a collection of these precious writings. “Nothing in the world I desire but books,” he wrote; “like Jacob, you have drunk of the dew of heaven.… I ask to drink of your waters.” Cromwell did not refuse Coverdale his treasures. “Since the Holy Ghost moves you to bear the cost of this work,” exclaimed the latter, “God gives me boldness to labour in the same.”7 He commenced without delay, saying: “Whosoever believeth not the Scripture, believeth not Christ; and whoso refuseth it, refuseth God also.” Such were the foundations of the reformed church in England.

Coverdale did not undertake to translate the Scriptures as a mere literary task: the Spirit which had inspired him spoke to his heart; and tasting their life-giving promises, he expressed his happiness in pious songs:— Be glad now, all ye christen men, And let us rejoyce unfaynedly. The kindnesse cannot be written with penne, That we have receaved of God’s mercy; Whose love towarde us hath never ende:

He hath done for us as a frende;

Now let us thanke him hartely.

These lovynge words he spake to me.

I wyll delyver thy soule from payne;

I am desposed to do for thee, And to myne owne selfe thee to retayne.

Thou shalt be with me, for thou art myne; And I with thee, for I am thyne;

Such is my love, I cannot layne.

They wyll shed out my precyous blonde, And take away my lyfe also; Which I wyll suffre all for thy good:

Beleve this sure, where ever thou go. For I will yet ryse up agayne;

Thy synnes I beare, though it be payne, To make thee safe and free from wo.

Coverdale did not remain long in the solitude he desired. The study of the Bible, which had attracted him to it, soon drew him out of it. A revival was going on in Essex; John Tyball, an inhabitant of Bumpstead, having learnt to find in Jesus Christ the true bread from heaven, did not stop there. One day as he was reading the first epistle to the Corinthians, these words: “eat of this bread,” and “drink of this cup,” repeated four times within a few verses, convinced him that there was no transubstantiation. “A priest has no power to create the body of the Lord,” said he, “Christ truly is present in the Eucharist, but he is there only for him that believeth, and by a spiritual

presence and action only." Tyball, disgusted with the Romish clergy and worship, and convinced that Christians are called to a universal priesthood, soon thought that men could do without a special ministry, and without denying the offices mentioned in Scripture, as some Christians have done since, he attached no importance to them. "Priesthood is not necessary," he said: "every layman may administer the sacraments as well as a priest." The minister of Bumpstead, one Richard Foxe, and next a greyfriar of Colchester named Meadow, were successively converted by Tyball's energetic preaching.

Coverdale, who was living not far from these parts, having heard speak of this religious revival, came to Bumpstead, and went into the pulpit in the spring of 1528, to proclaim the treasures contained in Scripture. Among his hearers was an Augustine monk, named Topley, who was supplying Foxe's place during his absence. This monk, while staying at the parsonage, had found a copy of Wickliffe's Wicket, which he read eagerly. His conscience was wounded by it, and all seemed to totter about him. He had gone to church full of doubt, and after divine service he waited upon the preacher, exclaiming: "O my sins, my sins!" "Confess yourself to God," said Coverdale, "and not to a priest. God accepteth the confession which cometh from the heart, and blotteth out all your sins."2 The monk believed in the forgiveness of God, and became a zealous evangelist for the surrounding country. The divine word had hardly lighted one torch, before that kindled another. At Colchester, in the same county, a worthy man named Pykas, had received a copy of the Epistles of Saint Paul from his mother, with this advice: "My son, live according to these writings, and not according to the teaching of the clergy." Some time after, Pykas having bought a New Testament, and "read it thoroughly many times," a total change took place in him. "We must be baptized by the Holy Ghost," he said, and these words passed like a breath of life over his simple-minded hearers. One day, Pykas having learnt that Bilney, the first of the Cambridge doctors who had known the power of God's word, was preaching at Ipswich, he proceeded thither, for he never refused to listen to a priest, when that priest proclaimed the truth. "O, what a sermon! how full of the Holy Ghost!" exclaimed Pykas. From that period meetings of the brothers in Christ (for thus they were called) increased in number. They read the New Testament, and each imparted to the others what he had received for the instruction of all. One day when the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew had been read, Pykas, who was sometimes wrong in the spiritual interpretation of Scripture, remarked: "When the Lord declares that not one stone of the temple shall be left upon another, he speaks of those haughty priests who persecute those whom they call heretics, and who pretend to be the temple of God. God will destroy them all." After protesting against the priest, he protested against the host: "The real body of Jesus Christ is in the Word," he said; "God is in the Word, the Word is in God. God and the Word cannot be separated. Christ is the living Word that nourishes the soul." These humble preachers increased. Even women knew the Epistles and Gospels by heart; Marion Matthew, Dorothy Long, Catherine Swain, Alice Gardiner, and, above all, Gyrling's wife, who had been in service with a priest lately burnt for heresy, took part in these gospel meetings. And it was not in cottages only that the glad tidings were then proclaimed; Bower Hall, the residence of the squires of Bumpstead, was open to Foxe, Topley, and Tyball, who often read the Holy Scriptures in the great hall of the mansion, in the presence of the master and all their household: a humble Reformation more real than that effected by Henry VIII.

There was, however, some diversity of opinion among these brethren. “All who have begun to believe,” said Tyball, Pykas, and others, “ought to meet together to hear the word and increase in faith. We pray in common … and that constitutes a church.” Coverdale, Bilney, and Latimer willingly recognised these incomplete societies, in which the members met simply as disciples; they believed them necessary at a period when the church was forming. These societies (in the reformers’ views) proved that organization has not the priority in the Christian church, as Rome maintains, and that this priority belongs to the faith and the life. But this imperfect form they also regarded as provisional. To prevent numerous dangers, it was necessary that this society should be succeeded by another, the church of the New Testament, with its elders or bishops, and deacons. The word, they thought, rendered a ministry of the word necessary; and for its proper exercise not only piety was required, but a knowledge of the sacred languages, the gift of eloquence, its exercise and perfection. However, there was no division among these Christians upon secondary matters. For some time the bishop of London watched this movement with uneasiness. He caused Hacker to be arrested, who, for six years past, had gone from house to house reading the Bible in London and Essex; examined and threatened him, inquired carefully after the names of those who had shown him hospitality; and the poor man in alarm had given up about forty of his brethren. Sebastian Harris, priest of Kensington, Forman, rector of All Hallows, John and William Pykas, and many others, were summoned before the bishop. They were taken to prison; they were led before the judges; they were put in the stocks; they were tormented in a thousand ways. Their minds became confused; their thoughts wandered; and many made the confessions required by their persecutors. The adversaries of the gospel, proud of this success, now desired a more glorious victory. If they could not reach Tyndale, had they not in London the patron of his work, Monmouth, the most influential of the merchants, and a follower of the true faith? The clergy had made religion their business, and the Reformation restored it to the people. Nothing offended the priests so much, as that laymen should claim the right to believe without their intervention, and even to propagate the faith. Sir Thomas More, one of the most amiable men of the sixteenth century, participated in their hatred. He wrote to Cochlæus: “Germany now daily bringeth forth monsters more deadly than what Africa was wont to do; but, alas! she is not alone. Numbers of Englishmen, who would not a few years ago even hear Luther’s name mentioned, are now publishing his praises! England is now like the sea, which swells and heaves before a great storm, without any wind stirring it.”2 More felt particularly irritated, because the boldness of the gospellers had succeeded to the timidity of the Lollards. “The heretics,” he said, “have put off hypocrisy, and put on impudence.” He therefore resolved to set his hand to the work. On the 14th of May 1529, Monmouth was in his shop, when an usher came and summoned him to appear before Sir J. Dauncies, one of the privy council. The pious merchant obeyed, striving to persuade himself that he was wanted on some matter of business; but in this he was deceived, as he soon found out. “What letters and books have you lately received from abroad?” asked with some severity, Sir Thomas More, who, with Sir William Kingston, was Sir John’s colleague. “None,” replied Monmouth. “What aid have you given to any persons living on the continent?”—“None, for these last three years. William Tyndale abode with me six months,” he continued, “and his life was what a good priest’s ought to be. I gave him ten pounds at the period of his departure, but nothing since. Besides, he is not the only one I have helped; the bishop of London’s chaplain, for instance, has received of me more than £50.”—“What books have you in your possession?” The merchant named the New Testament and some other works. “All these books have lain more than two years

on my table, and I never heard that either priests, friars, or laymen learnt any great errors from them."4 More tossed his head. "It is a hard matter," he used to say, "to put a dry stick in the fire without its burning, or to nourish a snake in our bosom and not be stung by it.—That is enough," he continued, "we shall go and search your house." Not a paper escaped their curiosity; but they found nothing to compromise Monmouth; he was however sent to the Tower.

After some interval the merchant was again brought before his judges. "You are accused," said More, "of having bought Martin Luther's tracts; of maintaining those who are translating the Scriptures into English; of subscribing to get the New Testament printed in English, with or without glosses; of having imported it into the kingdom; and, lastly, of having said that faith alone is sufficient to save a man."

There was matter enough to burn several men. Monmouth, feeling convinced that Wolsey alone had power to deliver him, resolved to apply to him. "What will become of my poor workmen in London and in the country during my imprisonment?" he wrote to the cardinal. "They must have their money every week; who will give it them?… Besides, I make considerable sales in foreign countries, which bring large returns to his majesty's customs. If I remain in prison, this commerce is stopped, and of course all the proceeds for the exchequer." Wolsey, who was as much a statesman as a churchman, began to melt; on the eve of a struggle with the pope and the emperor, he feared, besides, to make the people discontented. Monmouth was released from prison. As alderman, and then as sheriff of London, he was faithful until death, and ordered in his last will that thirty sermons should be preached by the most evangelical ministers in England, "to make known the holy word of Jesus Christ."—"That is better," he thought, "than founding masses." The Reformation showed, in the sixteenth century, that great activity in commerce might be allied to great piety.

CHAPTER III

Political Changes—Fresh Instructions from the Pope to Campeggio—His delays—He unbosoms himself to Francis—A Prediction—Arrival of Campeggio—Wolsey's Uneasiness—Henry's Satisfaction—The Cardinal's Project—Campeggio's Reception—First Interview with the Queen and with the King—Useless Efforts to make Campeggio part with the Decretal—The Nuncio's Conscience—Public Opinion—Measures taken by the King—His Speech to the Lords and Aldermen—Festivities—Wolsey seeks French Support—Contrariety

While these persecutions were agitating the fields and the capital of England, all had changed in the ecclesiastical world, because all had changed in the political. The pope, pressed by Henry VIII and intimidated by the armies of Francis I, had granted the decretal and despatched Campeggio. But, on a sudden, there was a new evolution; a change of events brought a change of counsels. Doria had gone over to the emperor; his fleet had restored abundance to Naples; the army of Francis I, ravaged by famine and pestilence, had capitulated, and Charles V, triumphant in Italy, had said proudly to the pope: "We are determined to defend the queen of England against King Henry's injustice."

Charles having recovered his superiority, the affrighted pope opened his eyes to the justice of Catherine's cause. "Send four messengers after Campeggio," said he to his officers; "and let each take a different road; bid them travel with all speed and deliver our despatches to him." They

overtook the legate, who opened the pope's letters. "In the first place," said Clement VII to him, "protract your journey. In the second place, when you reach England, use every endeavour to reconcile the king and queen. In the third place, if you do not succeed, persuade the queen to take the veil. And in the last place, if she refuses, do not pronounce any sentence favourable to the divorce without a new and express order from me. This is the essential: Summum et maximum mandatum." The ambassador of the sovereign pontiff had a mission to do nothing. This instruction is sometimes as effective as any.

Campeggio, the youngest of the cardinals, was the most intelligent and the slowest; and this slowness caused his selection by the pope. He understood his master. If Wolsey was Henry's spur to urge on Campeggio, the latter was Clement's bridle to check Wolsey. One of the judges of the divorce was about to pull forwards, the other backwards; thus the business stood a chance of not advancing at all, which was just what the pope required. The legate, very eager to relax his speed, spent three months on his journey from Italy to England. He should have embarked for France on the 23rd of July; but the end of August was approaching, and no one knew in that country what had become of him. At length they learnt that he had reached Lyons on the 22nd of August. The English ambassador in France sent him horses, carriages, plate, and money, in order to hasten his progress; the legate complained of the gout, and Gardiner found the greatest difficulty in getting him to move. Henry wrote every day to Anne Boleyn, complaining of the slow progress of the nuncio. "He arrived in Paris last Sunday or Monday," he says at the beginning of September; "Monday next we shall hear of his arrival in Calais, and then I shall obtain what I have so longed for, to God's pleasure and both our comforts." At the same time, this impatient prince sent message after message to accelerate the legate's rate of travelling.

Anne began to desire a future which surpassed all that her youthful imagination had conceived, and her agitated heart expanded to the breath of hope. She wrote to Wolsey:

"This shall be to give unto your grace, as I am most bound, my humble thanks for the great pain and travail that your grace doth take in studying, by your wisdom and great diligence, how to bring to pass honourably the greatest wealth [well-being] that is possible to come to any creature living; and in especial remembering how wretched and unworthy I am in comparison to his highness.… Now, good my lord, your discretion may consider as yet how little it is in my power to recompense you but alonely [only] with my good will; the which I assure you, look what thing in this world I can imagine to do you pleasure in, you shall find me the gladdest woman in the world to do it." But the impatience of the king of England and of Anne seemed as if it would never be satisfied. Campeggio, on his way through Paris, told Francis I that the divorce would never take place, and that he should soon go to Spain to see Charles V.… This was significative. "The king of England ought to know," said the indignant Francis to the duke of Suffolk, "that Campeggio is imperialist at heart, and that his mission in England will be a mere mockery." In truth, the Spanish and Roman factions tried every manœuvre to prevent a union they detested. Anne Boleyn, queen of England, signified not only Catherine humbled, but Charles offended; the clerical party awakened, perhaps destroyed, and the evangelical party put in its place. The Romish faction found accomplices even in Anne's own family. Her brother George's wife, a proud and passionate woman, and a rigid Roman catholic, had sworn an implacable hatred against her young sister. By this means wounds might be inflicted, even in the domestic sanctuary, which would not be the less deep because they were the work of her own kindred. One day we are told that Anne found in her chamber a book of

pretended prophecies, in which was a picture representing a king, a queen shedding tears, and at their feet a young lady headless. Anne turned away her eyes with disgust. She desired, however, to know what this emblem signified, and efficious friends brought to her one of those pretended wise men, so numerous at all times, who abuse the credulity of the ignorant by professing to interpret such mysteries. “This prophetic picture,” he said, “represents the history of the king and his wife.” Anne was not credulous, but she understood what her enemies meant to insinuate, and dismissed the mock interpreter without betraying any signs of fear; then turning to her favourite attendant, Anne Saville, “Come hither, Nan,” said she, “look at this book of prophecies; this is the king, this the queen wringing her hands and mourning, and this (putting her finger on the bleeding body) is myself, with my head cut off.”—The young lady answered with a shudder: “If I thought it were true, I would not myself have him were he an emperor.”—“Tut, Nan,” replied Anne Boleyn with a sweet smile, “I think the book a bauble, and am resolved to have him, that my issue may be royal, whatever may become of me.” This story is based on good authority, and there were so many predictions of this kind afloat that it is very possible one of them might come true; people afterwards recollected only the prophecies confirmed by the events. But, be that as it may, this young lady, so severely chastised in after-days, found in her God an abundant consolation. At length Campeggio embarked at Calais on the 29th of September, and unfortunately for him he had an excellent passage across the channel. A storm to drive him back to the French coast would have suited him admirably. But on the 1st of October he was at Canterbury, whence he announced his arrival to the king. At this news, Henry forgot all the delays which had so irritated him. “His majesty can never be sufficiently grateful to your holiness for so great a favour,” wrote Wolsey to the pope; “but he will employ his riches, his kingdom, his life even, and deserve the name of Restorer of the Church as justly as he has gained that of Defender of the Faith.” This zeal alarmed Campeggio, for the pope wrote to him that any proceeding which might irritate Charles would inevitably cause the ruin of the church. The nuncio became more dilatory than ever, and although he reached Canterbury on the 1st of October, he did not arrive at Dartford until the 5th, thus taking four days for a journey of about thirty miles.

Meanwhile preparations were making to receive him in London. Wolsey, feeling contempt for the poverty of the Roman cardinals, and very uneasy about the equipage with which his colleague was likely to make his entrance into the capital, sent a number of showy chests, rich carpets, litters hung with drapery, and harnessed mules. On the other hand Campeggio, whose secret mission was to keep in the back-ground, and above all to do nothing, feared these banners, and trappings, and all the parade of a triumphal entry. Alleging therefore an attack of gout in order to escape from the pomps his colleague had prepared for him, he quietly took a boat, and thus reached the palace of the bishop of Bath, where he was to lodge.

While the nuncio was thus proceeding unnoticed up the Thames, the equipages sent by Wolsey entered London through the midst of a gaping crowd, who looked on them with curiosity as if they had come from the banks of the Tiber. Some of the mules however took fright and ran away, the coffers fell off and burst open, when there was a general rush to see their contents; but to the surprise of all they were empty. This was an excellent jest for the citizens of London. “Fine outside, empty inside; a just emblem of the popedom, its embassy, and foolish pomps,” they said; “a sham legate, a procession of masks, and the whole a farce!”

Campeggio was come at last, and now what he dreaded most was an audience. “I cannot move,” he said, “or endure the motion of a litter.” Never had an attack of gout been more seasonable. Wolsey, who paid him frequent visits, soon found him to be his equal in cunning. To no purpose did he treat him with every mark of respect, shaking his hand and making much of him;2 it was labour lost, the Roman nuncio would say nothing, and Wolsey began to despair. The king, on the contrary, was full of hope, and fancied he already had the act of divorce in his portfolio, because he had the nuncio in his kingdom. The greatest effect of the nuncio’s arrival was the putting an end to Anne Boleyn’s indecision. She had several relapses: the trials which she foresaw, and the grief Catherine must necessarily feel, had agitated her imagination and disturbed her mind. But when she saw the church and her own enemies prepared to pronounce the king’s divorce, her doubts were removed, and she regarded as legitimate the position that was offered her. The king, who suffered from her scruples, was delighted at this change. “I desire to inform you,” he wrote to her in English, “what joy it is to me to understand of your conformableness with reason, and of the suppressing of your inutile and vain thoughts and fantasies with the bridle of reason. I assure you all the greatness of this world could not counterpoise for my satisfaction the knowledge and certainty thereof.… The unfeigned sickness of this well-willing legate doth somewhat retard his access to your person.” It was therefore the determination of the pope that made Anne Boleyn resolve to accept Henry’s hand; this is an important lesson for which we are indebted to the Vatican letters. We should be grateful to the papacy for having so carefully preserved them. But the more Henry rejoiced, the more Wolsey despaired; he would have desired to penetrate into Clement’s thoughts, but could not succeed. Imagining that De Angelis, the general of the Spanish Observance, knew all the secrets of the pope and of the emperor, he conceived the plan of kidnapping him. “If he goes to Spain by sea,” said he to Du Bellay, “a good brigantine or two would do the business; and if by land, it will be easier still.” Du Bellay failed not (as he informs us himself) “to tell him plainly that by such proceedings he would entirely forfeit the pope’s good will.”—“What matter?” replied Wolsey, “I have nothing to lose.” As he said this, tears started to his eyes. At last he made up his mind to remain ignorant of the pontiff’s designs, and wiped his eyes, awaiting, not without fear, the interview between Henry and Campeggio. On the 22nd of October, a month after his arrival, the nuncio, borne in a sedan chair of red velvet, was carried to court. He was placed on the right of the throne, and his secretary in his name delivered a high-sounding speech, saluting Henry with the name of Saviour of Rome, Liberator urbis. “His majesty,” replied Fox in the king’s name, “has only performed the duties incumbent on a Christian prince, and he hopes that the holy see will bear them in mind.”—“Well attacked, well defended,” said Du Bellay. For the moment, a few Latin declamations got the papal nuncio out of his difficulties.

Campeggio did not deceive himself: if the divorce were refused, he foresaw the reformation of England. Yet he hoped still, for he was assured that Catherine would submit to the judgment of the church; and being fully persuaded that the queen would refuse the holy father nothing, the nuncio began “his approaches,” as Du Bellay calls them. On the 27th of October, the two cardinals waited on Catherine, and in flattering terms insinuated that she might prevent the blow which threatened her by voluntary retirement into a convent. And then, to end all indecision in the queen’s mind, Campeggio put on a severe look and exclaimed: “How is it, madam, explain the mystery to us? From the moment the holy father appointed us to examine the question of your divorce, you have been seen not only at court, but in public, wearing the most magnificent ornaments, participating with an appearance of gaiety and satisfaction at amusements and festivities which you had never

tolerated before.… The church is in the most cruel embarrassment with regard to you; the king, your husband, is in the greatest perplexity; the princess, your daughter, is taken from you … and instead of shedding tears, you give yourself up to vanity. Renounce the world, madam; enter a nunnery. Our holy father himself requires this of you." The agitated queen was almost fainting; stifling her emotion, however, she said mildly but firmly: "Alas! my lords, is it now a question whether I am the king's lawful wife or not, when I have been married to him almost twenty years and no objection raised before?… Divers prelates and lords are yet alive who then adjudged our marriage good and lawful,—and now to gay it is detestable! this is a great marvel to me, especially when I consider what a wise prince the king's father was, and also the natural love and affection my father, King Ferdinand, bare unto me. I think that neither of these illustrious princes would have made me contract an illicit union." At these words, Catherine's emotion compelled her to stop.—"If I weep, my lords," she continued almost immediately, "it is not for myself, it is for a person dearer to me than my life. What! I should consent to an act which deprives my daughter of a crown? No, I will not sacrifice my child. I know what dangers threaten me. I am only a weak woman, a stranger, without learning, advisers, or friends … and my enemies are skilful, learned in the laws, and desirous to merit their master's favour … and more than that, even my judges are my enemies. Can I receive as such," she said as she looked at Campeggio, "a man extorted from the pope by manifest lying?… And as for you," added she, turning haughtily to Wolsey, "having failed in attaining the tiara, you have sworn to revenge yourself on my nephew the emperor … and you have kept him true promise; for all his wars and vexations, he may only thank you. One victim was not enough for you. Forging abominable suppositions, you desire to plunge his aunt into a frightful abyss.… But my cause is just, and I trust it in the Lord's hand." After this bold language, the unhappy Catherine withdrew to her apartments. The imminence of the danger effected a salutary revolution in her; she laid aside her brilliant ornaments, assumed the sober garments in which she is usually represented, and passed days and nights in mourning and in tears.

Thus Campeggio saw his hopes deceived; he had thought to find a nun, and had met a queen and a mother.… He now proceeded to set every imaginable spring at work; as Catherine would not renounce Henry, he must try and prevail upon Henry to renounce his idea of separating from the queen. The Roman legate therefore changed his batteries, and turned them against the king.

Henry, always impatient, went one day unannounced to Campeggio's lodging, accompanied by Wolsey only: "As we are without witnesses," he said, taking his seat familiarly between the two cardinals, "let us speak freely of our affairs.—How shall you proceed?" But to his great astonishment and grief,2 the nuncio prayed him, with all imaginable delicacy, to renounce the divorce. At these words the fiery Tudor burst out: "Is this how the pope keeps his word? He sends me an ambassador to annul my marriage, but in reality to confirm it." He made a pause. Campeggio knew not what to say. Henry and Catherine being equally persuaded of the justice of their cause, the nuncio was in a dilemma. Wolsey himself suffered a martyrdom.4 The king's anger grew fiercer; he had thought the legate would hasten to withdraw an imprudent expression, but Campeggio was dumb. "I see that you have chosen your part," said Henry to the nuncio; "mine, you may be sure, will soon be taken also. Let the pope only persevere in this way of acting, and the apostolical see, covered with perpetual infamy, will be visited with a frightful destruction." The lion had thrown off the lamb's skin which he had momentarily assumed. Campeggio felt that he must appease the monarch. "Craft and delay" were his orders from Rome; and with that view the

pope had provided him with the necessary arms. He hastened to produce the famous decretal which pronounced the divorce. “The holy father,” he told the king, “ardently desires that this matter should be terminated by a happy reconciliation between you and the queen; but if that is impossible, you shall judge yourself whether or not his holiness can keep his promises.” He then read the bull, and even showed it to Henry, without permitting it, however, to leave his hands. This exhibition produced the desired effect: Henry grew calm. “Now I am at case again,” he said; “this miraculous talisman revives all my courage. This decretal is the efficacious remedy that will restore peace to my oppressed conscience, and joy to my bruised heart. Write to his holiness, that this immense benefit binds me to him so closely, that he may expect from me more than his imagination can conceive.” And yet a few clouds gathered shortly after in the king’s mind.

Campeggio having shown the bull had hastened to lock it up again. Would he presume to keep it in his own hands? Henry and Wolsey will leave no means untried to get possession of it; that point gained, and victory is theirs.

Wolsey having returned to the nuncio, he asked him for the decretal with an air of candour as if it was the most natural thing in the world. He desired, he said, to show it to the king’s privy-councillors. “The pope,” replied Campeggio, “has granted this bull, not to be used, but to be kept secret; he simply desired to show the king the good feeling by which he was animated.” Wolsey having failed, Henry tried his skill. “Have the goodness to hand me the bull which you showed me,” said he. The nuncio respectfully refused. “For a single moment,” he said. Campeggio still refused. The haughty Tudor retired, stifling his anger. Then Wolsey made another attempt, and founded his demand on justice. “Like you, I am delegated by his holiness to decide this affair,” he said, “and I wish to study the important document which is to regulate our proceedings.”—This was met by a new refusal. “What!” exclaimed the minister of Henry VIII, “am I not, like you, a cardinal?… like you, a judge? your colleague?” It mattered not, the nuncio would not, by any means, let the decretal go.2 Clement was not deceived in the choice he had made of Campeggio; the ambassador was worthy of his master.

It was evident that the pope in granting the bull had been acting a part: this trick revolted the king. It was no longer anger that he felt, but disgust. Wolsey knew that Henry’s contempt was more to be feared than his wrath. He grew alarmed, and paid the nuncio another visit. “The general commission,” he said, “is insufficient, the decretal commission alone can be of service, and you do not permit us to read a word of it. … The king and I place the greatest confidence in the good intentions of his holiness, and yet we find our expectations frustrated.4 Where is that paternal affection with which we had flattered ourselves? What prince has ever been trifled with as the king of England is now? If this is the way in which the Defender of the Faith is rewarded, Christendom will know what those who serve Rome will have to expect from her, and every power will withdraw its support. Do not deceive yourselves: the foundation on which the holy see is placed is so very insecure that the least movement will suffice to precipitate it into everlasting ruin. What a sad futurity!… what inexpressible torture!… whether I wake or sleep, gloomy thoughts continually pursue me like a frightful nightmare.”2 This time Wolsey spoke the truth. But all his eloquence was useless; Campeggio refused to give up the so much desired bull. When sending him, Rome had told him: “Above all, do not succeed!” This means having failed, there remained for Wolsey one other way of effecting the divorce. “Well, then,” he said to Campeggio, “let us pronounce it ourselves.”—“Far be it from us,” replied the nuncio; “the anger of the emperor will be so great, that

the peace of Europe will be broken for ever."—"I know how to arrange all that," replied the English cardinal, "in political matters you may trust to me." The nuncio then took another tone, and proudly wrapping himself up in his morality, he said: "I shall follow the voice of my conscience; if I see that the divorce is possible, I shall leap the ditch; if otherwise, I shall not."—"Your conscience! that may be easily satisfied," rejoined Wolsey. "Holy Scripture forbids a man to marry his brother's widow; now no pope can grant what is forbidden by the law of God."—"The Lord preserve us from such a principle," exclaimed the Roman prelate; "the power of the pope is unlimited."—The nuncio had hardly put his conscience forward before it stumbled; it bound him to Rome and not to heaven. But for that matter, neither public opinion nor Campeggio's own friends had any great idea of his morality; they thought that to make him leap the ditch, it was only requisite to know the price at which he might be bought. The bishop of Bayonne wrote to Montmorency: "Put at the close of a letter which I can show Campeggio something promissory, that he shall have benefices … That will cost you nothing, and may serve in this matter of the marriage; for I know that he is longing for something of the sort."—"What is to be done then," said Wolsey at last, astonished at meeting with a resistance to which he was unaccustomed. "I shall inform the pope of what I have seen and heard," replied Campeggio, "and I shall wait for his instructions." Henry was forced to consent to this new course, for the nuncio hinted, that if it were opposed he would go in person to Rome to ask the pontiff's orders, and he never would have returned. By this means several months were gained.

During this time men's minds were troubled. The prospect of a divorce between the king and queen had stirred the nation; and the majority, particularly among the women, declared against the king. "Whatever may be done," the people said boldly, "whoever marries the princess Mary will be king of England." Wolsey's spies informed him that Catherine and Charles V had many devoted partizans even at the court. He wished to make sure of this. "It is pretended," he said one day in an indifferent tone, "that the emperor has boasted that he will get the king driven from his realm, and that by his majesty's own subjects.… What do you think of it, my lords?"—"Tough against the spur," says Du Bellay, the lords remained silent. At length, however, one of them more imprudent than the rest, exclaimed: "Such a boast will make the emperor lose more than a hundred thousand Englishmen." This was enough for Wolsey. To lose them, he thought, Charles must have them. If Catherine thought of levying war against her husband, following the example of former queens of England, she would have, then, a party ready to support her; this became dangerous. The king and the cardinal immediately took their measures. More than 15,000 of Charles's subjects were ordered to leave London; the arms of the citizens were seized, "in order that they might have no worse weapon than the tongue;" the Flemish councillors accorded to Catherine were dismissed after they had been heard by the king and Campeggio, "for they had no commission to speak to the other [Wolsey]"—and finally, they kept "a great and constant watch" upon the country. Men feared an invasion of England, and Henry was not of a humour to subject his kingdom to the pope. This was not enough; the alarmed king thought it his duty to come to an explanation with his people; and having summoned the lords spiritual and temporal, the judges, the members of the privy-council, the mayor and aldermen of the city, and many of the gentry, to meet him at his palace of Bridewell on the 13th of November, he said to them with a very condescending air: "You know, my lords and gentlemen, that for these twenty years past divine Providence has granted our country such prosperity as it had never known before. But in the midst of all the glory that surrounds me, the thought of my last hour often occurs to me, and I fear that if I should die without

an heir, my death would cause more damage to my people than my life has done them good. God forbid, that for want of a legitimate king England should be again plunged into the horrors of civil war!" Then calling to mind the illegalities invalidating his marriage with Catherine, the king continued: "These thoughts have filled my mind with anxiety, and are I continually pricking my conscience. This is the only motive, and God is my witness,2 which has made me lay this matter before the pontiff. As touching the queen, she is a woman incomparable in gentleness, humility, and buxomness, as I these twenty years have had experiment of; so that if I were to marry again, if the marriage might be good, I would surely choose her above all other women. But if it be determined by judgment that our marriage was against God's law, and surely void, then I shall not only sorrow in departing from so good a lady and loving companion, but much more lament and bewail my unfortunate chance, that I have so long lived in adultery, to God's great displeasure, and have no true heir of my body to inherit this realm.… Therefore I require of you all to pray with us that the very truth may be known, for the discharging of our conscience and the saving of our soul." These words, though wanting in sincerity, were well calculated to soothe men's minds. Unfortunately, it appears that after this speech from the crown, the official copy of which has been preserved, Henry added a few words of his own. "If, however," he said, according to Du Bellay, casting a threatening glance around him, "there should be any man whatsoever who speaks of his prince in other than becoming terms, I will show him that I am the master, and there is no head so high that I will not roll it from his shoulders." This was a speech in Henry's style; but we cannot give unlimited credit to Du Bellay's assertions, this diplomatist being very fond, like others of his class, of "seasoning" his despatches. But whatever may be the fact as regards the postscript, the speech on the divorce produced an effect. From that time there were no more jests, not even on the part of the Boleyns' enemies. Some supported the king, others were content to pity the queen in secret; the majority prepared to take advantage of a court-revolution which every one foresaw. "The king so plainly gave them to understand his pleasure," says the French ambassador, "that they speak more soberly than they have done hitherto."

Henry wishing to silence the clamours of the people, and to allay the fears felt by the higher classes, gave several magnificent entertainments at one time in London, at another at Greenwich, now at Hampton Court, and then at Richmond. The queen accompanied him, but Anne generally remained "in a very handsome lodging which Henry had furnished for her," says Du Bellay. The cardinal, following his master's example, gave representations of French plays with great magnificence. All his hope was in France. "I desire nothing in England, neither in word nor in deed, which is not French," he said to the bishop of Bayonne. At length Anne Boleyn had accepted the brilliant position she had at first refused, and every day her stately mansion (Suffolk House) was filled with a numerous court,—"more than ever had crowded to the queen."—"Yes, yes," said Du Bellay, as he saw the crowd turning towards the rising sun, "they wish by these little things to accustom the people to endure her, that when great ones are attempted, they may not be found so strange." In the midst of these festivities the grand business did not slumber. When the French ambassador solicited the subsidy intended for the ransom of the sons of Francis I, the cardinal required of him in exchange a paper proving that the marriage had never been valid. Du Bellay excused himself on the ground of his age and want of learning; but being given to understand that he could not have the subsidy without it, he wrote the memoir in a single day. The enraptured cardinal and king entreated him to speak with Campeggio. The ambassador consented, and succeeded beyond all expectation. The nuncio, fully aware that a bow too much bent will break,

made Henry by turns become the sport of hope and fear. “Take care how you assert that the pope had not the right to grant a dispensation to the king,” said he to the French bishop, “this would be denying his power, which is infinite. But,” added he in a mysterious tone, “I will point out a road that will infallibly lead you to the mark. Show that the holy father has been deceived by false information. Push me hard on that,” he continued “so as to force me to declare that the dispensation was granted on erroneous grounds.” Thus did the legate himself reveal the breach by which the fortress might be surprised. “Victory!” exclaimed Henry, as he entered Anne’s apartments all beaming with joy. But this confidence on the part of Campeggio was only a new trick. “There is a great rumour at court,” wrote Du Bellay soon after, “that the emperor and the king of France are coming together, and leaving Henry alone, so that all will fall on his shoulders.” Wolsey, finding that the intrigues of diplomacy had failed, thought it his duty to put fresh springs in motion, “and by all good and honest means to gain the pope’s favour.”2 He saw, besides, to his great sorrow, the new catholicity then forming in the world, and uniting, by the closest bonds, the Christians of England to those of the continent. To strike down one of the leaders of this evangelical movement might incline the court of Rome in Henry’s favour. The cardinal undertook, therefore, to persecute Tyndale; and this resolution will now transport us to Germany.

CHAPTER IV

True Catholicity—Wolsey—Harman’s Matter—West sent to Cologne—Labours of Tyndale and Fryth—Rincke at Frankfort—He makes a Discovery—Tyndale at Marburg—West returns to England—His Tortures in the Monastery. The residence of Tyndale and his friends in foreign countries, and the connections there formed with pious Christians, testify to the fraternal spirit which the Reformation then restored to the church. It is in protestantism that true catholicity is to be found. The Romish church is not a catholic church. Separated from the churches of the east, which are the oldest in Christendom, and from the reformed churches, which are the purest, it is nothing but a sect, and that a degenerated one. A church which should profess to believe in an episcopal unity, but which kept itself separate from the episcopacy of Rome and of the East, and from the evangelical churches, would be no longer a catholic church; it would be a sect more sectarian still than that of the Vatican, a fragment of a fragment. The church of the Saviour requires a truer, a diviner unity than that of priests, who condemn one another. It was the reformers, and particularly Tyndale, who proclaimed throughout Christendom the existence of a body of Christ, of which all the children of God are members. The disciples of the Reformation are the true catholics.

It was a catholicity of another sort that Wolsey desired to uphold. He did not reject certain reforms in the church, particularly such as brought him any profit; but, before all, he wished to preserve for the hierarchy their privileges and uniformity. The Romish Church in England was then personified in him, and if he fell, its ruin would be near. His political talents and multiplied relations with the continent, caused him to discern more clearly than others the dangers which threatened the popedom. The publication of the Scriptures of God in English appeared to some a cloud without importance, which would soon disappear from the horizon; but to the foreseeing glance of Wolsey, it betokened a mighty tempest. Besides, he loved not the fraternal relations then forming between the evangelical Christians of Great Britain and of other nations. Annoyed by this spiritual catholicity, he resolved to procure the arrest of Tyndale, who was its principal organ.

Already had Hackett, Henry's envoy to the Low Countries, caused the imprisonment of Harman, an Antwerp merchant, one of the principal supporters of the English reformer. But Hackett had in vain asked Wolsey for such documents as would convict him of treason (for the crime of loving the Bible was not sufficient to procure Harman's condemnation in Brabant); the envoy had remained without letters from England, and the last term fixed by the law having expired, Harman and his wife were liberated after seven months' imprisonment. And yet Wolsey had not been inactive. The cardinal hoped to find elsewhere the co-operation which Margaret of Austria refused. It was Tyndale that he wanted, and everything seemed to indicate that he was then hidden at Cologne or in its neighbourhood. Wolsey, recollecting senator Rincke and the services he had already performed, determined to send to him one John West, a friar of the Franciscan convent at Greenwich. West, a somewhat narrow-minded but energetic man, was very desirous of distinguishing himself, and he had already gained some notoriety in England among the adversaries of the Reformation. Flattered by his mission, this vain monk immediately set off for Antwerp, accompanied by another friar, in order to seize Tyndale, and even Roy, once his colleague at Greenwich, and against whom he had there ineffectually contended in argument.

While these men were conspiring his ruin, Tyndale composed several works, got them printed, and sent to England, and prayed God night and day to enlighten his fellow-countrymen. "Why do give you give yourself so much trouble," said some of his friends. "They will burn your books as they have burnt the Gospel." "They will only do what I expect," replied he, "if they burn me also." Already he beheld his own burning pile in the distance; but it was a sight which only served to increase his zeal. Hidden, like Luther at the Wartburg, not however in a castle, but in a humble lodging, Tyndale, like the Saxon reformer, spent his days and nights translating the Bible. But not having an elector of Saxony to protect him, he was forced to change his residence from time to time. At this epoch, Fryth, who had escaped from the prisons of Oxford, rejoined Tyndale, and the sweets of friendship softened the bitterness of their exile. Tyndale having finished the New Testament, and begun the translation of the Old, the learned Fryth was of great use to him. The more they studied the word of God, the more they admired it. In the beginning of 1529, they published the books of Genesis and Deuteronomy, and addressing their fellow-countrymen, they said: "As thou readest, think that every syllable pertaineth to thine own self, and suck out the pith of the Scripture." Then denying that visible signs naturally impart grace, as the schoolmen had pretended, Tyndale maintained that the sacraments are effectual only when the Holy Ghost sheds his influence upon them. "The ceremonies of the Law," he wrote, "stood the Israelites in the same stead as the sacraments do us. We are saved not by the power of the sacrifice or the deed itself, but by virtue of faith in the promise, whereof the sacrifice or ceremony was a token or sign. The Holy Ghost is no dumb God, no God that goeth a mumming. Wherever the word is proclaimed, this inward witness worketh. If baptism preach me the washing in Christ's blood, so doth the Holy Ghost accompany it; and that deed of preaching through faith doth put away my sins. The ark of Noah saved them in the water through faith." The man who dared address England in language so contrary to the teaching of the middle ages must be imprisoned. John West, who had been sent with this object, arrived at Antwerp; Hackett procured for him as interpreter a friar of English descent, made him assume a secular dress, and gave him "three pounds" on the cardinal's account; the less attention the embassy attracted, the more likely it would be to succeed. But great was West's vexation, on reaching Cologne, to learn that Rincke was at Frankfort. But that mattered not; the Greenwich monk could search for Tyndale at Cologne, and desire Rincke to do

the same at Frankfort; thus there would be two searches instead of one. West procured a “swift” messenger, (he too was a monk,) and gave him the letter Wolsey had addressed to Rincke.

It was fair-time at Frankfort, and the city was filled with merchants and their wares. As soon as Rincke had finished reading Wolsey’s letter, he hastened to the burgomasters, and required them to confiscate the English translations of the Scriptures, and, above all, to seize “the heretic who was troubling England as Luther troubled Germany.” “Tyndale and his friends have not appeared in our fairs since the month of March 1528,” replied the magistrates, “and we know not whether they are dead or alive.”

Rincke was not discouraged. John Schoot of Strasburg, who was said to have printed Tyndale’s books, and who cared less about the works he published than the money he drew from them, happened to be at Frankfort. “Where is Tyndale?” Rincke asked him. “I do not know,” replied the printer; but he confessed that he had printed a thousand volumes at the request of Tyndale and Roy. “Bring them to me,” continued the senator of Cologne—“If a fair price is paid me, I will give them up to you.” Rincke paid all that was demanded.

Wolsey would now be gratified, for the New Testament annoyed him almost as much as the divorce; this book, so dangerous in his eyes, seemed on the point of raising a conflagration which would infallibly consume the edifice of Roman traditionalism. Rincke, who participated in his patron’s fears, impatiently opened the volumes made over to him; but there was a sad mistake, they were not the New Testament, not even a work of Tyndale’s, but one written by William Roy, a changeable and violent man, whom the reformer had employed for some time at Hamburg, and who had followed him to Cologne, but with whom he had soon become disgusted. “I bade him farewell for our two lives,” said Tyndale, “and a day longer.” Roy, on quitting the reformer, had gone to Strasburg, where he boasted of his relations with him, and had got a satire in that city printed against Wolsey and the monastic orders, entitled The Burial of the Mass: this was the book delivered to Rincke. The monk’s sarcastic spirit had exceeded the legitimate bounds of controversy, and the senator accordingly dared not send the volumes to England. He did not however discontinue his inquiries, but searched every place where he thought he could discover the New Testament, and having seized all the suspected volumes, set off for Cologne.

Yet he was not satisfied. He wanted Tyndale, and went about asking every one if they knew where to find him. But the reformer, whom he was seeking in so many places, and especially at Frankfort and Cologne, chanced to be residing at about equal distances from these two towns, so that Rincke, while travelling from one to the other, might have met him face to face, as Ahab’s messenger met Elijah. Tyndale was at Marburg, whither he had been drawn by several motives. Prince Philip of Hesse was the great protector of the evangelical doctrines. The university had attracted attention in the Reform by the paradoxes of Lambert of Avignon. Here a young Scotchman named Hamilton, afterwards illustrious as a martyr, had studied shortly before, and here too the celebrated printer, John Luft, had his presses. In this city Tyndale and Fryth had taken up their abode, in September 1528, and, hidden on the quiet banks of the Lahn, were translating the Old Testament. If Rincke had searched this place he could not have failed to discover them. But either he thought not of it, or was afraid of the terrible landgrave. The direct road by the Rhine was that which he followed, and Tyndale escaped. When he arrived at Cologne, Rincke had an immediate interview with West. Their investigations having failed, they must have recourse to

more vigorous measures. The senator, therefore, sent the monk back to England, accompanied by his son Hermann, charging them to tell Wolsey: “To seize Tyndale we require fuller powers, ratified by the emperor. The traitors who conspire against the life of the king of England are not tolerated in the empire, much less Tyndale and all those who conspire against Christendom. He must be put to death; nothing but some striking example can check the Lutheran heresy.—And as to ourselves,” they were told to add, “by the favour of God there may possibly be an opportunity for his royal highness and your grace to recompense us.” Rincke had not forgotten the subsidy of ten thousand pounds which he had received from Henry VII for the Turkish war, when he had gone to London as Maximilian’s envoy.

West returned to England sorely vexed that he had failed in his mission. What would they say at court and in his monastery? A fresh humiliation was in reserve for him. Roy, whom West had gone to look for on the banks of the Rhine, had paid a visit to his mother on the banks of the Thames; and to crown all, the new doctrines had penetrated into his own convent. The warden, father Robinson, had embraced them, and night and day the Greenwich monks read that New Testament which West had gone to Cologne to burn. The Antwerp friar, who had accompanied him on his journey, was the only person to whom he could confide his sorrows; but the Franciscans sent him back again to the continent, and then amused themselves at poor West’s expense. If he desired to tell of his adventures on the banks of the Rhine, he was laughed at; if he boasted of the names of Wolsey and Henry VIII, they jeered him still more. He desired to speak to Roy’s mother, hoping to gain some useful information from her; this the monks prevented. “It is in my commission,” he said. They ridiculed him more and more. Robinson, perceiving that the commission made West assume unbecoming airs of independence, requested Wolsey to withdraw it; and West, fancying he was about to be thrown into prison, exclaimed in alarm: “I am weary of my life!” and conjured a friend whom he had at court to procure him before Christmas an obedience under his lordship’s hand and seal, enabling him to leave the monastery; “What you pay him for it,” he added, “I shall see you be reimbursed.” Thus did West expiate the fanatical zeal which had urged him to pursue the translator of the oracles of God. What became of him, we know not: he is never heard of more. At that time Wolsey had other matters to engage him than this “obedience.” While West’s complaints were going to London, those of the king were travelling to Rome. The great business in the cardinal’s eyes was to maintain harmony between Henry and the church. There was no more thought about investigations in Germany, and for a time Tyndale was saved.

CHAPTER V

Necessity of the Reformation—Wolsey’s Earnestness with Da Casale—An Audience with Clement VII—Cruel Position of the Pope—A Judas’ Kiss—A new Brief—Bryan and Vannes sent to Rome—Henry and Du Bellay—Wolsey’s Reasons against the Brief—Excitement in London—Metamorphosis—Wolsey’s Decline—His Anguish. The king and a part of his people still adhered to the popedom, and so long as these bonds were not broken the word of God could not have free course. But to induce England to renounce Rome, there must indeed be powerful motives: and these were not wanting.

Wolsey had never given such pressing orders to any of Henry’s ambassadors: “The king,” he wrote to Da Casale on the 1st of November 1528, “commits this business to your prudence,

dexterity, and fidelity; and I conjure you to employ all the powers of your genius, and even to surpass them. Be very sure that you have done nothing and can do nothing that will be more agreeable to the king, more desirable by me, and more useful and glorious for you and your family."

Da Casale, possessed a tenacity which justified the cardinal's confidence, and an active excitable mind: trembling at the thought of seeing Rome lose England, he immediately requested an audience of Clement VII. "What!" said he to the pope, "just as it was proposed to go on with the divorce, your nuncio endeavours to dissuade the king!… There is no hope that Catherine of Aragon will ever give an heir to the crown. Holy father, there must be an end of this. Order Campeggio to place the decretal in his majesty's hands."—"What say you?" exclaimed the pope. "I would gladly lose one of my fingers to recover it again, and you ask me to make it public … it would be my ruin." Da Casale insisted: "we have a duty to perform," he said; "we remind you at this last hour of the perils threatening the relations which unite Rome and England. The crisis is at hand. We knock at your door, we cry, we urge, we entreat, we lay before you the present and future dangers which threaten the papacy.3 … The world shall know that the king at least has fulfilled the duty of a devoted son of the church. If your holiness desires to keep England in St. Peter's fold, I repeat … now is the time … now is the time." At these words, Da Casale, unable to restrain his emotion, fell down at the pope's feet, and begged him to save the church in Great Britain. The pope was moved. "Rise," said he, with marks of unwonted grief,2 "I grant you all that is in my power; I am willing to confirm the judgment which the legates may think it their duty to pass; but I acquit myself of all responsibility as to the untold evils which this matter may bring with it.… If the king, after having defended the faith and the church, desires to ruin both, on him alone will rest the responsibility of so great a disaster." Clement granted nothing. Da Casale withdrew disheartened, and feeling convinced that the pontiff was about to treat with Charles V.

Wolsey desired to save the popedom; but the popedom resisted. Clement VII was about to lose that island which Gregory the Great had won with such difficulty. The pope was in the most cruel position. The English envoy had hardly left the palace before the emperor's ambassador entered breathing threats. The unhappy pontiff escaped the assaults of Henry only to be exposed to those of Charles; he was thrown backwards and forwards like a ball. "I shall assemble a general council," said the emperor through his ambassador, "and if you are found to have infringed the canons of the church in any point, you shall be proceeded against with every rigour. Do not forget," added his agent in a low tone, "that your birth is illegitimate, and consequently excludes you from the pontificate." The timid Clement, imagining that he saw the tiara falling from his head, swore to refuse Henry every thing. "Alas!" he said to one of his dearest confidants, "I repent in dust and ashes that I ever granted this decretal bull. If the king of England so earnestly desires it to be given him, certainly it cannot be merely to know its contents. He is but too familiar with them. It is only to tie my hands in this matter of the divorce; I would rather die a thousand deaths." Clement, to calm his agitation, sent one of his ablest gentlemen of the bed-chamber, Francis Campana, apparently to feed the king with fresh promises, but in reality to cut the only thread on which Henry's hopes still hung. "We embrace your majesty," wrote the pope in the letter given to Campana, "with the paternal love your numerous merits deserve." Now Campana was sent to England to burn clandestinely the famous decretal;2 Clement concealed his blows by an embrace. Rome had granted many divorces not so well founded as that of Henry VIII; but a very different matter from a

divorce was in question here; the pope, desirous of upraising in Italy his shattered power, was about to sacrifice the Tudor, and to prepare the triumph of the Reformation. Rome was separating herself from England.

All Clement's fear was, that Campana would arrive too late to burn the bull; he was soon reassured; a dead calm prevented the great matter from advancing. Campeggio, who took care to be in no hurry about his mission, gave himself up, like a skilful diplomatist, to his worldly tastes; and when he could not, due respect being had to the state of his legs, indulge in the chase, of which he was very fond, he passed his time in gambling, to which he was much addicted. Respectable historians assert that he indulged in still more illicit pleasures. But this could not last for ever, and the nuncio sought some new means of delay, which offered itself in the most unexpected manner. One day an officer of the queen's presented to the Roman legate a brief of Julius II, bearing the same date as the bull of dispensation, signed too, like that, by the secretary Sigismond, and in which the pope expressed himself in such a manner, that Henry's objections fell of themselves. "The emperor," said Catherine's messenger, "has discovered this brief among the papers of Puebla, the Spanish ambassador in England, at the time of the marriage."—"It is impossible to go on," said Campeggio to Wolsey; "all your reasoning is now cut from under you. We must wait for fresh instructions." This was the cardinal's conclusion at every new incident, and the journey from London to the Vatican being very long (without reckoning the Roman dilatoriness), the expedient was infallible.

Thus there existed two acts of the same pope, signed on the same day—the one secret, the other public, in contradiction to each other. Henry determined to send a new mission to Rome. Anne proposed for this embassy one of the most accomplished gentlemen of the court, her cousin. Sir Francis Bryan. With him was joined an Italian, Peter Vannes, Henry's Latin secretary. "You will search all the registers of the time of Julius II," said Wolsey to them; "you will study the hand-writing of secretary Sigismond, and you will attentively examine the ring of the fisherman used by that pontiff.—Moreover you will inform the pope that it is proposed to set a certain greyfriar, named De Angelis, in his place, to whom Charles would give the spiritual authority, reserving the temporal for himself. You will manage so that Clement takes alarm at the project, and you will then offer him a guard of 2000 men to protect him. You will ask whether, in case the queen should desire to embrace a religious life, on condition of the king's doing the same, and Henry should yield to this wish, he could have the assurance that the pope would afterwards release him from his vows. And, finally, you will inquire whether, in case the queen should refuse to enter a convent, the pope would permit the king to have two wives, as we see in the Old Testament." The idea which has brought so much reproach on the landgrave of Hesse was not a new one; the honour of it belongs to a cardinal and legate of Rome, whatever Bossuet may say. "Lastly," continued Wolsey, "as the pope is of a timid disposition, you will not fail to season your remonstrances with threats. You, Peter, will take him aside and tell him that, as an Italian, having more at heart than any one the glory of the holy see, it is your duty to warn him, that if he persists, the king, his realm, and many other princes, will for ever separate from the papacy."

It was not on the mind of the pope alone that it was necessary to act; the rumour that the emperor and the king of France were treating together disturbed Henry. Wolsey had vainly tried to sound Du Bellay; these two priests tried craft against craft. Besides, the Frenchman was not always seasonably informed by his court, letters taking ten days to come from Paris to London. Henry

resolved to have a conference with the ambassador. He began by speaking to him of his matter, says Du Bellay, “and I promise you,” he added, “that he needs no advocate, he understands the whole business so well.” Henry next touched upon the wrongs of Francis I, “recalling so many things that the envoy knew not what to say.”—“I pray you, Master Ambassador,” said Henry in conclusion, “to beg the king, my brother, to give up a little of his amusements during a year only for the prompt despatch of his affairs. Warn those whom it concerns.” Having given this spur to the king of France, Henry turned his thoughts towards Rome. In truth, the fatal brief from Spain tormented him day and night, and the cardinal tortured his mind to find proofs of its non-authenticity; if he could do so, he would acquit the papacy of the charge of duplicity, and accuse the emperor of forgery. At last he thought he had succeeded. “In the first place,” he said to the king, “the brief has the same date as the bull. Now, if the errors in the latter had been found out on the day it was drawn up, it would have been more natural to make another than to append a brief pointing out the errors. What! the same pope, the same day, at the petition of the same persons, give out two rescripts for one effect, one of which contradicts the other! Either the bull was good, and then, why the brief? or the bull was bad, and then, why deceive princes by a worthless bull? Many names are found in the brief incorrectly spelt, and these are faults which the pontifical secretary, whose accuracy is so well known, could not have committed.2 Lastly, no one in England ever heard mention of this brief; and yet it is here that it ought to be found.” Henry charged Knight, his principal secretary, to join the other envoys with all speed, in order to prove to the pope the supposititious character of the document. This important paper revived the irritation felt in England against Charles V, and it was resolved to come to extremities. Every one discontented with Austria took refuge in London, particularly the Hungarians. The ambassador from Hungary proposed to Wolsey to adjudge the imperial crown of Germany to the elector of Saxony or the landgrave of Hesse, the two chiefs of protestantism. Wolsey exclaimed in alarm: “It will be an inconvenience to Christendom, they are so Lutheran.” But the Hungarian ambassador so satisfied him that in the end he did not find the matter quite so inconvenient. These schemes were prospering in London, when suddenly a new metamorphosis took place under the eyes of Du Bellay. The king, the cardinal, and the ministers appeared in strange consternation. Vincent da Casale had just arrived from Rome with a letter from his cousin the prothonatory, informing Henry that the pope, seeing the triumph of Charles V, the indecision of Francis I, the isolation of the king of England, and the distress of his cardinal, had flung himself into the arms of the emperor. At Rome they went so far as to jest about Wolsey, and to say that since he could not be St. Peter they would make him St. Paul.

While they were ridiculing Wolsey at Rome, at St. Germain’s, they were joking about Henry. “I will make him get rid of the notions he has in his head,” said Francis; and the Flemings, who were again sent out of the country, said as they left London, “that this year they would carry on the war so vigorously, that it would be really a sight worth seeing.”

Besides these public griefs, Wolsey had his private ones. Anne Boleyn, who had already begun to use her influence on behalf of the despotic cardinal’s victims, gave herself no rest until Cheyney, a courtier disgraced by Wolsey, had been restored to the king’s favour. Anne even gave utterance to several biting sarcasms against the cardinal, and the duke of Norfolk and his party began “to speak big,” says Du Bellay. At the moment when the pope, scared by Charles V, was separating from England, Wolsey himself was tottering. Who shall uphold the papacy?… After Wolsey,

nobody! Rome was on the point of losing the power which for nine centuries she had exercised in the bosom of this illustrious nation. The cardinal's anguish cannot be described; unceasingly pursued by gloomy images, he saw Anne on the throne causing the triumph of the Reformation: this nightmare was stifling him. "His grace, the legate, is in great trouble," wrote the bishop of Bayonne. "However … he is more cunning than they are." To still the tempest Wolsey had only one resource left: this was to render Clement favourable to his master's designs. The crafty Campana, who had burnt the decretal, conjured him not to believe all the reports transmitted to him concerning Rome. "To satisfy the king," said he to the cardinal, "the holy father will, if necessary, descend from the pontifical throne." Wolsey therefore resolved to send to Rome a more energetic agent than Vannes, Bryan, or Knight, and cast his eyes on Gardiner. His courage began to revive, when an unexpected event fanned once more his loftiest hopes.

CHAPTER VI The Pope's Illness—Wolsey's Desire—Conference about the Members of the Conclave—Wolsey's Instructions—The Pope recovers—Speech of the English Envoys to the Pope—Clement willing to abandon England—The English demand the Pope's Denial of the Brief—Wolsey's Alarm—Intrigues—Bryan's clearsightedness—Henry's Threats—Wolsey's new Efforts—He calls for an Appeal to Rome, and retracts—Wolsey and Du Belly at Richmond—The Ship of the State. On the 6th of January 1529, the feast of Epiphany, just as the pope was performing mass, he was attacked by a sudden illness; he was taken to his room, apparently in a dying state. When this news reached London, the cardinal resolved to hasten to abandon England, where the soil trembled under his feet, and to climb boldly to the throne of the pontiffs. Bryan and Vannes, then at Florence, hurried on to Rome through roads infested with robbers. At Orvieto they were informed the pope was better; at Viterbo, no one knew whether he was alive or dead; at Ronciglione, they were assured that he he had expired; and, finally, when they reached the metropolis of the popedom, they learnt that Clement could not survive, and that the imperialists, supported by the Colonnas, were striving to have a pope devoted to Charles V. But great as might be the agitation at Rome, it was greater still at Whitehall. If God caused De' Medici to descend from the pontifical throne, it could only be, thought Wolsey, to make him mount it. "It is expedient to have such a pope as may save the realm," said he to Gardiner. "And although it cannot but be incommodious to me in this mine old age to be the common father, yet, when all things be well pondered, the qualities of all the cardinals well considered, I am the only one, without boasting, that can and will remedy the king's secret matter. And were it not for the redintegration of the state of the church, and especially to relieve the king and his realm from their calamities, all the riches and honour of the world should not cause me to accept the said dignity. Nevertheless I conform myself to the necessities of the times. Wherefore, Master Stephen, that this matter may succeed, I pray you to apply all your ingenuity, spare neither money nor labour. I give you the amplest powers, without restriction or limitation." Gardiner departed to win for his master the coveted tiara.

Henry VIII and Wolsey, who could hardly restrain their impatience, soon heard of the pontiff's death from different quarters. "The emperor has taken away Clement's life,"3 said Wolsey, blinded by hatred. "Charles," rejoined the king, "will endeavour to obtain by force or fraud, a pope according to his desires." "Yes, to make him his chaplain," replied Wolsey, "and to put an end by degrees both to pope and popedom." "We must fly to the defence of the church," resumed Henry, "and with that view, my lord, make up your mind to be pope."—"That alone," answered the

cardinal, “can bring your Majesty’s weighty matter to a happy termination, and by saving you, save the church … and myself also,” he thought in his heart.—“Let us see, let us count the voters.”

Henry and his minister then wrote down on a strip of parchment the names of all the cardinals, marking with the latter A those who were on the side of the kings of England and France, and with the letter B all who favoured the emperor. “There was no C,” says a chronicler sarcastically, “to signify any on Christ’s side.” “The letter N designated the neutrals. “The cardinals present,” said Wolsey, “will not exceed thirty-nine, and we must have two-thirds, that is, twenty-six. Now, there are twenty upon whom we can reckon; we must therefore, at any price, gain six of the neutrals.”

Wolsey, deeply sensible of the importance of an election that would decide whether England was to be reformed or not, carefully drew up the instructions, which Henry signed, and which history must register. “We desire and ordain,” the ambassadors were informed in them, “that you secure the election of the cardinal of York; not forgetting that next to the salvation of his own soul, there is nothing the king desires more earnestly.

“To gain over the neutral cardinals you will employ two methods in particular. The first is, the cardinals being present, and having God and the Holy Ghost before them, you shall remind them that the cardinal of York alone can save Christendom.

“The second is, because human fragility suffereth not all things to be pondered and weighed in a just balance, it appertaineth in matter of so high importance, to the comfort and relief of all Christendom, to succour the infirmity that may chance … not for corruption, you will understand … but rather to help the lacks and defaults of human nature. And, therefore, it shall be expedient that you promise spiritual offices, dignities, rewards of money, or other things which shall seem meet to the purpose.

“Then shall you, with good dexterity, combine and knit those favourable to us in a perfect fastness and indissoluble knot. And that they may be the better animated to finish the election to the king’s desire, you shall offer them a guard of 2000 or 3000 men from the kings of England and France, from the viscount of Turin, and the republic of Venice.

“If, notwithstanding all your exertions, the election should fail, then the cardinals of the king’s shall repair to some sure place, and there proceed to such an election as may be to God’s pleasure.

“And to win more friends for the king, you shall promise, on the one hand, to the Cardinal de’ Medici and his party our special favour; and the Florentines, on the other hand, you shall put in comfort of the exclusion of the said family De’ Medici. Likewise you shall put the cardinals in perfect hope of recovering the patrimony of the church; and you shall contain the Venetians in good trust of a reasonable way to be taken for Cervia and Ravenna (which formed part of the patrimony) to their contentment.”

Such were the means by which the cardinal hoped to win the papal throne. To the right he said yes, to the left he said no. What would it matter that these perfidies were one day discovered, provided it were after the election. Christendom might be very certain that the choice of the future pontiff would be the work of the Holy Ghost. Alexander VI had been a poisoner; Julius II had given way to ambition, anger, and vice; the liberal Leo X had passed his life in worldly pursuits; the unhappy Clement VII had lived on stratagems and lies; Wolsey would be their worthy successor:

“All the seven deadly sins have worn the triple crown.”

Wolsey found his excuse in the thought, that if he succeeded, the divorce was secured, and England enslaved for ever to the court of Rome.

Success at first appeared probable. Many cardinals spoke openly in favour of the English prelate; one of them asked for a detailed account of his life, in order to present it as a model to the church; another worshipped him (so he said) as a divinity.… Among the gods and popes adored at Rome there were some no better than he. But ere long alarming news reached England. What grief! the pope was getting better. “Conceal your instructions,” wrote the cardinal, “and reserve them in omnem eventum.”

Wolsey not having obtained the tiara, it was necessary at least to gain the divorce. “God declares,” said the English ambassadors to the pope, “except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it. Therefore, the king, taking God alone for his guide, requests of you, in the first place, an engagement to pronounce the divorce in the space of three months, and in the second the avocation to Rome.”—“The promise first, and only after that the avocation,” Wolsey had said; “for I fear that if the pope begins with the avocation, he will never pronounce the divorce.”—“Besides,” added the envoys, “the king’s second marriage admits of no refusal, whatever bulls or briefs there may be.2 The only issue of this matter is the divorce; the divorce in one way or another must be procured.”

Wolsey had instructed his envoys to pronounce these words with a certain air of familiarity, and at the same time with a gravity calculated to produce an effect. His expectations were deceived: Clement was colder than ever. He had determined to abandon England in order that he might secure the States of the Church, of which Charles was then master, thus sacrificing the spiritual to the temporal. “The pope will not do the least thing for your majesty,” wrote Bryan to the king; “your matter may well be in his Pater noster, but it certainly is not in his Credo.” “Increase in importunity,” answered the king; “the cardinal of Verona should remain about the pope’s person and counterbalance the influence of De Angelis and the archbishop of Capua. I would rather lose my two crowns than be beaten by these two friars.”

Thus was the struggle about to become keener than ever, when Clement’s relapse once more threw doubt on every thing. He was always between life and death; and this perpetual alternation agitated the king and the impatient cardinal in every way. The latter considered that the pope had need of merits to enter the kingdom of heaven. “Procure an interview with the pope,” he wrote to the envoys, “even though he be in the very agony of death; and represent to him that nothing will be more likely to save his soul than the bill of divorce.” Henry’s commissioners were not admitted; but towards the end of March, the deputies appearing in a body, the pope promised to examine the letter from Spain. Vannes began to fear this document; he represented that those who had fabricated it would have been able to give it an appearance of authenticity. “Rather declare immediately that this brief is not a brief,” said he to the pope. “The king of England, who is your holiness’s son, is not so like the rest of the world. We cannot put the same shoe on every foot.”3 This rather vulgar argument did not touch Clement. “If to content your master in this business,” said he, “I cannot employ my head, at least I will my finger.”—“Be pleased to explain yourself,” replied Vannes, who found the finger a very little matter.—“I mean,” resumed the pontiff, “that I shall employ every means, provided they are honourable.” Vannes withdrew disheartened.

He immediately conferred with his colleagues, and all together, alarmed at the idea of Henry's anger, returned to the pontiff; they thrust aside the lackeys, who endeavoured to stop them, and made their way into his bed-chamber. Clement opposed them with that resistance of inertia by which the podedom has gained its greatest victories: siluit, he remained silent. Of what consequence to the pontiff were Tudor, his island, and his church, when Charles of Austria was threatening him with his armies? Clement, less proud than Hildebrand, submitted willingly to the emperer's power, provided the emperor would protect him. "I had rather," he said, "be Cæsar's servant, not only in a temple, but in a stable if necessary, than be exposed to the insults of rebels and vagabonds." At the same time he wrote to Campeggio: "Do not irritate the king, but spin out this matter as much as possible;6 the Spanish brief gives us the means." In fact, Charles V had twice shown Lee the original document, and Wolsey, after this ambassador's report, began to believe that it was not Charles who had forged the brief, but that Pope Julius II had really given two contradictory documents on the same day. Accordingly the cardinal now feared to see this letter in the pontiff's hands. "Do all you can to dissuade the pope from seeking the original in Spain," wrote he to one of his ambassadors; "it may exasperate the emperor." We know how cautious the cardinal was towards Charles. Intrigue attained its highest point at this epoch, and Englishmen and Romans encountered craft with craft. "In such ticklish negotiations," says Burnet, (who had had some little experience in diplomacy) "ministers must say and unsay as they are instructed, which goes of course as a part of their business." Henry's envoys to the pope intercepted the letters sent from Rome, and had Campeggio's seized.2 On his part the pope indulged in flattering smiles and perfidious equivocations. Bryan wrote to Henry VIII: "Always your grace hath done for him in deeds, and he hath recompensed you with fair words, and fair writings, of which both I think your grace shall lack none; but as for the deeds, I never believe to see them, and especially at this time." Bryan had comprehended the court of Rome better perhaps than many politicians. Finally, Clement himself, wishing to prepare the king for the blow he was about to inflict, wrote to him: "We have been able to find nothing that would satisfy your ambassadors."4

Henry thought he knew what this message meant: that he had found nothing, and would find nothing; and accordingly this prince, who, if we may believe Wolsey, had hitherto shown incredible patience and gentleness, gave way to all his violence. "Very well then," said he; "my lords and I well know how to withdraw ourselves from the authority of the Roman see." Wolsey turned pale, and conjured his master not to rush into that fearful abyss;6 Campeggio, too, endeavoured to revive the king's hopes. But it was all of no use. Henry recalled his ambassadors.

Henry, it is true, had not yet reached the age when violent characters become inflexible from the habit they have encouraged of yielding to their passions. But the cardinal, who knew his master, knew also that his inflexibility did not depend upon the number of his years; he thought Rome's power in England was lost, and placed between Henry and Clement, he exclaimed: "How shall I avoid Scylla, and not fall into Charybdis?" He begged the king to make one last effort by sending Dr. Bennet to the pope with orders to support the avocation to Rome, and he gave him a letter in which he displayed all the resources of his eloquence. "How can it be imagined," he wrote, "that the persuasions of sense urge the king to break a union in which the ardent years of his youth were passed with such purity?2 … The matter is very different. I am on the spot, I know the state of men's minds.… Pray, believe me.… The divorce is the secondary question; the primary one is the fidelity of this realm to the papal see. The nobility, gentry, and citizens all exclaim with

indignation: Must our fortunes, and even our lives, depend upon the nod of a foreigner? We must abolish, or at the very least diminish, the authority of the Roman pontiff. … Most holy father, we cannot mention such things without a shudder." … This new attempt was also unavailing. The pope demanded of Henry how he could doubt his good will, seeing that the king of England had done so much for the apostolic see.4 This appeared a cruel irony to Tudor; the king requested a favour of the pope, and the pope replied by calling to mind those which the papacy had received from his hands. "Is this the way," men asked in England, "in which Rome pays her debts?"

Wolsey had not reached the term of his misfortunes. Gardiner and Bryan had just returned to London: they declared that to demand an avocation to Rome was to lose their cause. Accordingly Wolsey, who turned to every wind, ordered Da Casale, in case Clement should pronounce the avocation, to appeal from the pope, the false head of the church, to the true vicar of Jesus Christ. This was almost in Luther's style. Who was this true vicar? Probably a pope nominated by the influence of England. But this proceeding did not assure the cardinal: he was losing his judgment. A short time before this Du Bellay, who had just returned from Paris, whither he had gone to retain France on the side of England, had been invited to Richmond by Wolsey. As the two prelates were walking in the park, on that hill whence the eye ranges over the fertile and undulating fields through which the winding Thames pours its tranquil waters, the unhappy cardinal observed to the bishop: "My trouble is the greatest that ever was!… I have excited and carried on this matter of the divorce, to dissolve the union between the two houses of Spain and England, by sowing misunderstanding between them, as if I had no part in it. You know it was in the interest of France; I therefore entreat the king your master and her majesty to do every thing that may forward the divorce. I shall esteem such a favour more than if they made me pope; but if they refuse me, my ruin is inevitable." And then giving way to despair, he exclaimed: "Alas! would that I were going to be buried to-morrow!" The wretched man was drinking the bitter cup his perfidies had prepared for him. All seemed to conspire against Henry, and Bennet was recalled shortly after. It was said at court and in the city: "Since the pope sacrifices us to the emperor, let us sacrifice the pope." Clement VII, intimidated by the threats of Charles V, and tottering upon his throne, madly repelled with his foot the bark of England. Europe was all attention, and began to think that the proud vessel of Albion, cutting the cable that bound her to the pontiffs, would boldly spread her canvass to the winds, and ever after sail the sea alone, wafted onwards by the breeze that comes from heaven. The influence of Rome over Europe is in great measure political. It loses a kingdom by a royal quarrel, and might in this same way lose ten.

CHAPTER VII

Discussion Between the Evangelicals and the Catholics—Union of Learning and Life—The Laity—Tewkesbury—His Appearance before the Bishop's Court—He is tortured—Two Classes of Opponents—A Theological Duel—Scripture and the Church—Emancipation of the Mind—Mission to the Low Countries—Tyndale's Embarrassment—Tonstall wishes to buy the Books—Packington's Stratagem—Tyndale departs for Antwerp—His Shipwreck—Arrival at Hamburg—Meets Coverdale.

Other circumstances from day to day rendered the emancipation of the church more necessary. If behind these political debates there had not been found a Christian people, resolved never to temporize with error, it is probable that England, after a few years of independence, would have

fallen back into the bosom of Rome. The affair of the divorce was not the only one agitating men's minds; the religious controversies, which for some years filled the continent, were always more animated at Oxford and Cambridge. The Evangelicals and the Catholics (not very catholic indeed) warmly discussed the great questions which the progress of events brought before the world. The former maintained that the primitive church of the apostles and the actual church of the papacy were not identical; the latter affirmed, on the contrary, the identity of popery and apostolic Christianity. Other Romish doctors in later times, finding this position somewhat embarrassing, have asserted that Catholicism existed only in the germ in the apostolic church, and had subsequently developed itself. But a thousand abuses, a thousand errors may creep into a church under cover of this theory. A plant springs from the seed and grows up in accordance with immutable laws; whilst a doctrine cannot be transformed in the mind of man without falling under the influence of sin. It is true that the disciples of popery have supposed a constant action of the Divine Spirit in the Catholic church, which excludes every influence of error. To stamp on the development of the church the character of truth, they have stamped on the church itself the character of infallibility; quod erat demonstrandum. Their reasoning is a mere begging of the question. To know whether the Romish development is identical with the Gospel, we must examine it by Scripture.

It was not university men alone who occupied themselves with Christian truth. The separation which has been remarked in other times between the opinions of the people and of the learned, did not now exist. What the doctors taught, the citizens practised; Oxford and London embraced each other. The theologians knew that learning has need of life, and the citizens believed that life has need of that learning which derives the doctrine from the wells of the Scriptures of God. It was the harmony between these two elements, the one theological, the other practical, which constituted the strength of the English reformation. The evangelical life in the capital alarmed the clergy more than the evangelical doctrine in the colleges. Since Monmouth had escaped, they must strike another. Among the London merchants was John Tewkesbury, one of the oldest friends of the Scriptures in England. As early as 1512 he had become possessor of a manuscript copy of the Bible, and had attentively studied it; when Tyndale's New Testament appeared, he read it with avidity; and, finally, The Wicked Mammon had completed the work of his conversion. Being a man of heart and understanding, clever in all he undertook, a ready and fluent speaker, and liking to get to the bottom of every thing, Tewkesbury like Monmouth became very influential in the city, and one of the most learned in Scripture of any of the evangelicals. These generous Christians, being determined to consecrate to God the good things they had received from him, were the first among that long series of laymen who were destined to be more useful to the truth than many ministers and bishops. They found time to interest themselves about the most trifling details of the kingdom of God; and in the history of the Reformation in Britain their names should be inscribed beside those of Latimer and Tyndale. The activity of these laymen could not escape the cardinal's notice. Clement VII was abandoning England: it was necessary for the English bishops, by crushing the heretics, to show that they would not abandon the popedom. We can understand the zeal of these prelates, and without excusing their persecutions, we are disposed to extenuate their crime. The bishops determined to ruin Tewkesbury. One day in April 1529, as he was busy among his peltries, the officers entered his warehouse, arrested him, and led him away to the bishop of London's chapel, where, besides the ordinary (Tonstall), the bishops of Ely, St. Asaph, Bath, and Lincoln, with the abbot of Westminster, were on the bench. The composition of

this tribunal indicated the importance of his case. The emancipation of the laity, thought these judges, is perhaps a more dangerous heresy than justification by faith.

“John Tewkesbury,” said the bishop of London, “I exhort you to trust less to your own wit and learning, and more unto the doctrine of the holy mother the church.” Tewkesbury made answer, that in his judgment he held no other doctrine than that of the church of Christ. Tonstall then broached the principal charge, that of having read the Wicked Mammon, and after quoting several passages, he exclaimed: “Renounce these errors.”—“I find no fault in the book,” replied Tewkesbury. “It has enlightened my conscience and consoled my heart. But it is not my Gospel. I have studied the Holy Scriptures these seventeen years, and as a man sees the spots of his face in a glass, so by reading them I have learnt the faults of my soul. If there is a disagreement between you and the New Testament, put yourselves in harmony with it, rather than desire to put that in accord with you.” The bishops were surprised that a leather-seller should speak so well, and quote Scripture so happily that they were unable to resist him.2 Annoyed at being catechised by a layman, the bishops of Bath, St. Asaph, and Lincoln thought they could conquer him more easily by the rack than by their arguments. He was taken to the Tower, where they ordered him to be put to the torture. His limbs were crushed, which was contrary to the laws of England, and the violence of the rack tore from him a cry of agony to which the priests replied by a shout of exultation. The inflexible merchant had promised at last to renounce Tyndale’s Wicked Mammon. Tewkesbury left the Tower “almost a cripple,” and returned to his house to lament the fatal word which the question had extorted from him, and to prepare in the silence of faith to confess in the burning pile the precious name of Christ Jesus.

We must, however, acknowledge that the “question” was not Rome’s only argument. The gospel had two classes of opponents in the sixteenth century, as in the first ages of the church. Some attacked it with the torture, others with their writings. Sir Thomas More, a few years later, was to have recourse to the first of these arguments; but for the moment he took up his pen. He had first studied the writings of the Fathers of the church and of the Reformers, but rather as an advocate than as a theologian; and then, armed at all points, he rushed into the arena of polemics, and in his attacks dealt those “technical convictions and that malevolent subtlety,” says one of his greatest admirers, “from which the honestest men of his profession are not free.” Jests and sarcasms had fallen from his pen in his discussion with Tyndale, as in his controversy with Luther. Shortly after Tewkesbury’s affair (in June, 1529) there appeared A Dialogue of Sir Thomas More, Knt., touching the pestilent Sect of Luther and Tyndale, by the one begun in Saxony, and by the other laboured to be brought into England.

Tyndale soon became informed of More’s publication, and a remarkable combat ensued between these two representatives of the two doctrines that were destined to divide Christendom—Tyndale the champion of Scripture, and More the champion of the church. More having called his book a dialogue, Tyndale adopted this form in his reply, and the two combatants valiantly crossed their swords, though wide seas lay between them. This theological duel is not without importance in the history of the Reformation. The struggles of diplomacy, of sacerdotalism, and of royalty were not enough; there must be struggles of doctrine. Rome had set the hierarchy above the faith; the Reformation was to restore faith to its place above the hierarchy.

More. Christ said not, the Holy Ghost shall write, but shall teach. Whatsoever the church says, it is the word of God, though it be not in Scripture.

Tyndale. What! Christ and the apostles not spoken of Scriptures!… These are written, says St. John, that ye believe and through belief have life. (1 John 2:1; Romans 15:4; Matthew 22:29)

More. The apostles have taught by mouth many things they did not write, because they should not come into the hands of the heathen for mocking.

Tyndale. I pray you what thing more to be mocked by the heathen could they teach than the resurrection; and that Christ was God and man, and died between two thieves? And yet all these things the apostles wrote. And again, purgatory, penance, and satisfaction for sin, and praying to saints, are marvellous agreeable unto the superstition of the heathen people, so that they need not to abstain from writing of them for fear lest the heathen should have mocked them.

More. We must not examine the teaching of the church by Scripture, but understand Scripture by means of what the church says.

Tyndale. What! Does the air give light to the sun, or the sun to the air? Is the church before the Gospel, or the Gospel before the church? Is not the father older than the son? God begat us with his own will, with the word of truth, says St. James (James 1:18) If he who begetteth is before him who is begotten, the word is before the church, or, to speak more correctly, before the congregation.

More. Why do you say congregation and not church?

Tyndale. Because by that word church, you understand nothing but a multitude of shorn and oiled, which we now call the spirituality or clergy; while the word of right is common unto all the congregation of them that believe in Christ.

More. The church is the pope and his sect are followers.

Tyndale. The pope teacheth us to trust in holy works for salvation, as penance, saints' merits, and friars' coats. Now, he that hath no faith to be saved through Christ, is not of Christ's church.3 More. The Romish church from which the Lutherans came out, was before them, and therefore is the right one.

Tyndale. In like manner you may say, the church of the Pharisees, whence Christ and his apostles came out, was before them, and was therefore the right church, and consequently Christ and his disciples are heretics.

More. No: the apostles came out from the church of the Pharisees because they found not Christ there; but your priests in Germany and elsewhere, have come out of our church, because they wanted wives.

Tyndale. Wrong: … these priests were at first attached to what you call heresies, and then they took wives; but yours were first attached to the holy doctrine of the pope, and then they took harlots.

More. Luther's books be open, if you will not believe us.

Tyndale. Nay, ye have shut them up, and have even burnt them. …

More. I marvel that you deny purgatory, Sir William, except it be a plain point with you to go straight to hell.

Tyndale. I know no other purging but faith in the cross of Christ; while you, for a groat or a sixpence, buy some secret pills [indulgences] which you take to purge yourselves of your sins.

More. Faith, then, is your purgatory, you say; there is no need, therefore, of works—a most immoral doctrine!

Tyndale. It is faith alone that saves us, but not a bare faith. When a horse beareth a saddle and a man thereon, we may well say that the horse only and alone beareth the saddle, but we do not mean the saddle empty, and no man thereon. In this manner did the catholic and the evangelical carry on the discussion. According to Tyndale, what constitutes the true church is the work of the Holy Ghost within; according to More, the constitution of the papacy without. The spiritual character of the Gospel is thus put in opposition to the formalist character of the Roman church. The Reformation restored to our belief the solid foundation of the word of God; for the sand it substituted the rock. In the discussion to which we have just been listening, the advantage remained not with the catholic. Erasmus, a friend of More's, embarrassed by the course the latter was taking, wrote to Tonstall: "I cannot heartily congratulate More."

Henry interrupted the celebrated knight in these contests to send him to Cambray, where a peace was negotiating between France and the empire. Wolsey would have been pleased to go himself; but his enemies suggested to the king, "that it was only that he might not expedite the matter of the divorce." Henry, therefore, despatched More, Knight, and Tonstall; but Wolsey had created so many delays that he did not arrive until after the conclusion of the Ladies' Peace (August 1529). The king's vexation was extreme. Du Bellay had in vain helped him to spend a good preparatory July to make him swallow the dose. Henry was angry with Wolsey, Wolsey threw the blame on the ambassador, and the ambassador defended himself, he tells us, "with tooth and nail."3 By way of compensation, the English envoys concluded with the emperor a treaty prohibiting on both sides the printing and sale of "any Lutheran books." Some of them could have wished for a good persecution, for a few burning piles, it may be. A singular opportunity occurred. In the spring of 1529, Tyndale and Fryth had left Marburg for Antwerp, and were thus in the vicinity of the English envoys. What West had been unable to effect, it was thought the two most intelligent men in Britain could not fail to accomplish. "Tyndale must be captured," said More and Tonstall.—"You do not know what sort of a country you are in," replied Hackett. "Will you believe that on the 7th of April, Harman arrested me at Antwerp for damages, caused by his imprisonment? If you can lay anything to my charge as a private individual, I said to the officer, I am ready to answer for myself; but if you arrest me as ambassador, I know no judge but the emperor. Upon which the procurator had the audacity to reply, that I was arrested as ambassador; and the lords of Antwerp only set me at liberty on condition that I should appear again at the first summons. These merchants are so proud of their franchises, that they would resist even Charles himself." This anecdote was not at all calculated to encourage More; and not caring about a pursuit, which promised to be of little use, he returned to England. But the bishop of London, who was left behind, persisted in the project, and repaired to Antwerp to put it in execution.

Tyndale was at that time greatly embarrassed; considerable debts, incurred with his printers, compelled him to suspend his labours. Nor was this all: the prelate who had spurned him so harshly in London, had just arrived in the very city where he lay concealed.… What would become of him?… A merchant, named Augustin Packington, a clever man, but somewhat inclined to dissimulation, happening to be at Antwerp on business, hastened to pay his respects to the bishop. The latter observed, in the course of conversation: “I should like to get hold of the books with which England is poisoned.” “I can perhaps serve you in that matter,” replied the merchant. “I know the Flemings, who have bought Tyndale’s books; so that if your lordship will be pleased to pay for them, I will make you sure of them all.”—“Oh, oh!” thought the bishop, “Now, as the proverb says, I shall have God by the toe. Gentle Master Packington,” he added in a flattering tone, “I will pay for them whatsoever they cost you. I intend to burn them at St. Paul’s cross.” The bishop, having his hand already on Tyndale’s Testaments, fancied himself on the point of seizing Tyndale himself.

Packington, being one of those men who love to conciliate all parties, ran off to Tyndale, with whom he was intimate, and said:—“William, I know you are a poor man, and have a heap of New Testaments and books by you, for which you have beggared yourself; and I have now found a merchant who will buy them all, and with ready money too.”—“Who is the merchant?” said Tyndale.—“The bishop of London.”—“Tonstall?… If he buys my books, it can only be to burn them.”—“No doubt,” answered Packington; “but what will he gain by it? The whole world will cry out against the priest who burns God’s word, and the eyes of many will be opened. Come, make up your mind, William; the bishop shall have the books, you the money, and I the thanks.” … Tyndale resisted the proposal; Packington became more pressing. “The question comes to this,” he said; “shall the bishop pay for the books or shall he not? for, make up your mind … he will have them.”—“I consent,” said the Reformer at last; “I shall pay my debts, and bring out a new and more correct edition of the Testament.” The bargain was made.

Erelong the danger thickened around Tyndale. Placards, posted at Antwerp and throughout the province, announced that the emperor, in conformity with the treaty of Cambray, was about to proceed against the Reformers and their writings. Not an officer of justice appeared in the street but Tyndale’s friends trembled for his liberty. Under such circumstances, how could he print his translation of Genesis and Deuteronomy? He made up his mind about the end of August to go to Hamburg, and take his passage in a vessel loading for that port. Embarking with his books, his manuscripts, and the rest of his money, he glided down the Scheldt, and soon found himself afloat on the German ocean. But one danger followed close upon another. He had scarcely passed the mouth of the Meuse when a tempest burst upon him, and his ship, like that of old which bore St. Paul, was almost swallowed up by the waves.—“Satan, envying the happy course and success of the Gospel,” says a chronicler, “set to his might how to hinder the blessed labours of this man.” The seamen toiled, Tyndale prayed, all hope was lost. The reformer alone was full of courage, not doubting that God would preserve him for the accomplishment of his work. All the exertions of the crew proved useless; the vessel was dashed on the coast, and the passengers escaped with their lives. Tyndale gazed with sorrow upon that ocean which had swallowed up his beloved books and precious manuscripts, and deprived him of his resources.2 What labours, what perils! banishment, poverty, thirst, insults, watchings, persecution, imprisonment, the stake!… Like Paul, he was in perils by his own countrymen, in perils among strange people, in perils in the city, in perils in the

sea. Recovering his spirits, however, he went on board another ship, entered the Elbe, and at last reached Hamburg.

Great joy was in store for him in that city. Coverdale, Foxe informs us, was waiting there to confer with him, and to help him in his labours. It has been supposed that Coverdale went to Hamburg to invite Tyndale, in Cromwell's name, to return to England;4 but it is merely a conjecture, and requires confirmation. As early as 1527, Coverdale had made known to Cromwell his desire to translate the Scriptures. It was natural that, meeting with difficulties in this undertaking, he should desire to converse with Tyndale. The two friends lodged with a pious woman named Margaret van Emmersen, and spent some time together in the autumn of 1529, undisturbed by the sweating sickness which was making such cruel havoc all around them. Coverdale returned to England shortly after; the two reformers had, no doubt, discovered that it was better for each of them to translate the Scriptures separately.

Before Coverdale's return, Tonstall had gone back to London, exulting at carrying with him the books he had bought so dearly. But when he reached the capital, he thought he had better defer the meditated auto da fé until some striking event should give it increased importance. And besides, just at that moment, very different matters were engaging public attention on the banks of the Thames, and the liveliest emotions agitated every mind.

CHAPTER VIII The Royal Session—Sitting of the 18th June; the Queen's Protest—Sitting of the 21st June—Summons to the King and Queen—Catherine's Speech—She retires—Impression on the audience—The King's Declaration—Wolsey's Protest—Quarrel between the Bishops—New sitting—Apparition to the Maid of Kent—Wolsey chafed by Henry—The Earl of Wiltshire at Wolsey's—Private Conference between Catherine and the two Legates.

Affairs had changed in England during the absence of Tonstall and More; and even before their departure, events of a certain importance had occurred. Henry, finding there was nothing more to hope from Rome, had turned to Wolsey and Campeggio. The Roman nuncio had succeeded in deceiving the king. "Campeggio is very different from what he is reported," said Henry to his friends; "he is not for the emperor, as I was told; I have said somewhat to him which has changed his mind." No doubt he had made some brilliant promise.

Henry therefore, imagining himself sure of his two legates, desired them to proceed with the matter of the divorce without delay. There was no time to lose, for the king was informed that the pope was on the point of recalling the commission given to the two cardinals; and as early as the 19th of March, Salviati, the pope's uncle and secretary of state, wrote to Campeggio about it. Henry's process, once in the court of the pontifical chancery, it would have been long before it got out again. Accordingly, on the 31st of May, the king, by a warrant under the great seal, gave the legates leave to execute their commission, "without any regard to his own person, and having the fear of God only before their eyes." The legates themselves had suggested this formula to the king. On the same day the commission was opened; but to begin the process was not to end it. Every letter which the nuncio received forbade him to do so in the most positive manner. "Advance slowly and never finish," were Clement's instructions. The trial was to be a farce, played by a pope and two cardinals. The ecclesiastical court met in the great hall of the Blackfriars, commonly called the "parliament chamber." The two legates having successively taken the commission in their hands, devoutly declared that they were resolved to execute it (they should have said, to elude it),

made the required oaths, and ordered a peremptory citation of the king and queen to appear on the 18th of June at nine in the morning. Campeggio was eager to proceed slowly; the session was adjourned for three weeks. The citation caused a great stir among the people. “What!” said they, “a king and a queen constrained to appear, in their own realm, before their own subjects.” The papacy set an example which was to be strictly followed in after-years both in England and in France. On the 18th of June Catherine appeared before the commission in the parliament chamber, and stepping forward with dignity, said with a firm voice: “I protest against the legates as incompetent judges, and appeal to the pope.” This proceeding of the queen’s, her pride and firmness, troubled her enemies, and in their vexation they grew exasperated against her. “Instead of praying God to bring this matter to a good conclusion,” they said, “she endeavours to turn away the people’s affections from the king. Instead of showing Henry the love of a youthful wife, she keeps away from him night and day. There is even cause to fear,” they added, “that she is in concert with certain individuals who have formed the horrible design of killing the king and the cardinal.” But persons of generous heart, seeing only a queen, a wife, and a mother, attacked in her dearest affections, showed themselves full of sympathy for her. On the 21st of June, the day to which the court adjourned, the two legates entered the parliament chamber with all the pomp belonging to their station, and took their seats on a raised platform. Near them sat the bishops of Bath and Lincoln, the abbot of Westminster, and Doctor Taylor, master of the Rolls, whom they had added to their commission. Below them were the secretaries, among whom the skilful Stephen Gardiner held the chief rank. On the right hung a cloth of estate where the king sat surrounded by his officers; and on the left, a little lower, was the queen, attended by her ladies. The archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops were seated between the legates and Henry VIII, and on both sides of the throne were stationed the counsellors of the king and queen. The latter were Fisher, bishop of Rochester, Standish of St. Asaph, West of Ely, and Doctor Ridley. The people, when they saw this procession defile before them, were far from being dazzled by the pomp. “Less show and more virtue,” they said, “would better become such judges.” The pontifical commission having been read, the legates declared that they would judge without fear or favour, and would admit of neither recusation nor appeal. Then the usher cried: “Henry, king of England, come into court.” The king, cited in his own capital to accept as judges two priests, his subject, repressed the throbbing of his proud heart, and replied, in the hope that this strange trial would have a favourable issue: “Here I am.” The usher continued: “Catherine, queen of England, come into court.” The queen handed the cardinals a paper in which she protested against the legality of the court, as the judges were the subjects of her opponent,3 and appealed to Rome. The cardinals declared they could not admit this paper, and consequently Catherine was again called into court. At this second summons she rose, devoutly crossed herself, made the circuit of the court to where the king sat, bending with dignity as she passed in front of the legates, and fell on her knees before her husband. Every eye was turned upon her. Then speaking in English, but with a Spanish accent, which by recalling the distance she was from her native home, pleaded eloquently for her, Catherine said with tears in her eyes, and in a tone at once dignified and impassioned:

“Sir,—I beseech you, for all the love that hath been between us, and for the love of God, let me have justice and right; take some pity on me, for I am a poor woman and a stranger, born out of your dominions. I have here no assured friend, much less impartial counsel, and I flee to you as to the head of justice within this realm. Alas! Sir, wherein have I offended you, or what occasion given you of displeasure, that you should wish to put me from you? I take God and all the world to

witness, that I have been to you a true, humble, and obedient wife, ever conformable to your will and pleasure. Never have I said or done aught contrary thereto, being always well pleased and content with all things wherein you had delight; neither did I ever grudge in word or countenance, or show a visage or spark of discontent. I loved all those whom you loved, only for your sake. This twenty years I have been your true wife, and by me ye have had divers children, although it hath pleased God to call them out of this world, which yet hath been no default in me." The judges, and even the most servile of the courtiers, were touched when they heard these simple and eloquent words, and the queen's sorrow moved them almost to tears. Catherine continued:—

"Sir,—When ye married me at the first, I take God to be my judge I was a true maid; and whether it be true or not, I put it to your conscience.… If there be any just cause that ye can allege against me, I am contented to depart from your kingdom, albeit to my great shame and dishonour; and if there be none, then let me remain in my former estate until death. Who united us? The king, your father, who was called the second Solomon; and my father, Ferdinand, who was esteemed one of the wisest princes that, for many years before, had reigned in Spain. It is not, therefore, to be doubted that the marriage between you and me is good and lawful. Who are my judges? Is not one the man that has put sorrow between you and me? … a judge whom I refuse and abhor!—Who are the councillors assigned me? Are they not officers of the crown, who have made oath to you in your own council?… Sir, I conjure you not to call me before a court so formed. Yet, if you refuse me this favour … your will be done.… I shall be silent, I shall repress the emotions of my soul, and remit my just cause to the hands of God."

Thus spoke Catherine through her tears; humbly bending, she seemed to embrace Henry's knees. She rose and made a low obeisance to the king. It was expected that she would return to her seat: but leaning on the arm of Griffiths, her receiver-general, she moved towards the door. The king, observing this, ordered her to be recalled; and the usher following her, thrice cried aloud: "Catherine, queen of England, come into court."—"Madam," said Griffiths, "you are called back."—"I hear it well enough," replied the queen, "but go you on, for this is no court wherein I can have justice: let us proceed." Catherine returned to the palace, and never again appeared before the court either by proxy or in person."2

She had gained her cause in the minds of many. The dignity of her person, the quaint simplicity of her speech, the propriety with which, relying upon her innocence, she had spoken of the most delicate subjects, and the tears which betrayed her emotion, had created a deep impression. But "the sting in her speech," as an historian says, was her appeal to the king's conscience, and to the judgment of Almighty God, on the capital point in the cause. "How could a person so modest, so sober in her language," said many, "dare utter such a falsehood? Besides, the king did not contradict her."

Henry was greatly embarrassed: Catherine's words had moved him. Catherine's defence, one of the most touching in history, had gained over the accuser himself. He therefore felt constrained to render this testimony to the accused: "Since the queen has withdrawn, I will, in her absence, declare to you all present, that she has been to me as true and obedient a wife as I could desire. She has all the virtues and good qualities that belong to a woman. She is as noble in character as in birth." But Wolsey was the most embarrassed of all. When the queen had said, without naming him, that one of her judges was the cause of all her misfortunes, looks of indignation were turned

upon him. He was unwilling to remain under the weight of this accusation. As soon as the king had finished speaking, he said: “Sir, I humbly beg your majesty to declare before this audience, whether I was the first or chief mover in this business.” Wolsey had formerly boasted to Du Bellay, “that the first project of the divorce was set on foot by himself, to create a perpetual separation between the houses of England and Spain;” but now it suited him to affirm the contrary. The king, who needed his services, took care not to contradict him. “My lord cardinal,” he said, “I can well excuse you herein. Marry, so far from being a mover, ye have been rather against me in attempting thereof. It was the bishop of Tarbes, the French ambassador, who begot the first scruples in my conscience by his doubts on the legitimacy of the princess Mary.” This was not correct. The bishop of Tarbes was not in England before the year 1527, and we have proofs that the king was meditating a divorce in 1526. “From that hour,” he continued, “I was much troubled, and thought myself in danger of God’s heavy displeasure, who, wishing to punish my incestuous marriage, had taken away all the sons my wife had borne me. I laid my grief before you, my lord of Lincoln, then being my ghostly father; and by your advice I asked counsel of the rest of the bishops, and you all informed me under your seals, that you shared in my scruples.”—“That is the truth,” said the archbishop of Canterbury.—“No, Sir, not so, under correction,” quoth the bishop of Rochester, “you have not my hand and seal.”—“No?” exclaimed the king, showing him a paper which he held in his hand; “is not this your hand and seal?”—“No, forsooth,” he answered. Henry’s surprise increased, and turning with a frown to the archbishop of Canterbury, he asked him: “What say you to that?” “Sir, it is his hand and seal,” replied Warham.—“It is not,” rejoined Rochester; “I told you I would never consent to any such act.”—“You say the truth,” responded the archbishop, “but you were fully resolved at the last, that I should subscribe your name and put your seal.”—“All which is untrue,” added Rochester, in a passion. The bishop was not very respectful to his primate. “Well, well,” said the king, wishing to end the dispute, “we will not stand in argument with you; for you are but one man.”3 The court adjourned. The day had been better for Catherine than for the prelates. In proportion as the first sitting had been pathetic, so the discussions in the second between the lawyers and bishops were calculated to revolt a delicate mind. The advocates of the two parties vigorously debated pro and con respecting the consummation of Arthur’s marriage with Catherine. “It is a very difficult question,” said one of the counsel; “none can know the truth.”—“But I know it,” replied the bishop of Rochester.—“What do you mean?” asked Wolsey.—“My lord,” he answered, “he was the very Truth who said: “What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder: that is enough for me.”—“So everybody thinks,” rejoined Wolsey; but whether it was God who united Henry of England and Catherine of Aragon, hoc restat probandum, that remains to be proved. The king’s council decides that the marriage is unlawful, and consequently it was not God who joined them together.” The two bishops then exchanged a few words less edifying than those of the preceding day. Several of the hearers expressed a sentiment of disgust. “It is a disgrace to the court,” said Doctor Ridley with no little indignation, “that you dare discuss questions which fill every right-minded man with horror.” This sharp reprimand put an end to the debate. The agitations of the court spread to the convents; priests, monks, and nuns were every where in commotion. It was not long before astonishing revelations began to circulate through the cloisters. There was no talk then of an old portrait of the Virgin that winked its eyes; but other miracles were invented. “An angel,” it was rumoured, “has appeared to Elizabeth Barton, the maid of Kent, as he did formerly to Adam, to the patriarchs, and to Jesus Christ.” At the epochs of the creation and of the redemption, and in the times which lead from one to the other, miracles are natural; God then

appeared, and his coming without any signs of power, would be as surprising as the rising of the sun unattended by its rays of light. But the Romish Church does not stop there; it claims in every age, for its saints, the privilege of miraculous powers, and the miracles are multiplied in proportion to the ignorance of the people. And accordingly the angel said to the epileptic maid of Kent: “Go to the unfaithful king of England, and tell him there are three things he desires, which I forbid now and for ever. The first is the power of the pope; the second the new doctrine; the third Anne Boleyn. If he takes her for his wife, God will visit him.” The vision-seeing maid delivered the message to the king, whom nothing could now stop. On the contrary, he began to find out that Wolsey proceeded too slowly, and the idea sometimes crossed his mind that he was betrayed by this minister. One fine summer’s morning, Henry as soon as he rose summoned the cardinal to him at Bridewell. Wolsey hastened thither, and remained closeted with the king from eleven till twelve. The latter gave way to all the fury of his passion and the violence of his despotism. “We must finish this matter promptly,” he said, “we must positively.” Wolsey retired very uneasy, and returned by the Thames to Westminster. The sun darted his bright rays on the water. The bishop of Carlisle, who sat by the cardinal’s side, remarked, as he wiped his forehead: “A very warm day, my lord.”—“Yes,” replied the unhappy Wolsey, “if you had been chafed for an hour as I have been, you would say it was a hot day.” When he reached his palace, the cardinal lay down on his bed to seek repose; he was not quiet long.

Catherine had grown in Henry’s eyes, as well as in those of the nation. The king shrank from a judgment; he even began to doubt of his success. He wished that the queen would consent to a separation. This idea occurred to his mind after Wolsey’s departure, and the cardinal had hardly closed his eyes before the Earl of Wiltshire (Anne Boleyn’s father) was announced to him with a message from the king. “It is his majesty’s pleasure,” said Wiltshire, “that you represent to the queen the shame that will accrue to her from a judicial condemnation, and persuade her to confide in his wisdom.” Wolsey, commissioned to execute a task he knew to be impossible, exclaimed: “Why do you put such fancies in the king’s head?” and then he spoke so reproachfully that Wiltshire, with tears in his eyes, fell on his knees beside the cardinal’s bed. Boleyn, desirous of seeing his daughter queen of England, feared perhaps that he had taken a wrong course. “It is well,” said the cardinal, recollecting that the message came from Henry VIII, “I am ready to do every thing to please his majesty.” He rose, went to Bath-Place to fetch Campeggio, and together they waited on the queen. The two legates found Catherine quietly at work with her maids of honour. Wolsey addressed the queen in Latin: “Nay, my lord,” she said, “speak to me in English; I wish all the world could hear you.”—“We desire, madam, to communicate to you alone our counsel and opinion.”—“My lord,” said the queen, “you are come to speak of things beyond my capacity;” and then, with noble simplicity, showing a skein of red silk hanging about her neck, she continued: “These are my occupations, and all that I am capable off. I am a poor woman, without friends in this foreign country, and lacking wit to answer persons of wisdom as ye be; and yet, my lords, to please you, let us go to my withdrawing room.” At these words the queen rose, and Wolsey gave her his hand. Catherine earnestly maintained her rights as a woman and a queen. “We who were in the outer chamber,” says Cavendish, “from time to time could hear the queen speaking very loud, but could not understand what she said.” Catherine, instead of justifying herself, boldly accused her judge. “I know, Sir Cardinal,” she said with noble candour, “I know who has given the king the advice he is following: it is you. I have not ministered to your pride—I have blamed your conduct—I have complained of your tyranny, and my nephew the emperor has not made you

pope.… Hence all my misfortunes. To revenge yourself you have kindled a war in Europe, and have stirred up against me this most wicked matter. God will be my judge.… and yours!" Wolsey would have replied, but Catherine haughtily refused to hear him, and while treating Campeggio with great civility, declared that she would not acknowledge either of them as her judge. The cardinals withdrew, Wolsey full of vexation, and Campeggio beaming with joy, for the business was getting more complicated. Every hope of accommodation was lost: nothing remained now but to proceed indicially.

CHAPTER IX The Trial resumed—Catherine Summoned—Twelve Articles—The Witnesses' Evidence—Arthur and Catherine really married—Campeggio opposes the Argument of Divine Right—Other Arguments—The legates required to deliver judgment—Their Tergiversations—Change in men's minds—Final Session—General Expectation—Adjournment during Harvest—Campeggio Excuses this impertinence—The King's indignation—Suffolk's violence—Wolsey's Reply—He is ruined—General Accusations—The Cardinal turns to an Episcopal Life. The trial was resumed. The bishop of Bath and Wells waited upon the queen at Greenwich, and peremptorily summoned her to appear in the parliament-chamber. On the day appointed Catherine limited herself to sending an appeal to the pope. She was declared contumacious, and the legates proceeded with the cause.

Twelve articles were prepared, which were to serve for the examination of the witnesses, and the summary of which was, that the marriage of Henry with Catherine, being forbidden both by the law of God and of the church, was null and void The hearing of the witnesses began, and Dr. Taylor, archdeacon of Buckingham, conducted the examination. Their evidence, which would now be taken only with closed doors, may be found in Lord Herbert of Cherbury's History of Henry VIII. The duke of Norfolk, high-treasurer of England, the duke of Suffolk, Maurice St. John, gentleman-carver to Prince Arthur, the Viscount Fitzwalter and Anthony Willoughby, his cup-bearers, testified to their being present on the morrow of the wedding at the breakfast of the prince, then in sound health, and reported the conversation that took place. The old duchess of Norfolk, the earl of Shrewsbury, and the marquis of Dorset, confirmed these declarations, which proved that Arthur and Catherine were really married. It was also called to mind that, at the time of Arthur's death, Henry was not permitted to take the title of prince of Wales, because Catherine hoped to give an heir to the crown of England.

"If Arthur and Catherine were really married," said the king's counsellors after these extraordinary depositions, "the marriage of this princess with Henry, Arthur's brother, was forbidden by the divine law, by an express command of God contained in Leviticus, and no dispensation could permit what God had forbidden." Campeggio would never concede this argument, which limited the right of the popes; it was necessary therefore to abandon the divine right (which was in reality to lose the cause), and to seek in the bull of Julius II and in his famous brief for flaws that would invalidate them both; and this the king's counsel did, although they did not conceal the weakness of their position. "The motive alleged in the dispensation," they said, "is the necessity of preserving a cordial relation between Spain and England; now, there was nothing that threatened their harmony. Moreover, it is said in this document that the pope grants it at the prayer of Henry, prince of Wales. Now as this prince was only thirteen years old, he was not of age to make such a request. As for the brief, it is found neither in England nor in Rome; we cannot therefore admit its authenticity." It was not difficult for Catherine's friends to invalidate these objections. "Besides,"

they added, “a union that has lasted twenty years, sufficiently establishes its own lawfulness. And will you declare the Princess Mary illegitimate, to the great injury of this realm?” The king’s advocates then changed their course. Was not the Roman legate provided with a decretal pronouncing the divorce, in case it should be proved that Arthur’s marriage had been really consummated? Now, this fact had been proved by the depositions. “This is the moment for delivering judgment,” said Henry and his counsellors to Campeggio. “Publish the pope’s decretal.” But the pope feared the sword of Charles V, then hanging over his head; and accordingly, whenever the king advanced one step, the Romish prelate took several in an opposite direction. “I will deliver judgment in five days,” said he; and when the five days were expired, he bound himself to deliver it in six. “Restore peace to my troubled conscience,” exclaimed Henry. The legate replied in courtly phrase; he had gained a few days’ delay, and that was all he desired.

Such conduct on the part of the Roman legate produced an unfavourable effect in England, and a change took place in the public mind. The first movement had been for Catherine; the second was for Henry. Clement’s endless delays and Campeggio’s stratagems exasperated the nation. The king’s argument was simple and popular: “The pope cannot dispense with the laws of God;” while the queen, by appealing to the authority of the Roman pontiff, displeased both high and low. “No precedent,” said the lawyers, “can justify the king’s marriage with his brother’s widow.”

There were, however, some evangelical Christians who thought Henry was “troubled” more by his passions than by his conscience; and they asked how it happened that a prince, who represented himself to be so disturbed by the possible transgression of a law of doubtful interpretation, could desire, after twenty years, to violate the indisputable law which forbade the divorce?… On the 21st of July, the day fixed ad concludendum, the cause was adjourned until the Friday following, and no one doubted that the matter would then be terminated.

All prepared for this important day. The king ordered the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk to be present at the sitting of the court; and being himself impatient to hear the so much coveted judgment, he stole into a gallery of the parliament-chamber facing the judges. The legates of the holy see having taken their seats, the attorney-general signified to them, “that every thing necessary for the information of their conscience having been judicially laid before them, that day had been fixed for the conclusion of the trial.” There was a pause; every one feeling the importance of this judgment, waited for it with impatience. “Either the papacy pronounces my divorce from Catherine,” the king had said, “or I shall divorce myself from the papacy.” That was the way Henry put the question. All eyes, and particularly the king’s, were turned on the judges; Campeggio could not retreat; he must now say yes or no. For some time he was silent. He knew for certain that the queen’s appeal had been admitted by Clement VII and that the latter had concluded an alliance with the emperor. It was no longer in his power to grant the king’s request. Clearly foreseeing that a no would perhaps forfeit the power of Rome in England, while a yes might put an end to the plans of religious emancipation which alarmed him so much, he could not make up his mind to say either yes or no. At last the nuncio rose slowly from his chair, and all the assembly listened with emotion to the oracular decision which for so many years the powerful king of England had sought from the Roman pontiff. “The general vacation of the harvest and vintage,” he said, “being observed every year by the court of Rome, dating from to-morrow the 24th of July, the beginning of the dog-days, we adjourn, to some future period, the conclusion of these pleadings.” The auditors were thunderstruck. “What! because the malaria renders the air of Rome

dangerous at the end of July; and compels the Romans to close their courts, must a trial be broken off on the banks of the Thames, when its conclusion is looked for so impatiently?" The people hoped for a judicial sentence, and they were answered with a jest; it was thus Rome made sport of Christendom. Campeggio, to disarm Henry's wrath, gave utterance to some noble sentiments; but his whole line of conduct raises legitimate doubts as to his sincerity. "The queen," he said, "denies the competency of the court; I must therefore make my report to the pope, who is the source of life and honour, and wait his sovereign orders. I have not come so far to please any man, be he king or subject. I am an old man, feeble and sickly, and fear none but the Supreme Judge, before whom I must soon appear. I therefore adjourn this court until the 1st of October."

It was evident that this adjournment was only a formality intended to signify the definitive rejection of Henry's demand. The same custom prevails in the British legislature. The king, who from his place of concealment had heard Campeggio's speech, could scarcely control his indignation. He wanted a regular judgment; he clung to forms; he desired that his cause should pass successfully through all the windings of ecclesiastical procedure, and yet here it is wrecked upon the vacations of the Romish court. Henry was silent, however, either from prudence, or because surprise deprived him of the power of speech, and he hastily left the gallery.

Norfolk, Suffolk, and the other courtiers, did not follow him. The king and his ministers, the peers and the people, and even the clergy, were almost unanimous, and yet the pope pronounced his veto. He humbled the Defender of the Faith to flatter the author of the sack of Rome. This was too much. The impetuous Suffolk started from his seat, struck his hand violently on the table in front of him, cast a threatening look upon the judges and exclaimed: "By the mass, the old saying is confirmed to-day, that no cardinal has ever brought good to England."—"Sir, of all men in this realm," replied Wolsey, "you have the least cause to disparage cardinals, for if I, poor cardinal, had not been, you would not have had a head on your shoulders."2 It would seem that Wolsey pacified Henry, at the time of the duke's marriage with the Princess Mary. "I cannot pronounce sentence," continued Wolsey, "without knowing the good pleasure of his holiness." The two dukes and the other noblemen left the hall in anger, and hastened to the palace. The legates, remaining with their officers, looked at each other for a few moments. At last Campeggio, who alone had remained calm during this scene of violence, arose, and the audience dispersed.

Henry did not allow himself to be crushed by this blow. Rome, by her strange proceedings, aroused in him that suspicious and despotic spirit, of which he gave such tragic proofs in after-years. The papacy was making sport of him. Clement and Wolsey tossed his divorce from one to the other like a ball which, now at Rome and now at London, seemed fated to remain perpetually in the air. The king thought he had been long enough the plaything of his holiness and of the crafty cardinal; his patience was exhausted, and he resolved to show his adversaries that Henry VIII was more than a match for these bishops. We shall find him seizing this favourable opportunity, and giving an unexpected solution to the matter.

Wolsey sorrowfully hung his head; by taking part with the nuncio and the pope, he had signed the warrant of his own destruction. So long as Henry had a single ray of hope, he thought proper still to dissemble with Clement VII; but he might vent all his anger on Wolsey. From the period of the Roman Vacations the cardinal was ruined in his master's mind. Wolsey's enemies seeing his favour decline, hastened to attack him. Suffolk and Norfolk in particular, impatient to get rid of an

insolent priest who had so long chafed their pride, told Henry that Wolsey had been continually playing false; they went over all his negotiations month by month and day by day, and drew the most overwhelming conclusions from them. Sir William Kingston and Lord Manners laid before the king one of the cardinal's letters which Sir Francis Bryan had obtained from the papal archives. In it the cardinal desired Clement to spin out the divorce question, and finally to oppose it, seeing (he added) that if Henry was separated from Catherine, a friend to the reformers would become queen of England. This letter clearly expressed Wolsey's inmost thoughts: Rome at any price … and perish England and Henry rather than the popedom! We can imagine the king's anger.

Anne Boleyn's friends were not working alone. There was not a person at court whom Wolsey's haughtiness and tyranny had not offended; no one in the king's council in whom his continual intrigues had not raised serious suspicions. He had (they said) betrayed in France the cause of England; kept up in time of peace and war secret intelligence with Madam, mother of Francis I; received great presents from her; oppressed the nation, and trodden under foot the laws of the kingdom. The people called him Frenchman and traitor, and all England seemed to vie in throwing burning brands at the superb edifice which the pride of this prelate had so laboriously erected.

Wolsey was too clearsighted not to discern the signs of his approaching fall. "Both the rising and the setting sun (for thus an historian calls Anne Boleyn and Catherine of Aragon) frowned upon him," and the sky, growing darker around him, gave token of the storm that was to overwhelm him. If the cause failed, Wolsey incurred the vengeance of the king; if it succeeded, he would be delivered up to the vengeance of the Boleyns, without speaking of Catherine's, the emperor's and the pope's. Happy Campeggio! thought the cardinal, he has nothing to fear. If Henry's favour is withdrawn from him, Charles and Clement will make him compensation. But Wolsey lost every thing when he lost the king's good graces. Detested by his fellow-citizens, despised and hated by all Europe, he saw to whatever side he turned nothing but the just reward of his avarice and falseness. He strove in vain, as on other occasions, to lean on the ambassador of France; Du Bellay was solicited on the other side. "I am exposed here to such a heavy and continual fire that I am half dead," exclaimed the bishop of Bayonne; and the cardinal met with an unusual reserve in his former confidant.

Yet the crisis approached. Like a skilful but affrighted pilot, Wolsey cast his eyes around him to discover a port in which he could take refuge. He could find none but his see of York. He therefore began once more to complain of the fatigues of power, of the weariness of the diplomatic career, and to extol the sweetness of an episcopal life. On a sudden he felt a great interest about the flock of whom he had never thought before. Those around him shook their heads, well knowing that such a retreat would be to Wolsey the bitterest of disgraces. One single idea supported him; if he fell, it would be because he had clung more to the pope than to the king: he would be the martyr of his faith.—What a faith, what a martyr!

CHAPTER X

Anne Boleyn at Hever—She Reads the Obedience of a Christian Man—is recalled to Court—Miss Gainsford and George Zouch—Tyndale's Book converts Zouch—Zouch in the Chapel-Royal—The Book seized—Anne applies to Henry—The King reads the Book—Pretended Influence of the Book on Henry—The Court at Woodstock—The Park and its Goblins—Henry's Esteem for Anne.

While these things were taking place Anne was living at Hever Castle in retirement and sadness. Scruples from time to time still alarmed her conscience. It is true, the king represented to her unceasingly that his salvation and the safety of his people demanded the dissolution of a union condemned by the divine law, and that what he solicited several popes had granted. Had not Alexander VI annulled, after ten years, the marriage of Ladislaus and Beatrice of Naples? Had not Louis XII, the father of his people, been divorced from Joan of France? Nothing was more common, he said, than to see the divorce of a prince authorized by a pope; the security of the state must be provided for before every thing else. Carried away by these arguments and dazzled by the splendour of a throne, Anne Boleyn consented to usurp at Henry's side the rank belonging to another. Yet, if she was imprudent and ambitious, she was feeling and generous, and the misfortunes of a queen whom she respected soon made her reject with terror the idea of taking her place. The fertile pastures of Kent and the gothic halls of Hever Castle were by turns the witnesses of the mental conflicts this young lady experienced. The fear she entertained of seeing the queen again, and the idea that the two cardinals, her enemies, were plotting her ruin, made her adopt the resolution of not returning to court, and she shut herself up in her solitary chamber.

Anne had neither the deep piety of a Bilney, nor the somewhat vague and mystic spirituality observable in Margaret of Valois; it was not feeling which prevailed in her religion, it was knowledge, and a horror of superstition and pharisaism. Her mind required light and activity, and at that time she sought in reading the consolations so necessary to her position. One day she opened one of the books prohibited in England, which a friend of the Reformation had given her: The Obedience of a Christian Man. Its author was William Tyndale, that invisible man whom Wolsey's agents were hunting for in Brabant and Germany, and this was a recommendation to Anne. "If thou believe the promises," she read, "then God's truth justifieth thee; that is, forgiveth thy sins and sealeth thee with his Holy Spirit. If thou have true faith, so seest thou the exceeding and infinite love and mercy which God hath shown thee freely in Christ: then must thou needs love again: and love cannot, but compel thee to work. If when tyrants oppose thee thou have power to confess, then art thou sure that thou art safe. If thou be fallen from the way of truth, come thereto again and thou art safe. Yea, Christ shall save thee, and the angels of heaven shall rejoice at thy coming."2 These words did not change Anne's heart, but she marked with her nail, as was her custom, other passages which struck her more, and which she desired to point out to the king if, as she hoped, she was ever to meet him again. She believed that the truth was there, and took a lively interest in those whom Wolsey, Henry, and the pope were at that time persecuting.

Anne was soon dragged from these pious lessons, and launched into the midst of a world full of dangers. Henry, convinced that he had nothing to expect henceforward from Campeggio, neglected those proprieties which he had hitherto observed, and immediately after the adjournment ordered Anne Boleyn to return to court; he restored her to the place she had formerly occupied, and even surrounded her with increased splendour. Every one saw that Anne, in the king's mind, was queen of England; and a powerful party was formed around her, which proposed to accomplish the definitive ruin of the cardinal.

After her return to court, Anne read much less frequently The Obedience of a Christian Man and the Testament of Jesus Christ. Henry's homage, her friends' intrigues, and the whirl of festivities, bade fair to stifle the thoughts which solitude had aroused in her heart. One day having left Tyndale's book in a window, Miss Gainsford, a fair young gentlewoman attached to her person,

took it up and read it. A gentleman of handsome mien, cheerful temper, and extreme mildness, named George Zouch, also belonging to Anne's household, and betrothed to Miss Gainsford, profiting by the liberty his position gave him, indulged sometimes in "love tricks."2 On one occasion when George desired to have a little talk with her, he was annoyed to find her absorbed by a book of whose contents he knew nothing; and taking advantage of a moment when the young lady had turned away her head, he laughingly snatched it from her. Miss Gainsford ran after Zouch to recover her book; but just at that moment she heard her mistress calling her, and she left George, threatening him with her finger. As she did not return immediately, George withdrew to his room, and opened the volume; it was the Obedience of a Christian Man. He glanced over a few lines, then a few pages, and at last read the book through more than once. He seemed to hear the voice of God. "I feel the Spirit of God," he said, "speaking in my heart as he has spoken in the heart of him who wrote the book." The words which had only made a temporary impression on the preoccupied mind of Anne Boleyn, penetrated to the heart of her equerry and converted him. Miss Gainsford, fearing that Anne would ask for her book, entreated George to restore it to her; but he positively refused, and even the young lady's tears failed to make him give up a volume in which he had found the life of his soul. Becoming more serious, he no longer jested as before; and when Miss Gainsford peremptorily demanded the book, he was, says the chronicler, "ready to weep himself."

Zouch, finding in this volume an edification which empty forms and ceremonies could not give, used to carry it with him to the king's chapel. Dr. Sampson, the dean, generally officiated; and while the choir chanted the service, George would be absorbed in his book, where he read: "If when thou seest the celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, thou believest in this promise of Christ: This is my body that is broken for you, and if thou have this promise fast in thine heart, thou art saved and justified thereby; thou eatest his body and drinkest his blood. If not, so helpeth it thee not, though thou hearest a thousand masses in a day: no more than it should help thee in a dead thirst to behold a bush at a tavern door, if thou knewest not thereby that there was wine within to be sold." The young man dwelt upon these words: by faith he ate the body and drank the blood of the Son of God. This was what was passing in the palaces of Henry VIII; there were saints in the household of Cæsar.

Wolsey, desirous of removing from the court everything that might favour the Reformation, had recommended extreme vigilance to Dr. Sampson so as to prevent the circulation of the innovating books. Accordingly, one day when George was in the chapel absorbed in his book, the dean, who, even while officiating, had not lost sight of the young man, called him to him after the service, and rudely taking the book from his hands, demanded: "What is your name, and in whose service are you?" Zouch having replied, the dean withdrew with a very angry look, and carried his prey to the cardinal. When Miss Gainsford heard of this mishap, her grief was extreme; she trembled at the thought that the Obedience of a Christian Man was in Wolsey's hands. Not long after this, Anne having asked for her book, the young lady fell on her knees, confessed all, and begged to be forgiven. Anne uttered not a word of reproach; her quick mind saw immediately the advantage she might derive from this affair. "Well," said she, "it shall be the dearest book to them that ever the dean or cardinal took away."

"The noble lady," as the chronicler styles her, immediately demanded an interview of the king, and on reaching his presence she fell at his feet, and begged his assistance. "What is the matter,

Anne," said the astonished monarch. She told him what had happened, and Henry promised that the book should not remain in Wolsey's hands.

Anne had scarcely quitted the royal apartments when the cardinal arrived with the famous volume, with the intention of complaining to Henry of certain passages which he knew could not fail to irritate him, and to take advantage of it even to attack Anne, if the king should be offended. Henry's icy reception closed his mouth; the king confined himself to taking the book, and bowing out the cardinal. This was precisely what Anne had hoped for. She begged the king to read the book, which he promised to do. And Henry accordingly shut himself up in his closet, and read the Obedience of a Christian Man. There were few works better calculated to enlighten him, and none, after the Bible, that has had more influence upon the Reformation in England. Tyndale treated of obedience, "the essential principle," as he terms it, "of every political or religious community." He declaimed against the unlawful power of the popes, who usurped the lawful authority of Christ and of his Word. He professed political-doctrines too favourable doubtless to absolute power, but calculated to show that the reformers were not, as had been asserted, instigators of rebellion. Henry read as follows:—

"The king is in the room of God in this world. He that resisteth the king, resisteth God; he that judgeth the king, judgeth God. He is the minister of God to defend thee from a thousand inconveniences; though he be the greatest tyrant in the world, yet is he unto thee a great benefit of God; for it is better to pay the tenth than to lose all, and to suffer wrong of one man than of every man."

These are indeed strange doctrines for rebels to hold, thought the king; and he continued:—

"Let kings, if they had lever [rather] be Christians in deed than so to be called, give themselves altogether to the wealth [well-being] of their realms after the ensample of Jesus Christ; remembering that the people are God's, and not theirs; yea, are Christ's inheritance, bought with his blood. The most despised person in his realm (if he is a Christian) is equal with him in the kingdom of God and of Christ. Let the king put off all pride, and become a brother to the poorest of his subjects."

It is probable that these words were less satisfactory to the king. He kept on reading:—

"Emperors and kings are nothing now-a-days, but even hangmen unto the pope and bishops, to kill whomsoever they condemn, as Pilate was unto the scribes and pharisees and high bishops to hang Christ." This seemed to Henry rather strong language.

"The pope hath received no other authority of Christ than to preach God's word. Now, this word should rule only, and not bishops' decrees or the pope's pleasure. In præsentia majoris cessat potestas minoris, in the presence of the greater, the less hath no power. The pope, against all the doctrine of Christ, which saith, My kingdom is not of this world, hath usurped the right of the emperor. Kings must make account of their doings only to God. No person may be exempt from this ordinance of God; neither can the profession of monks and friars, or anything that the popes or bishops can lay for themselves, except them from the sword of the emperor or king, if they break the laws. For it is written, (Romans 13:1-14) Let every soul submit himself unto the authority of the higher powers."

“What excellent reading!” exclaimed Henry, when he had finished; “this is truly a book for all kings to read, and for me particularly.”

Captivated by Tyndale’s work, the king began to converse with Anne about the church and the pope; and she who had seen Margaret of Valois unassumingly endeavour to instruct Francis I strove in like manner to enlighten Henry VIII. She did not possess the influence over him she desired; this unhappy prince was, to the very end of his life, opposed to the evangelical reformation; protestants and catholics have been equally mistaken when they have regarded him as being favourable to it. “In a short time,” says the annalist quoted by Strype at the end of his narrative, “the king, by the help of this virtuous lady, had his eyes opened to the truth. He learned to seek after that truth, to advance God’s religion and glory, to detest the pope’s doctrine, his lies, his pomp, and pride, and to deliver his subjects from the Egyptian darkness and Babylonian bonds that the pope had brought him and his subjects under. Despising the rebellions of his subjects and the rage of so many mighty potentates abroad, he set forward a religious reformation, which, beginning with the triple-crowned head, came down to all the members of the hierarchy.” History has rarely delivered a more erroneous judgment. Henry’s eyes were never opened to the truth, and it was not he who made the Reformation. It was accomplished first of all by Scripture, and then by the ministry of simple and faithful men baptized of the Holy Ghost.

Yet Tyndale’s book and the conduct of the legates had given rise in the king’s mind to new thoughts which he sought time to mature. He desired also to conceal his anger from Wolsey and Campeggio, and dissipate his spleen, says the historian Collyer; he therefore gave orders to remove the court to the palace of Woodstock. The magnificent park attached to this royal residence, in which was the celebrated bower constructed (it is said) by Henry II to conceal the fair Rosamond, offered all the charms of the promenade, the chase, and solitude. Hence he could easily repair to Langly, Grafton, and other country seats. It was not long before the entertainments, horse-races, and other rural sports began. The world with its pleasures and its grandeur, were at the bottom the idols of Anne Boleyn’s heart; but yet she felt a certain attraction for the new doctrine, which was confounded in her mind with the great cause of all knowledge, perhaps even with her own. More enlightened than the generality of women, she was distinguished by the superiority of her understanding not only over own sex, but even over many of the gentlemen of the court. While Catherine, a member of the third order of St. Francis, indulged in trifling practices, the more intelligent, if not more pious Anne, cared but little for amulets which the friars had blessed, for apparitions, or visions of angels. Woodstock furnished her with an opportunity of curing Henry VIII of the superstitious ideas natural to him. There was a place in the forest said to be haunted by evil spirits; not a priest or a courtier dared approach it. A tradition ran that if a king ventured to cross the boundary, he would fall dead. Anne resolved to take Henry there. Accordingly, one morning she led the way in the direction of the place where these mysterious powers manifested their presence (as it was said) by strange apparitions; they entered the wood; they arrived at the so much dreaded spot; all hesitated; but Anne’s calmness reassured her companions; they advanced; they found … nothing but trees and turf, and, laughing at their former terrors, they explored every corner of this mysterious resort of the evil spirits. Anne returned to the palace, congratulating herself on the triumph Henry had gained over his imaginary fears.2 This prince, who could as yet bear with superiority in others, was struck with Anne Boleyn’s.

Never too gay nor yet too melancholy, A heavenly mind is hers, like angels holy.

None purer ever soared above the sky.

O mighty Marvel, thus may every eye See of what monster strange the humble serf am I;

Monster indeed, for in her frame divine A woman's form, man's heart, and angel's head combine.

These verses of Clement Marot, written in honour of Margaret of Valios, faithfully express what Henry then felt for Anne, who had been with Marot in the household of that princess. Henry's love may perhaps have deceived him, as to Anne's excellencies.

CHAPTER XI

Embarrassment of the pope—The Triumphs of Charles decide him—He traverses the Cause to Rome—Wolsey's Dejection—Henry's Wrath—His fears—Wolsey obtains comfort—Arrival of the two Legates at Grafton—Wolsey's reception by Henry—Wolsey and Norfolk at Dinner—Henry with Anne—Conference between the King and the Cardinal—Wolsey's Joy and Grief—The Supper at Euston—Campeggio's Farewell Audience—Wolsey's Disgrace—Campeggio at Dover—He is accused by the courtiers—Leaves England—Wolsey foresees his own Fall and that of the Papacy.

While the court was thus taking its pleasure at Woodstock, Wolsey remained in London, a prey to the acutest anguish. "This avocation to Rome," wrote he to Gregory De Casale, "will not only completely alienate the king and his realm from the apostolic see, but will ruin me utterly." This message had hardly reached the pope, before the imperial ambassadors handed to him the queen's protest, and added in a very significant tone: "If your holiness does not call this cause before you, the emperor, who is determined to bring it to an end, will have recourse to other arguments." The same perplexity always agitated Clement: Which of the two must be sacrificed, Henry or Charles? Anthony de Leyva, who commanded the imperial forces, having routed the French army, the pope no longer doubted that Charles was the elect of Heaven. It was not Europe alone which acknowledged this prince's authority; a new world had just laid its power and its gold at his feet. The formidable priest-king of the Aztecs had been unable to withstand Cortez; could the priest-king of Rome withstand Charles V? Cortez had returned from Mexico, bringing with him Mexican chiefs in all their barbarous splendour, with thousands of pesos, with gold and silver and emeralds of extraordinary size, with magnificent tissues and birds of brilliant plumage. He had accompanied Charles, who was then going to Italy, to the place of embarkation, and had sent to Clement VII costly gifts of the precious metals, valuable jewels, and a troop of Mexican dancers, buffoons, and jugglers, who charmed the pope and the cardinal above all things.

Clement, even while refusing Henry's prayer, had not as yet granted the emperor's. He thought he could now resist no longer the star of a monarch victorious over two worlds, and hastened to enter into negotiations with him. Sudden terrors still assailed him from time to time: My refusal (he said to himself) may perhaps cause me to lose England. But Charles, holding him in his powerful grasp, compelled him to submit. Henry's antecedents were rather encouraging to the pontiff. How could he imagine that a prince, who alone of all the monarchs of Europe had once contended against the great reformer, would now separate from the popedom? On the 6th of July Clement declared to the English envoys that he avoked to Rome the cause between Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. In other words, this was refusing the divorce. "There are twenty three points in this case," said the courtiers, "and the debate on the first has lasted a year; before the end of the trial, the king will be not only past marrying but past living." When he learned that the fatal blow had been

struck, Bennett in a tone of sadness exclaimed: “Alas! most holy father, by this act the Church in England will be utterly destroyed; the king declared it to me with tears in his eyes.”—“Why is it my fortune to live in such evil days?” replied the pope, who, in his turn, began to weep;4 “but I am encircled by the emperor’s forces, and if I were to please the king, I should draw a fearful ruin upon myself and upon the church … God will be my judge.” On the 15th of July Da Casale sent the fatal news to the English minister. The king was cited before the pope, and in case of refusal condemned in a fine of 10,000 ducats. On the 18th of July peace was proclaimed at Rome between the pontiff and the emperor, and on the next day (these dates are important) Clement, wishing still to make one more attempt to ward off the blow with which the papacy was threatened, wrote to Cardinal Wolsey: “My dear son, how can I describe to you my affliction? Show in this matter the prudence which so distinguishes you, and preserve the king in those kindly feelings which he has ever manifested towards me.” A useless attempt! Far from saving the papacy, Wolsey was to be wrecked along with it.

Wolsey was thunderstruck. At the very time he was assuring Henry of the attachment of Clement and Francis, both were deserting him. The “politic handling” failed, which the cardinal had thought so skilful, and which had been so torturous Henry now had none but enemies on the continent of Europe, and the Reformation was daily spreading over his kingdom. Wolsey’s anguish cannot be described. His power, his pomp, his palaces were all threatened: who could tell whether he would even preserve his liberty and his life.—A just reward for so much duplicity. But the king’s wrath was to be greater than even the minister’s alarm. His terrified servants wondered how they should announce the pontiff’s decision. Gardiner, who, after his return from Rome, had been named secretary of state, went down to Langley on the 3rd of August to communicate it to him. What news for the proud Tudor! The decision on the divorce was forbidden in England; the cause avoked to Rome, there to be buried and unjustly lost; Francis I treating with the emperor; Charles and Clement on the point of exchanging at Bologna the most striking signs of their unchangeable alliance; the services rendered by the king to the popedom repaid with the blackest ingratitude; his hope of giving an heir to the crown disgracefully frustrated; and last, but not least, Henry VIII, the proudest monarch of Christendom, summoned to Rome to appear before an ecclesiastical tribunal … it was too much for Henry. His wrath, a moment restrained, burst forth like a clap of thunder, and all trembled around him. “Do they presume,” he exclaimed, “to try my cause elsewhere than in my own dominions? I, the king of England, summoned before an Italian tribunal!… Yes, … I will go to Rome, but it shall be with such a mighty army that the pope, and his priests, and all Italy shall be struck with terror.—I forbid the letters of citation to be executed,” he continued; “I forbid the commission to consider its functions at an end.” Henry would have desired to tear off Campeggio’s purple robes, and throw this prince of the Roman church into prison, in order to frighten Clement; but the very magnitude of the insult compelled him to restrain himself. He feared above all things to appear humbled in the eyes of England, and he hoped, by showing moderation, to hide the affront he had received. “Let everything be done,” he told Gardiner, “to conceal from my subjects these letters of citation, which are so hurtful to my glory. Write to Wolsey that I have the greatest confidence in his dexterity, and that he ought, by good handling, to win over Campeggio2 and the queen’s counsellors, and, above all, prevail upon them at any price not to serve these citatory letters on me.” But Henry had hardly given his instructions when the insult of which he had been the object recurred to his imagination; the thought of Clement haunted him night and day, and he swore to exact a stiking vengeance from the pontiff. Rome desires to have no more to do with

England.… England in her turn will cast off Rome. Henry will sacrifice Wolsey, Clement, and the church; nothing shall stop his fury. The crafty pontiff has concealed his game, the king shall beat him openly; and from age to age the popedom shall shed tears over the imprudent folly of a medici.

Thus after insupportable delays which had fatigued the nation, a thunderbolt fell upon England. Court, clergy, and people, from whom it was impossible to conceal these great events, were deeply stirred, and the whole kingdom was in commotion. Wolsey, still hoping to ward off the ruin impending over both himself and the papacy, immediately put in play all that dexterity which Henry had spoken of; he so far prevailed that the letters citatorial were not served on the king, but only the brief addressed to Wolsey by Clement VII. The cardinal, all radiant with this trivial success, and desirous of profiting by it to raise his credit, resolved to accompany Campeggio, who was going down to Grafton to take leave of the king. When the coming of the two legates was heard of at court, the agitation was very great. The dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk regarded this proceeding as the last effort of their enemy, and entreated Henry not to receive him. “The king will receive him,” said some. “The king will not receive him,” answered others. At length one Sunday morning it was announced that the prelates were at the gates of the mansion. Wolsey looked round with an anxious eye for the great officers who were accustomed to introduce him. They appeared, and desired Campeggio to follow them. When the legate had been taken to his apartments, Wolsey waited his turn; but great was his consternation on being informed that there was no chamber appointed for him in the palace. Sir Henry Norris, groom of the stole, offered Wolsey the use of his own room, and the cardinal followed him, almost sinking beneath the humiliation he had undergone. He made ready to appear before the king, and summoning up his courage, proceeded to the presence-chamber. The lords of the council were standing in a row according to their rank; Wolsey, taking off his hat, passed along saluting each of them with affected civility. A great number of courtiers arrived, impatient to see how Henry would receive his old favourite; and most of them were already exulting in the striking disgrace of which they hoped to be witnesses. At last the king was announced.

Henry stood under the cloth of state; and Wolsey advanced and knelt before him. Deep silence prevailed throughout the chamber.… To the surprise of all, Henry stooped down and raised him up with both hands.… Then, with a pleasing smile, he took Wolsey to the window, desired him to put on his hat, and talked familiarly with him. “Then,” say’s Cavendish, the cardinal’s gentleman usher, “it would have made you smile to behold the countenances of those who had laid wagers that the king would not speak with him.” But this was the last ray of evening which then lighted up the darkening fortunes of Wolsey: the star of his favour was about to set for ever.… The silence continued, for every one desired to catch a few words of the conversation. The king seemed to be accusing Wolsey, and Wolsey to be justifying himsel. On a sudden Henry pulled a letter out of his bosom, and showing it to the cardinal, said in a loud voice: “How can that be? is not this your hand?” It was no doubt the letter which Bryan had intercepted. Wolsey replied in an under-tone, and seemed to have appeased his master. The dinner hour having arrived, the king left the room telling Wolsey that he would not fail to see him again; the courtiers were eager to make their profoundest reverences to the cardinal, but he haughtily traversed the chamber, and the dukes hastened to carry to Anne Boleyn the news of this astonishing reception.

Wolsey, Campeggio, and the lords of the council sat down to dinner. The cardinal, well aware that the terrible letter would be his utter ruin, and that Henry's good graces had no other object than to prepare his fall, began to hint at his retirement. "Truly," said he with a devout air, "the king would do well to send his bishops and chaplains home to their cures and benefices." The company looked at one another with astonishment. "Yea, marry," said the duke of Norfolk somewhat rudely, "and so it were meet for you to do also."—"I should be very well contented therewith," answered Wolsey, "if it were the king's pleasure to license me with leave to go to my cure at Winchester."—"Nay, to your benefice at York, where your greatest honour and charge is," replied Norfolk, who was not willing that Wolsey should be living so near Henry.—"Even as it shall please the king," added Wolsey, and changed the subject of conversation.

Henry had caused himself to be announced to Anne Boleyn, who (says Cavendish) "kept state at Grafton more like a queen than a simple maid." Possessing extreme sensibility, and an ardent imagination, Anne, who felt the slightest insult with all the sensibility of her woman's heart, was very dissatisfied with the king after the report of the dukes. Accordingly, heedless of the presence of the attendants, she said to him: "Sir, is it not a marvellous thing to see into what great danger the cardinal hath brought you with all your subjects?"—"How so, sweetheart?" asked Henry. Anne continued: "Are you ignorant of the hatred his exactions have drawn upon you? There is not a man in your whole realm of England worth one hundred pounds, but he hath made you his debtor." Anne here alluded to the loan the king had raised among his subjects. "Well, well," said Henry, who was not pleased with these remarks, "I know that matter better than you."—"If my lord of Norfolk, my lord of Suffolk, my uncle, or my father had done much less than the cardinal hath done," continued Anne, "they would have lost their heads ere this." "Then I perceive," said Henry, "you are none of his friends."—"No, sir, I have no cause, nor any that love you," she replied. The dinner was ended; the king, without appearing at all touched, proceeded to the presence-chamber where Wolsey expected him.

After a long conversation, carried on in a low tone, the king took Wolsey by the hand and led him into his private chamber. The courtiers awaited impatiently the termination of an interview which might decide the fate of England; they walked up and down the gallery, often passing before the door of the closet, in the hope of catching from Wolsey's looks, when he opened it, the result of this secret conference; but one quarter of an hour followed another, these became hours, and still the cardinal did not appear. Henry having resolved that this conversation should be the last, was no doubt collecting from his minister all the information necessary to him. But the courtiers imagined he was returning into his master's favour; Norfolk, Suffolk, Wiltshire, and the other enemies of the prime minister, began to grow alarmed, and hastened off to Anne Boleyn, who was their last hope.

It was night when the king and Wolsey quitted the royal closet; the former appeared gracious, the latter satisfied; it was always Henry's custom to smile on those he intended to sacrifice. "I shall see you in the morning," he said to the cardinal with a friendly air. Wolsey made a low bow, and, turning round to the courtiers, saw the king's smile reflected on their faces. Wiltshire, Tuke, and even Suffolk, were full of civility. "Well," thought he, "the motion of such weathercocks as these shows me from what quarter the wind of favour is blowing." But a moment after the wind began to change. Men with torches waited for the cardinal at the gates of the palace to conduct him to the place where he would have to pass the night. Thus he was not to sleep beneath the same roof

with Henry. He was to lie at Euston, one of Empson's houses, about three miles off. Wolsey, repressing his vexation, mounted his horse, the footmen preceded him with their links, and after an hour's riding along very bad roads, he reached the lodging assigned him.

He had sat down to supper, to which some of his most intimate friends had been invited, when suddenly Gardiner was announced. Gardiner owed every thing to the cardinal, and yet he had not appeared before him since his return from Rome. He comes no doubt to play the hypocrite and the spy, thought Wolsey. But as soon as the secretary entered, Wolsey rose, made him a graceful compliment, and prayed him to take a seat. "Master Secretary," he asked, "where have you been since your return from Rome?"—"I have been following the court from place to place."—"You have been hunting then? Have you any dogs?" asked the prime minister, who knew very well what Gardiner had been doing in the king's closet. "A few," replied Gardiner. Wolsey thought that even the secretary was a bloodhound on his track. And yet after supper he took Gardiner aside, and conversed with him until midnight. He thought it prudent to neglect nothing that might clear up his position; and Wolsey sounded Gardiner, just as he himself had been sounded by Henry not long before. The same night at Grafton the king gave Campeggio a farewell audience, and treated him very kindly, "by giving him presents and other matters," says Du Bellay. Henry then returned to Anne Boleyn. The dukes had pointed out to her the importance of the present moment; she therefore asked and obtained of Henry, without any great difficulty, his promise never to speak to his minister again. The insults of the papacy had exasperated the king of England, and as he could not punish Clement, he took his revenge on the cardinal. The next morning, Wolsey, impatient to have the interview which Henry had promised, rode back early to Grafton. But as he came near, he met a numerous train of servants and sumpter-horses; and presently afterwards Henry, with Anne Boleyn and many lords and ladies of the court, came riding up. "What does all this mean?" thought the cardinal in dismay. "My lord," said the king, as he drew near, "I cannot stay with you now. You will return to London with cardinal Campeggio." Then striking the spurs into his horse, Henry galloped off with a friendly salutation. After him came Anne Boleyn, who rode past Wolsey with head erect, and casting on him a proud look. The court proceeded to Hartwell Park, where Anne had determined to keep the king all day. Wolsey was confounded. There was no room for doubt; his disgrace was certain. His head swam, he remained immovable for an instant, and then recovered himself; but the blow he had received had not been unobserved by the courtiers, and the cardinal's fall became the general topic of conversation.

After dinner, the legates departed, and on the second day reached Moor Park, a mansion built by Archbishop Neville, one of Wolsey's predecessors, who for high treason had been first imprisoned at Calais, and afterwards at Ham. These recollections were by no means agreeable to Wolsey. The next morning the two cardinals separated, Campeggio proceeded to Dover and Wolsey to London.

Campeggio was impatient to get out of England, and great was his annoyance, on reaching Dover, to find that the wind was contrary. But a still greater vexation was in reserve. He had hardly lain down to rest himself, before his door was opened, and a band of sergeants entered the room. The cardinal, who knew what scenes of this kind meant in Italy, thought he was a dead man, and fell trembling at his chaplain's feet begging for absolution. Meantime the officers opened his luggage, broke into his chests, scattered his property about the floor, and even shook out his clothes.2

Henry's tranquility had not been of long duration. "Campeggio is the bearer of letters from Wolsey to Rome," whispered some of the courtiers; "who knows but they contain treasonable matter?" "There is, too, among his papers the famous decretal pronouncing the divorce," said one; "if we had but that document it would finish the business." Another affirmed that Campeggio "had large treasure with him of my lord's (Wolsey's) to be conveyed in great tuns to Rome," whither it was surmised the cardinal of York would escape to enjoy the fruits of his treason. "It is certain," added a third, "that Campeggio, assisted by Wolsey, has been able to procure your majesty's correspondence with Anne Boleyn, and is carrying it away with him." Henry, therefore, sent a messenger after the nuncio, with orders that his baggage should be thoroughly searched.

Nothing was found, neither letters, nor bull, nor treasures. The bull had been destroyed; the treasures Wolsey had never thought of intrusting to his colleague; and the letters of Anne and Henry, Campeggio had sent on before by his son Rodolph, and the pope was stretching out his hands to receive them, proud, like his successors, of the robbery committed by two of his legates.

Campeggio being reassured, and seeing that he was neither to be killed nor robbed, made a great noise at this act of violence, and at the insulting remarks which had given rise to it. "I will not leave England," he caused Henry to be informed, "until I have received satisfaction." "My lord forgets that he is legate no longer," replied the king, "since the pope has withdrawn his power; he forgets, besides, that, as bishop of Salisbury, he is my subject; as for the remarks against him and the cardinal of York, it is a liberty the people of England are accustomed to take, and which I cannot put down." Campeggio, anxious to reach France, was satisfied with these reasons, and soon forgot all his sorrows at the sumptuous table of cardinal Duprat.

Wolsey was not so fortunate. He had seen Campeggio go away, and remained like a wrecked seaman thrown on a desert isle, who has seen depart the only friends capable of giving him any help. His necromancy had forewarned him that this would be a fatal year. The angel of the maid of Kent had said: "Go to the cardinal and announce his fall, because he has not done what you had commanded him to do."2 Other voices besides hers made themselves heard: the hatred of the nation, the contempt of Europe, and, above all, Henry's anger, told him that his hour was come. It was true the pope said, that he would do all in his power to save him; but Clement's good offices would only accelerate his ruin. Du Bellay, whom the people believed to be the cardinal's accomplice, bore witness to the change that had taken place in men's minds. While passing on foot through the streets of the capital, followed by two valets, "his ears were so filled with coarse jests as he went along," he said, "that he knew not which way to turn."4 "The cardinal is utterly undone," he wrote; "and I see not how he can escape." The idea occurred to Wolsey, from time to time, to pronounce the divorce himself; but it was too late. "He was even told that his life was in danger. Fortune, blind and bald, her foot on the wheel, fled rapidly from him, nor was it in his power to stop her. And this was not all: after him (he thought) there was no one who could uphold the church of the pontiffs in England. The ship of Rome was sailing on a stormy sea among rocks and shoals; Wolsey at the helm looked in vain for a port of refuge; the vessel leaked on every side; it was rapidly sinking, and the cardinal uttered a cry of distress. Alas! he had desired to save Rome, but Rome would not have it so.

CHAPTER XII A Meeting at Waltham—Youth of Thomas Cranmer—His early Education—Studies Scripture for Three Years—His functions as Examiner—The Supper at Waltham—New View of the

Divorce—Fox communicates it to Henry—Cranmer's Vexation—Conference with the King—Cranmer at the Boleyns. As Wolsey's star was disappearing in the West in the midst of stormy clouds, another was rising in the East, to point out the way to save Britain. Men, like stars, appear on the horizon at the command of God. On his return from Woodstock to Greenwich, Henry stopped full of anxiety at Waltham in Essex. His attendants were lodged in the houses of the neighbourhood. Fox, the almoner, and Secretary Gardiner, were quartered on a gentleman named Cressy, at Waltham Abbey. When supper was announced, Gardiner and Fox were surprised to see an old friend enter the room. It was Thomas Cranmer, a Cambridge doctor. "What! is it you?" they said, "and how came you here?" "Our host's wife is my relation," replied Cranmer, "and as the epidemic is raging at Cambridge, I brought home my friend's sons, who are under my care." As this new personage is destined to play an important part in the history of the Reformation, it may be worth our while to interrupt our narrative, and give a particular account of him.

Cranmer was descended from an ancient family, which came into England, as is generally believed, with the Conqueror. He was born at Aslacton in Nottinghamshire on the 2nd of July 1489, six years after Luther. His early education had been very much neglected; his tutor, an ignorant and severe priest, had taught him little else than patiently to endure severe chastisement—a knowledge destined to be very useful to him in after-life. His father was an honest country gentleman, who cared for little besides hunting, racing, and military sports. At this school, the son learnt to ride, to handle the bow and the sword, to fish, and to hawk; and he never entirely neglected these exercises, which he thought essential to his health. Thomas Cranmer was fond of walking, of the charms of nature, and of solitary meditations; and a hill, near his father's mansion, used often to be shown where he was wont to sit, gazing on the fertile country at his feet, fixing his eyes on the distant spires, listening with melancholy pleasure to the chime of the bells, and indulging in sweet contemplations. About 1504, he was sent to Cambridge, where "barbarism still prevailed," says an historian. His plain, noble, and modest air conciliated the affections of many, and, in 1510, he was elected fellow of Jesus College. Possessing a tender heart, he became attached, at the age of twenty-three, to a young person of good birth (says Foxe,) or of inferior rank, as other writers assert. Cranmer was unwilling to imitate the disorderly lives of his fellow-students, and although marriage would necessarily close the career of honours, he married the young lady, resigned his fellowship (in conformity with the regulations), and took a modest lodging at the Dolphin. He then began to study earnestly the most remarkable writings of the times, polishing, it has been said, his old asperity on the productions of Erasmus, of Lefevre of Etaples, and other great authors; every day his crude understanding received new brilliancy. He then began to teach in Buckingham (afterwards Magdalene) College, and thus provided for his wants. His lessons excited the admiration of enlightened men, and the anger of obscure ones, who disdainfully called him (because of the inn at which he lodged) the hostler. "This name became him well," said Fuller, "for in his lessons he roughly rubbed the backs of the friars, and famously curried the hides of the lazy priests." His wife dying a year after his marriage, Cranmer was re-elected fellow of his old college, and the first writing of Luther's having appeared, he said: "I must know on which side the truth lies. There is only one infallible source, the Scriptures; in them I will seek for God's truth." And for three years he constantly studied the holy books,4 without commentary, without human theology, and hence he gained the name of the Scripturist. At last his eyes were opened; he saw the mysterious bond which unites all biblical revelations, and

understood the completeness of God's design. Then without forsaking the Scriptures, he studied all kinds of authors. He was a slow reader, but a close observer;6 he never opened a book without having a pen in his hand. He did not take up with any particular party or age; but possessing a free and philosophic mind, he weighed all opinions in the balance of his judgment,2 taking the Bible for his standard.

Honours soon came upon him; he was made successively doctor of divinity, professor, university preacher, and examiner. He used to say to the candidates for the ministry: "Christ sendeth his hearers to the Scriptures, and not to the church."—"But," replied the monks, "they are so difficult."—"Explain the obscure passages by those which are clear," rejoined the professor, "Scripture by Scripture. Seek, pray, and he who has the key of David will open them to you." The monks, affrighted at this task, withdrew bursting with anger; and erelong Cranmer's name was a name of dread in every convent. Some, however, submitted to the labour, and one of them, Doctor Barret, blessed God that the examiner had turned him back; "for," said he, "I found the knowledge of God in the holy book he compelled me to study." Cranmer toiled at the same work as Latimer, Stafford, and Bilney.

Fox and Gardiner having renewed acquaintance with their old friend at Waltham Abbey, they sat down to table, and both the almoner and the secretary asked the doctor what he thought of the divorce. It was the usual topic of conversation, and not long before, Cranmer had been named member of a commission appointed to give their opinion on this affair. "You are not in the right path," said Cranmer to his friends; "you should not cling to the decisions of the church. There is a surer and a shorter way which alone can give peace to the king's conscience."—"What is that?" they both asked. "The true question is this," replied Cranmer: "What says the Word of God? If God has declared a marriage of this nature bad, the pope cannot make it good. Discontinue these interminable Roman negotiations. When God has spoken man must obey."—"But how shall we know what God has said?"—"Consult the universities; they will discern it more surely than Rome." This was a new view. The idea of consulting the universities had been acted upon before; but then there own opinions only had been demanded; now, the question was simply to know what God says in his word. "The word of God is above the church," was the principle laid down by Cranmer, and in that principle consisted the whole of the Reformation. The conversation at the supper-table of Waltham was destined to be one of those secret springs which an invisible Hand sets in motion for the accomplishment of his great designs. The Cambridge doctor, suddenly transported from his study to the foot of the throne, was on the point of becoming one of the principal instruments of Divine wisdom. The day after this conversation, Fox and Gardiner arrived at Greenwich, and the king summoned them into his presence the same evening. "Well, gentlemen," he said to them, "our holidays are over; what shall we do now? If we still have recourse to Rome, God knows when we shall see the end of this matter."—"It will not be necessary to take so long a journey," said Fox; "we know a shorter and surer way."—"What is it?" asked the king eagerly.—"Doctor Cranmer, whom we met yesterday at Waltham, thinks that the Bible should be the sole judge in your cause." Gardiner, vexed at his colleague's frankness, desired to claim all the honour of this luminous idea for himself; but Henry did not listen to him. "Where is Doctor Cranmer?" said he, much affected.2 "Send, and fetch him immediately. Mother of God! (this was his customary oath) this man has the right sow by the ear. If this had only been suggested to me two years ago, what expense and trouble I should have been spared."

Cranmer had gone into Nottinghamshire; a messenger followed and brought him back. “Why have you entangled me in this affair?” he said to Fox and Gardiner. “Pray make my excuses to the king.” Gardiner, who wished for nothing better, promised to do all he could; but it was of no use. “I will have no excuses,” said Henry. The wily courtier was obliged to make up his mind to introduce the ingenuous and upright man, to whom that station, which he himself had so coveted, was one day to belong. Cranmer and Gardiner went down to Greenwich, both alike dissatisfied.

Cranmer was then forty years of age, with pleasing features, and mild and winning eyes, in which the candour of his soul seemed to be reflected. Sensible to the pains as well as to the pleasures of the heart, he was destined to be more exposed than other men to anxieties and falls; a peaceful life in some remote parsonage would have been more to his taste than the court of Henry VIII. Blessed with a generous mind, unhappily he did not possess the firmness necessary in a public man; a little stone sufficed to make him stumble. His excellent understanding showed him the better way; but his great timidity made him fear the more dangerous. He was rather too fond of relying upon the power of men, and made them unhappy concessions with too great facility. If the king had questioned him, he would never have dared advise so bold a course as that he had pointed out; the advice had slipped from him at table during the intimacy of familiar conversation. Yet he was sincere, and after doing everything to escape from the consequences of his frankness, he was ready to maintain the opinion he had given.

Henry, perceiving Cranmer’s timidity, graciously approached him. “What is your name,” said the king endeavouring to put him at his ease? “Did you not meet my secretary and my almoner at Waltham?” And then he added: “Did you not speak to them of my great affair?”—repeating the words ascribed to Cranmer. The latter could not retreat: “Sir, it is true, I did say so.”—“I see,” replied the king with animation, “that you have found the breach through which we must storm the fortress. Now, Sir doctor, I beg you, and as you are my subject I command you, to lay aside every other occupation, and to bring my cause to a conclusion in conformity with the ideas you have put forth. All that I desire to know is, whether my marriage is contrary to the laws of God or not. Employ all your skill in investigating the subject, and thus bring comfort to my conscience as well as to the queen’s.”

Cranmer was confounded; he recoiled from the idea of deciding an affair on which depended, it might be, the destinies of the nation, and sighed after the lonely fields of Aslacton. But grasped by the vigorous hand of Henry, he was compelled to advance. “Sir,” said he, “pray intrust this matter to doctors more learned than I am.”—“I am very willing,” answered the king, “but I desire that you will also give me your opinion in writing.” And then summoning the earl of Wiltshire to his presence, he said to him: “My lord, you will receive Doctor Cranmer into your house at Durham Place, and let him have all necessary quiet to compose a report for which I have asked him.” After this precise command, which admitted of no refusal, Henry withdrew. In this manner was Cranmer introduced by the king to Anne Boleyn’s father, and not, as some Romanist authors have asserted, by Sir Thomas Boleyn to the king. Wiltshire conducted Cranmer to Durham House (now the Adelphi in the Strand,) and the pious doctor on whom Henry had imposed these quarters, soon contracted a close friendship with Anne and her father, and took advantage of it to teach them the value of the Divine word, as the pearl of great price. Henry, while profiting by the address of a Wolsey and a Gardiner, paid little regard to the men; but he respected Cranmer, even when opposed to him in opinion, and until his death placed the learned doctor above all his courtiers and

all his clerks. The pious man often succeeds better, even with the great ones of this world, than the ambitious and the intriguing.

CHAPTER XIII

Wolsey in the Court of Chancery—Accused by the Dukes—Refuses to give up the Great Seal—His Despair—He gives up the Seal—Order to depart—His Iventory—Alarm—The Scene of Departure—Favourable Message from the King—Wolsey's Joy—His Fool—Arrival at Esher.

While Cranmer was rising notwithstanding his humility, Wolsey was falling in despite of his stratagems. The cardinal still governed the kingdom, gave instructions to ambassadors, negotiated with princes, and filled his sumptuous palaces with his haughtiness. The king could not make up his mind to turn him off; the force of habit, the need he had of him, the recollection of the services Henry had received from him, pleaded in his favour. Wolsey without the seals appeared almost as inconceivable as the king without his crown. Yet the fall of one of the most powerful favourites recorded in history was inevitably approaching, and we must now describe it. On the 9th of October, after the Michaelmas vacation, Wolsey, desirous of showing a bold face, went and opened the high court of chancery with his accustomed pomp; but he noticed, with uneasiness, that none of the king's servants walked before him, as they had been accustomed to do. He presided on the bench with an inexpressible depression of spirits, and the various members of the court sat before him with an absent air; there was something gloomy and solemn in this sitting, as if all were taking part in a funeral: it was destined indeed to be the last act of the cardinal's power. Some days before (Foxe says on the 1st of October) the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, with other lords of the privy-council, had gone down to Windsor, and denounced to the king Wolsey's unconstitutional relations with the pope, his usurpations, "his robberies, and the discords sown by his means between Christian princes." Such motives would not have sufficed; but Henry had stronger. Wolsey had not kept any of his promises in the matter of the divorce; it would even appear that he had advised the pope to excommunicate the king, and thus raise his people against him.2 This enormity was not at that time known by the prince; it is even probable that it did not take place until later. But Henry knew enough, and he gave his attorney-general, Sir Christopher Hales, orders to prosecute Wolsey.

Whilst the heart-broken cardinal was displaying his authority for the last time in the court of chancery, the attorney-general was accusing him in the King's Bench for having obtained papal bulls conferring on him a jurisdiction which encroached on the royal power; and calling for the application of the penalties of præmunire. The two dukes received orders to demand the seals from Wolsey; and the latter, informed of what had taken place, did not quit his palace on the 10th, expecting every moment the arrival of the messengers of the king's anger; but no one appeared. The next day the two dukes arrived: "It is the king's good pleasure," said they to the cardinal, who remained seated in his arm-chair, "that you give up the broad seal to us and retire to Esher" (a country-seat near Hampton Court.) Wolsey, whose presence of mind never failed him, demanded to see the commission under which they were acting. "We have our orders from his majesty's mouth," said they.—"That may be sufficient for you," replied the cardinal, "but not for me. The great seal of England was delivered to me by the hands of my sovereign; I may not deliver it at the simple word of any lord, unless you can show me your commission." Suffolk broke out into a passion, but Wolsey remained calm, and the two dukes returned to Windsor. This was the

cardinal's last triumph. The rumour of his disgrace created an immense sensation at court, in the city, and among the foreign ambassadors. Du Bellay hastened to York Place (Whitehall) to contemplate this great ruin and console his unhappy friend. He found Wolsey, with dejected countenance and lustreless eyes, "shrunk to half his wonted size," wrote the ambassador to Montmorency, "the greatest example of fortune which was ever beheld." Wolsey desired "to set forth his case" to him; but his thoughts were confused, his language broken, "for heart and tongue both failed him entirely;" he burst into tears. The ambassador regarded him with compassion: "Alas!" thought he, "his enemies cannot but feel pity for him." At last the unhappy cardinal recovered his speech, but only to give way to despair. "I desire no more authority," he exclaimed, "nor the pope's legation, nor the broad seal of England.… I am ready to give up every thing, even to my shirt. … I can live in a hermitage, provided the king does not hold me in disgrace." The ambassador "did all he could to comfort him," when Wolsey, catching at the plank thrown out to him, exclaimed: "Would that the king of France and madame might pray the king to moderate his anger against me. But above all," he added in alarm, "take care the king never knows that I have solicited this of you." Du Bellay wrote indeed to France, that the king and madame alone could "withdraw their affectionate servant from the gates of hell," and Wolsey being informed of these despatches, his hopes recovered a little. But this bright gleam did not last long. On Sunday the 17th of October, Norfolk and Suffolk re-appeared at Whitehall, accompanied by Fitzwilliam, Taylor, and Gardiner, Wolsey's former dependant. It was six in the evening; they found the cardinal in an upper chamber, near the great gallery, and presented the king's orders to him. Having read them he said: "I am happy to obey his majesty's commands;" then having ordered the great seal to be brought him, he took it out of the white leather case in which he kept it, and handed it to the dukes, who placed it in a box, covered with crimson velvet, and ornamented with the arms of England, ordered Gardiner to seal it up with red wax, and gave it to Taylor to convey to the king.

Wolsey was thunderstruck; he was to drink the bitter cup even to the dregs: he was ordered to leave his palace forthwith, taking with him neither clothes, linen, nor plate; the dukes had feared that he would convey away his treasures. Wolsey comprehended the greatness of his misery; he found strength however to say: "Since it is the kings' good pleasure to take my house and all it contains, I am content to retire to Esher." The dukes left him.

Wolsey remained alone. This astonishing man, who had risen from a butcher's shop to the summit of earthly greatness—who, for a word that displeased him, sent his master's most faithful servants (Pace for instance) to the Tower—and who had governed England as if he had been its monarch, and even more, for he had governed without a parliament: was driven out, and thrown, as it were, upon a dunghill. A sudden hope flashed like lightning through his mind; perhaps the magnificence of the spoils would appease Henry. Was not Esau pacified by Jacob's present? Wolsey summoned his officers: "Set tables in the great gallery," he said to them, "and place on them all I have entrusted to your care, in order to render me an account." These orders were executed immediately. The tables were covered with an immense quantity of rich stuffs, silks and velvets of all colours, costly furs, rich copes and other ecclesiastical vestures; the walls were hung with cloth of gold and silver, and webs of a valuable stuff named baudykin, from the looms of Damascus, and with tapestry, representing scriptural subjects or stories from the old romances of chivalry. The gilt chamber and the council chamber, adjoining the gallery, were both filled with plate, in which the gold and silver were set with pearls and precious stones: these articles of luxury were so abundant

that basketfulls of costly plate, which had fallen out of fashion were stowed away under the tables. On every table was an exact list of the treasures with which it was loaded, for the most perfect order and regularity prevailed in the cardinal's household. Wolsey cast a glance of hope upon this wealth, and ordered his officers to deliver the whole to his majesty.

He then prepared to leave his magnificent palace. That moment of itself so sad, was made sadder still by an act of affectionate indiscretion. "Ah, my lord," said his treasurer, Sir William Gascoigne, moved even to tears, "your grace will be sent to the Tower." This was too much for Wolsey: to go and join his victims!… He grew angry, and exclaimed: "Is this the best comfort you can give your master in adversity? I would have you and all such blasphemous reporters know that it is untrue."

It was necessary to depart; he put round his neck a chain of gold, from which hung a pretended relic of the true cross; this was all he took. "Would to God," he exclaimed, as he placed it on, "that I had never had any other." This he said alluding to the legate's cross which used to be carried before him with so much pomp. He descended the back stairs, followed by his servants, some silent and dejected, others weeping bitterly, and proceeded to the river's brink, where a barge awaited him. But, alas! it was not alone. The Thames was covered with innumerable boats full of men and women. The inhabitants of London, expecting to see the cardinal led to the Tower, desired to be present at his humiliation, and prepared to accompany him. Cries of joy hailing his fall were heard from every side; nor were the cruellest sarcasms wanting. "The butcher's dog will bite no more," said some; "look, how he hangs his head." In truth, the unhappy man, distressed by a sight so new to him, lowered those eyes which were once so proud, but now were filled with bitter tears. This man, who had made all England tremble, was then like a withered leaf carried along the stream. All his servants were moved; even his fool, William Patch, sobbed like the rest. "O, wavering and newfangled multitude," exclaimed Cavendish, his gentleman usher. The hopes of the citizens were disappointed; the barge, instead of descending the river, proceeded upwards in the direction of Hampton Court; gradually the shouts died away, and the flotilla dispersed. The silence of the river permitted Wolsey to indulge in less bitter thoughts; but it seemed as if invisible furies were pursuing him, now that the people had left him. He left his barge at Putney, and mounting his mule, though with difficulty, proceeded slowly with downeast looks. Shortly after, upon lifting his eyes, he saw a horseman riding rapidly down the hill towards them. "Whom do you think it can be?" he asked of his attendants. "My lord," replied one of them, "I think it is Sir Henry Norris." A flash of joy passed through Wolsey's heart. Was it not Norris, who, of all the king's officers, had shown him the most respect during his visit to Grafton? Norris came up with them, saluted him respectfully, and said: "The king bids me declare that he still entertains the same kindly feelings towards you, and sends you this ring as a token of his confidence." Wolsey received it with a trembling hand: it was that which the king was in the habit of sending on important occasions. The cardinal immediately alighted from his mule, and kneeling down in the road, raised his hands to heaven with an indescribable expression of happiness. The fallen man would have pulled off his velvet under-cap, but unable to undo the strings, he broke them, and threw it on the ground. He remained on his knees bareheaded praying fervently amidst profound silence. God's forgiveness had never caused Wolsey so much pleasure as Henry's.

Having finished his prayer, the cardinal put on his cap, and remounted his mule. "Gentle Norris," said he to the king's messenger, "if I were lord of a kingdom, the half of it would scarcely be enough to reward you for your happy tidings; but I have nothing left except the clothes on my

back." Then taking off his gold chain: "Take this," he said, "it contains a piece of the true cross. In my happier days I would not have parted with it for a thousand pounds." The cardinal and Norris separated: but Wolsey soon stopped, and the whole troop halted on the heath. The thought troubled him greatly that he had nothing to send to the king; he called Norris back, and looking round him saw mounted on a sorry horse poor William Patch, who had lost all his gaiety since his master's misfortune. "Present this poor jester to the king from me," said Wolsey to Norris; "his buffooneries are a pleasure fit for a prince; he is worth a thousand pounds." Patch, offended at being treated thus, burst into a violent passion, his eyes flashed fire, he foamed at the mouth, he kicked and fought, and bit all who approached him; but the inexorable Wolsey, who looked upon him merely as a toy, ordered six of his tallest yeomen to lay hold of him. They carried off the unfortunate creature, who long continued to utter his piercing cries. At the very moment when his master had had pity on him, Wolsey, like the servant in the parable, had no pity on his poor companion in misfortune. At last they reached Esher. What a residence compared with Whitehall!… It was little more than four bare walls. The most urgent necessaries were procured from the neighbouring houses, but Wolsey could not adapt himself to this cruel contrast. Besides, he knew Henry VIII; he knew that he might send Norris one day with a gold ring, and the executioner the next with a rope. Gloomy and dejected, he remained seated in his lonely apartments. On a sudden he would rise from his seat, walk hurriedly up and down, speak aloud to himself, and then falling back in his chair, he would weep like a child. This man who formerly had shaken kingdoms, had been overthrown in the twinkling of an eye, and was now atoning for his perfidies in humiliation and terror,—a striking example of God's judgment.

CHAPTER XIV

Thomas More elected Chancellor—A lay Government one of the great Facts of the Reformation—Wolsey accused of subordinating England to the Pope—He implores the King's Clemency—His Condemnation—Cromwell at Esher—His Character—He sets out for London—Sir Christopher Hales recommends him to the King—Cromwell's Interview with Henry in the Park—A new Theory—Cromwell elected Member of Parliament—Opened by Sir Thomas More—Attack on ecclesiastical Abuses—Reforms pronounced by the Convocation—Three Bills—Rochester attacks them—Resistance of the House of Commons—Struggles—Henry sanctions the three Bills—Alarm of the Clergy and Disturbances.

During all this time everybody was in commotion at court. Norfolk and Suffolk, at the head of the council, had informed the Star Chamber of the cardinal's disgrace. Henry knew not how to supply his place. Some suggested the archbishop of Canterbury; the king would not hear of him. "Wolsey," says a French writer, "had disgusted the king and all England with those subjects of two masters who, almost always, sold one to the other. They preferred a lay minister." "I verily believe the priests will never more obtain it," wrote Du Bellay. The name of Sir Thomas More was pronounced. He was a layman, and that quality, which a few years before would, perhaps, have excluded him, was now a recommendation. A breath of Protestantism wafted to the summit of honours one of its greatest enemies. Henry thought that More, placed between the pope and his sovereign, would decide in favour of the interests of the throne, and of the independence of England. His choice was made.

More knew that the cardinal had been thrown aside because he was not a sufficiently docile instrument in the matter of the divorce. The work required of him was contrary to his convictions; but the honour conferred on him was almost unprecedented—very seldom indeed had the seals been intrusted to a mere knight. He followed the path of ambition and not of duty; he showed, however, in after-days that his ambition was of no common sort. It is even probable that, foreseeing the dangers which threatened to destroy the papal power in England, More wished to make an effort to save it. Norfolk installed the new chancellor in the Star Chamber. “His majesty,” said the duke, “has not cast his eyes upon the nobility of the blood, but on the worth of the person. He desires to show by this choice that there are among the laity and gentlemen of England, men worthy to fill the highest offices in the kingdom, to which, until this hour, bishops and noblemen alone think they have a right.”2 The Reformation which restored religion to the general body of the church, took away at the same time political power from the clergy. The priests had deprived the people of Christian activity, and the governments of power; the Gospel restored to both what the priests had usurped. This result could not but be favourable to the interests of religion; the less cause kings and their subjects have to fear the intrusion of clerical power into the affairs of the world, the more will they yield themselves to the vivifying influence of faith.

More lost no time; never had lord-chancellor displayed such activity. He rapidly cleared off the cases which were in arrear, and having been installed on the 26th of October he called on Wolsey’s cause on the 28th or 29th. “The crown of England,” said the attorney-general, “has never acknowledged any superior but God. Now, the said Thomas Wolsey, legate a latere, has obtained from the pope certain bulls, by virtue of which he has exercised since the 28th of August 1523 an authority derogatory to his majesty’s power, and to the rights of his courts of justice. The crown of England cannot be put under the pope; and we therefore accuse the said legate of having incurred the penalties of præmunire.”

There can be no doubt that Henry had other reasons for Wolsey’s disgrace than those pointed out by the attorney-general; but England had convictions of a higher nature than her sovereign’s. Wolsey was regarded as the pope’s accomplice, and this was the cause of the great severity of the public officer and of the people. The cardinal is generally excused by alleging that both king and parliament had ratified the unconstitutional authority with which Rome had invested him; but had not the powers conferred on him by the pope produced unjustifiable results in a constitutional monarchy? Wolsey, as papal legate, had governed England without a parliament; and, as if the nation had gone back to the reign of John, he had substituted de facto, if not in theory, the monstrous system of the famous bull Unam Sanctum for the institution of Magna Charta. The king, and even the lords and commons, had connived in vain at these illegalities; the rights of the constitution of England remained not the less inviolable, and the best of the people had protested against their infringement. And hence it was that Wolsey, conscious of his crime, “put himself wholly to the mercy and grace of the king,” and his counsel declared his ignorance of the statutes he was said to have infringed. We cannot here allege, as some have done, the prostration of Wolsey’s moral powers; he could, even after his fall, reply with energy to Henry VIII. When, for instance, the king sent to demand for the crown his palace of Whitehall, which belonged to the see of York, the cardinal answered: “Show his majesty from me that I must desire him to call to his most gracious remembrance that there is both a heaven and a hell;” and when other charges besides those of complicity with the papal aggression were brought against him, he defended

himself courageously, as will be afterwards seen. If therefore the cardinal did not attempt to justify himself for infringing the rights of the crown, it was because his conscience bade him be silent. He had committed one of the gravest faults of which a statesman can be guilty. Those who have sought to excuse him have not sufficiently borne in mind that, since the Great Charter, opposition to Romish aggression has always characterized the constitution and government of England. Wolsey perfectly recollected this; and this explanation is more honourable to him than that which ascribes his silence to weakness or to cunning. The cardinal was pronounced guilty, and the court passed judgment, that by the statute of præmunire his property was forfeited, and that he might be taken before the king in council. England, by sacrificing a churchman who had placed himself above kings, gave a memorable example of her inflexible opposition to the encroachments of the papacy. Wolsey was confounded, and his troubled imagination conjured up nothing but perils on every side.

While More was lending himself to the condemnation of his predecessor, whose friend he had been, another layman of still humbler origin was preparing to defend the cardinal, and by that very act to become the appointed instrument to throw down the convents in England, and to shatter the secular bonds which united this country to the Roman pontiff. On the 1st of November, two days after Wolsey's condemnation, one of his officers, with a prayer-book in his hand, was leaning against the window in the great hall, apparently absorbed in his devotions. "Good-morrow," said Cavendish as he passed him, on his way to the cardinal for his usual morning duties. The person thus addressed raised his head, and the gentleman-usher, seeing that his eyes were filled with tears, asked him: "Master Cromwell, is my lord in any danger?"—"I think not," replied Cromwell, "but it is hard to lose in a moment the labour of a life." In his master's fall Cromwell foreboded his own. Cavendish endeavoured to console him. "God willing, this is my resolution," replied Wolsey's ambitious solicitor; I intend this afternoon, as soon as my lord has dined, to ride to London, and so go to court, where I will either make or mar before I come back again. At this moment Cavendish was summoned, and he entered the cardinal's chamber.

Cromwell, devoured by ambition, had clung to Wolsey's robe in order to attain power; but Wolsey had fallen, and the solicitor, dragged along with him, strove to reach by other means the object of his desires. Cromwell was one of those earnest and vigorous men whom God prepares for critical times. Blessed with a solid judgment and intrepid firmness, he possessed a quality rare in every age, and particularly under Henry VIII,—fidelity in misfortune. The ability by which he was distinguished was not at all times without reproach: success seems to have been his first thought.

After dinner Cromwell followed Wolsey into his private room: "My lord, permit me to go to London, I will endeavour to save you." A gleam passed over the cardinal's saddened features.—"Leave the room," he said to his attendants. He then had a long private conversation with Cromwell, at the end of which the latter mounted his horse and set out for the capital, riding to the assault of power with the same activity as he had marched to the attack of Rome. He did not hide from himself that it would be difficult to procure access to the king; for certain ecclesiastics, jealous of Wolsey, had spoken against his solicitor at the time of the secularization of the convents, and Henry could not endure him. But Cromwell knew that fortune favours the bold, and, carried away by his ambitious dreams, he galloped on, saying to himself: "One foot in the stirrup, and my fortune is made!"

Sir Christopher Hales, a zealous Roman-catholic, entertained a sincere friendship for him; and to this friend Cromwell applied. Hales proceeded immediately to the palace (2nd November), where he found a numerous company talking about the cardinal's ruin. "There was one of his officers," said Hales, "who would serve your majesty well."—"Who is he?" asked Henry.—"Cromwell."—"Do not speak to me of that man, I hate him," replied the king angrily; and upon that all the courtiers chimed in with his majesty's opinion. This opening was not very encouraging; but Lord Russell, carl of Bedford, advancing to the midst of the group around the king, said boldly:2 "Permit me, Sir, to defend a man to whom I am indebted for my life. When you sent me privately into Italy, your majesty's enemies, having discovered me at Bologna, would have put me to death, had not Thomas Cromwell saved me. Sir, since you have now to do with the pope, there is no man (I think) in all England who will be fitter for your purpose."—"Indeed!" said the king; and after a little reflection, he said to Hales: "Very well then, let your client meet me in Whitehall gardens." The courtiers and the priests withdrew in great discomfiture. The interview took place the same day at the appointed spot. "Sir," said Cromwell to his majesty, "the pope refuses your divorce…. But why do you ask his consent? Every Englishman is master in his own house, and why should not you be so in England? Ought a foreign prelate to share your power with you? It is true, the bishops make oath to your majesty, but they make another to the pope immediately after, which absolves them from the former. Sir, you are but half a king, and we are but half your subjects. This kingdom is a two-headed monster. Will you bear with such an anomaly any longer? What! are you not living in an age when Frederick the Wise and other German princes have thrown off the yoke of Rome? Do likewise; become once more a king; govern your kingdom in concert with your lords and commons. Henceforward let Englishmen alone have any thing to say in England; let not your subjects' money be cast any more into the yawning gulf of the Tiber; instead of imposing new taxes on the nation, convert to the general good those treasures which have hitherto only served to fatten proud priests and lazy friars. Now is the moment for action. Rely upon your parliament; proclaim yourself the head of the church in England. Then shall you see an increase of glory to your name, and of prosperity to your people."

Never before had such language been addressed to a king of England. It was not only on account of the divorce that it was necessary to break with Rome; it was, in Cromwell's view, on account of the independence, glory, and prosperity of the monarchy. These considerations appeared more important to Henry than those which had hitherto been laid before him; none of the kings of England had been so well placed as he was to understand them. When a Tudor had succeeded to the Saxon, Norman, and Plantagenet kings, a man of the free race of the Celts had taken on the throne of England the place of princes submissive to the Roman pontiffs. The ancient British church, independent of the papacy, was about to rise again with this new dynasty, and the Celtic race, after eleven centuries of humiliation, to recover its ancient heritage. Undoubtedly, Henry had no recollections of this kind; but he worked in conformity with the peculiar character of his race, without being aware of the instinct which compelled him to act. He felt that a sovereign, who submits to the pope, becomes, like King John, his vassal; and now, after having been the second in his realm, he desired to be the first. The king reflected on what Cromwell had said; astonished and surprised, he sought to understand the new position which his bold adviser had made for him. "Your proposal pleases me much," he said; "but can you prove what you assert?" "Certainly," replied this able politician; "I have with me a copy of the oath the bishops make to the Roman pontiff." With these words he drew a paper from his pocket, and placed the oath before the king's

eyes. Henry, jealous of his authority even to despotism, was filled with indignation, and felt the necessity of bringing down that foreign authority which dared dispute the power with him, even in his own kingdom. He drew off his ring and gave it to Cromwell, declaring that he took him into his service, and soon after made him a member of his privy-council. England, we may say, was now virtually emancipated from the papacy.

Cromwell had laid the first foundations of his greatness. He had remarked the path his master had followed, and which had led to his ruin,—complicity with the pope; and he hoped to succeed by following the contrary course, namely, by opposing the papacy. He had the king's support, but he wanted more. Possessing a clear and easy style of eloquence, he saw what influence a seat in the great council of the nation would give him. It was somewhat late, for the session began on the next day (3rd November), but to Cromwell nothing was impossible. The son of his friend, Sir Thomas Rush, had been returned to parliament; but the young member resigned his seat, and Cromwell was elected in his place.

Parliament had not met for seven years, the kingdom having been governed by a prince of the Roman church. The reformation of the church, whose regenerating influence began to be felt already, was about to restore to the nation those ancient liberties of which a cardinal had robbed it; and Henry being on the point of taking very important resolutions, felt the necessity of drawing nearer to his people. Everything betokened that a good feeling would prevail between the parliament and the crown, and that "the priests would have a terrible fright."

While Henry was preparing to attack the Roman church in the papal supremacy, the commons were getting ready to war against the numerous abuses with which it had covered England. "Some even thought," says Tyndale, "that this assembly would reform the church, and that the golden age would come again." But it was not from acts of parliament that the Reformation was destined to proceed, but solely from the word of God. And yet the commons, without touching upon doctrine, were going to do their duty manfully in things within the province, and the parliament of 1529 may be regarded (Lord Herbert of Cherbury observes) as the first protestant parliament of England. "The bishops require excessive fines for the probates of wills," said Tyndale's old friend, Sir Henry Guilford. "As testamentary executor to Sir William Compton I had to pay a thousand marks sterling."—"The spiritual men," said another member, "would rather see the poor orphans die of hunger than give them the lean cow, the only thing their father left them."—"Priests," said another, "have farms, tanneries, and warehouses, all over the country. In short, the clerks take everything from their flocks, and not only give them nothing, but even deny them the word of God. The clergy were in utter consternation. The power of the nation seemed to awaken in this parliament for the sole purpose of attacking the power of the priest. It was important to ward off these blows. The convocation of the province of Canterbury, assembling at Westminster on the 5th of November, thought it their duty, in self-defence, to reform the most crying abuses. It was therefore decreed, on the 12th of November, that the priests should no longer keep shops or taverns, play at dice or other forbidden games, pass the night in suspected places, be present at disreputable shows, go about with sporting dogs, or with hawks, falcons, or other birds of prey, on their fist;3 or, finally, hold suspicious intercourse with women. Penalties were denounced against these various disorders; they were doubled in case of adultery; and still further increased in the case of more abominable impurities.5 Such were the laws rendered necessary by the manners of the clergy.

These measures did not satisfy the commons. Three bills were introduced having reference to the fees on the probate of wills, mortuaries, pluralities, non-residence, and the exercise of secular professions. “The destruction of the church is aimed at,” exclaimed Bishop Fisher, when these bills were carried to the lords, “and if the church falls, the glory of the kingdom will perish. Lutheranism is making great progress amongst us, and the savage cry that has already echoed in Bohemia, Down with the church, is now uttered by the commons…. How does that come about? Solely from want of faith.—My lords, save your country! save the church!” Sir Thomas Audley, the speaker, with a deputation of thirty members, immediately went to Whitehall. “Sir,” they said to the king, “we are accused of being without faith, and of being almost as bad as the Turks. We demand an apology for such offensive language.” Fisher pretended that he only meant to speak of the Bohemians; and the commons, by no means satisfied, zealously went on with their reforms.

These the king was resolved to concede; but he determined to take advantage of them to present a bill making over to him all the money borrowed of his subjects. John Petit, one of the members for the city, boldly opposed this demand. “I do not know other persons’ affairs,” he said, “and I cannot give what does not belong to me. But as regards myself personally, I give without reserve all that I have lent the king.” The royal bill passed, and the satisfied Henry gave his consent to the bills of the commons. Every dispensation coming from Rome, which might be contrary to the statutes, was strictly forbidden. The bishops exclaimed that the commons were becoming schismatical; disturbances were excited by certain priests; but the clerical agitators were punished, and the people, when they heard of it, were delighted beyond measure.

CHAPTER XV The last hour—More’s Fanaticism—Debates in Convocation—Royal Proclamation—The Bishop of Norwich—Sentences condemned—Latimer’s Opposition—The New Testament burnt—The Persecution begins—Hitton—Bayfield—Tonstall and Packington—Bayfield arrested—The Rector Patmore—Lollards’ Tower—Tyndale and Patmore—a Musician—Freese the Painter—Placards and Martyrdom of Bennet—Thomas More and John Petit—Bilney. The moment when Henry aimed his first blows at Rome was also that in which he began to shed the blood of the disciples of the gospel. Although ready to throw off the authority of the pope, he would not recognise the authority of Christ: obedience to the Scriptures is, however, the very soul of the Reformation. The king’s contest with Rome had filled the friends of Scripture with hope. The artisans and tradesmen, particularly those who lived near the sea, were almost wholly won over to the gospel. “The king is one of us,” they used to boast; “he wishes his subjects to read the New Testament. Our faith, which is the true one, will circulate through the kingdom, and by Michaelmas next those who believe as we do will be more numerous than those of a contrary opinion. We are ready, if needs be, to die in the struggle.” This was indeed to be the fate of many.

Language such as this aroused the clergy: “The last hour has come,” said Stokesley, who had been raised to the See of London after Tonstall’s translation to Durham; “if we would not have Luther’s heresy pervade the whole of England, we must hasten to throw it in the sea.” Henry was fully disposed to do so; but as he was not on very good terms with the clergy, a man was wanted to serve as mediator between him and the bishops. He was soon found.

Sir Thomas More’s noble understanding was then passing from ascetic practices to fanaticism, and the humanist turning into an inquisitor. In his opinion, the burning of heretics was just and necessary. He has even been reproached with binding evangelical Christians to a tree in his

garden, which he called “the tree of truth,” and of having flogged them with his own hand.2 More has declared that he never gave “stripe nor stroke, nor so much as a fillip on the forehead,” to any of his religious adversaries; and we willingly credit his denial. All must be pleased to think that if the author of the Utopia was a severe judge, the hand which held one of the most famous pens of the sixteenth century never discharged the duties of an executioner. The bishops led the attack. “We must clear the Lord’s field of the thorns which choke it,” said the archbishop of Canterbury to Convocation on the 29th of November 1529; immediately after which the bishop of Bath read to his colleagues the list of books that he desired to have condemned. There were a number of works by Tyndale, Luther, Melancthon, Zwingle, Œcolampadius, Pomeranus, Brentius, Bucer, Jonas, Francis Lambert, Fryth, and Fish. The Bible in particular was set down. “It is impossible to translate the Scripture into English,” said one of the prelates.5—“It is not lawful for the laity to read it in their mother tongue,” said another.—“If you tolerate the Bible,” added a third, “you will make us all heretics.”—“By circulating the Scriptures,” exclaimed several, “you will raise up the nation against the king.” Sir T. More laid the bishops’ petition before the king, and some time after, Henry gave orders by proclamation, that “no one should preach, or write any book, or keep any school without his bishop’s license;—that no one should keep any heretical book in his house;—that the bishops should detain the offenders in prison at their discretion, and then proceed to the execution of the guilty;—and, finally, that the chancellor, the justices of the peace, and other magistrates, should aid and assist the bishops.” Such was the cruel proclamation of Henry VIII, “the father of the English Reformation.” The clergy were not yet satisfied. The blind and octogenarian bishop of Norwich, being more ardent than the youngest of his priests, recommenced his complaints. “My diocese is accumbered with such as read the Bible,” said he to the archbishop of Canterbury, “and there is not a clerk from Cambridge but savoureth of the frying-pan. If this continues any time, they will undo us all. We must have greater authority to punish them than we have.”

Consequently, on the 24th of May 1530, More, Warham, Tonstall, and Gardiner, having been admitted into St. Edward’s chamber at Westminster, to make a report to the king concerning heresy, they proposed forbidding, in the most positive manner, the New Testament and certain other books in which the following doctrines were taught: “That Christ has shed his blood for our iniquities, as a sacrifice to the Father.—Faith only doth justify us.—Faith without good works is no little or weak faith, it is no faith.—Labouring in good works to come to heaven, thou dost shame Christ’s blood.”

Whilst nearly every one in the audience-chamber supported the prayer of the petition, there were three or four doctors who kept silence. At last one of them, it was Latimer, opposed the proposition. Bilney’s friend was more decided than ever to listen to no other voice than God’s. “Christ’s sheep hear no man’s voice but Christ’s,” he answered Dr. Redman, who had called upon him to submit to the church; “trouble me no more from the talking with the Lord my God.” The church, in Latimer’s opinion, presumed to set up its own voice in the place of Christ’s, and the Reformation did the contrary; this was his abridgement of the controversy. Being called upon to preach during Christmas tide, he had censured his hearers because they celebrated that festival by playing at cards, like mere worldlings, and then proceeded to lay before their eyes Christ’s cards, that is to say, his laws. Being placed on the Cambridge commission to examine into the question of the king’s marriage, he had conciliated the esteem of Henry’s deputy, Doctor Butts, the court physician, who had presented him to his master, by whose orders he preached at Windsor.

Henry felt disposed at first to yield something to Latimer. “Many of my subjects,” said he to the prelates assembled in St. Edward’s hall, “think that it is my duty to cause the Scriptures to be translated and given to the people.” The discussion immediately began between the two parties; and Latimer concluded by asking “that the Bible should be permitted to circulate freely in English.”2—“But the most part overcame the better,” he tells us. Henry declared that the teaching of the priests was sufficient for the people, and was content to add, “that he would give the Bible to his subjects when they renounced the arrogant pretension of interpreting it according to their own fancies.”—“Shun these books,” cried the priests from the pulpit, “detest them, keep them not in your hands, deliver them up to your superiors.”4 Or, if you do not, your prince, who has received from God the sword of justice, will use it to punish you.” Rome had every reason to be satisfied with Henry VIII. Tonstall, who still kept under lock and key the Testaments purchased at Antwerp through Packington’s assistance, had them carried to St. Paul’s Churchyard, where they were publicly burnt. The spectators retired shaking the head, and saying: “The teaching of the priests and of Scriptures must be in contradiction to each other, since the priests destroy them.” Latimer did more: “You have promised us the word of God,” he wrote courageously to the king, “perform your promise now rather than to-morrow! The day is at hand when you shall give an account of your office, and of the blood that hath been shed with your sword.” Latimer well knew that by such language he hazarded his life; but that he was ready to sacrifice, as he tells us himself.6

Persecution soon came. Just as the sun appeared to be rising on the Reformation, the storm burst forth. “There was not a stone the bishops left unremoved,” says the chronicler, “any corner unsearched, for the diligent execution of the king’s proclamation; whereupon ensued a grievous persecution and slaughter of the faithful.”

Thomas Hitton, a poor and pious minister of Kent, used to go frequently to Antwerp to purchase New Testaments. As he was returning from one of these expeditions, in 1529, the bishop of Rochester caused him to be arrested at Gravesend, and put to the cruelest tortures, to make him deny his faith. But the martyr repeated with holy enthusiasm: “Salvation cometh by faith and not by works, and Christ giveth it to whomsoever he willeth.” On the 20th of February 1530, he was tied to the stake and there burnt to death.

Scarcely were Hitton’s sufferings ended for bringing the Scriptures into England, when a vessel laden with New Testaments arrived at Colchester. The indefatigable Bayfield, who accompanied these books, sold them in London, went back to the continent, and returned to England in November; but this time the Scriptures fell into the hands of Sir Thomas More. Bayfield, undismayed, again visited the Low Countries, and soon reappeared, bringing with him the New Testament and the works of almost all the Reformers. “How cometh it that there are so many New Testaments from abroad?” asked Tonstall of Packington; “you promised me that you would buy them all.”—“They have printed more since,” replied the wily merchant; and it will never be better so long as they have letters and stamps [types and dies]. My lord, you had better buy the stamps too, and so you shall be sure.”

Instead of the stamps, the priests sought after Bayfield. The bishop of London could not endure this godly man. Having, one day asked Bainham (who afterwards suffered martyrdom) whether he knew a single individual who, since the days of the apostles, had lived according to the true faith in Jesus Christ, the latter answered: “Yes, I know Bayfield.” Being tracked from place to place, he

fled from the house of his pious hostess, and hid himself at his binder's, where he was discovered, and thrown into the Lollard's tower.5 As he entered the prison, Bayfield noticed a priest named Patmore, pale, weakened by suffering, and ready to sink under the ill-treatment of his jailers. Patmore, won over by Bayfield's piety, soon opened his heart to him. When rector of Haddam, he had found the truth in Wickliffe's writings. "They have burnt his bones," he said, "but from his ashes shall burst forth a well-spring of life. Delighting in good works, he used to fill his granaries with wheat, and when the markets were high, he would send his corn to them in such abundance as to bring down the prices.7 "It is contrary to the law of God to burn heretics," he said; and growing bolder, he added: "I care no more for the pope's curse than for a bundle of hay." His curate, Simon Smith, unwilling to imitate the disorderly lives of the priests, and finding Joan Bennore, the rector's servant, to be a discreet and pious person, desired to marry her. "God," said Patmore, "has declared marriage lawful for all men; and accordingly it is permitted to the priests in foreign parts." The rector alluded to Wittemberg, where he had visited Luther. After his marriage Smith and his wife quitted England for a season, and Patmore accompanied them as far as London. The news of this marriage of a priest—a fact without precedent in England—made Stokesley throw Patmore into the Lollards' tower, and although he was ill, neither fire, light, nor any other comfort was granted him. The bishop and his vicar-general visited him alone in his prison, and endeavoured by their threats to make him deny his faith.

It was during these circumstances that Bayfield was thrust into the tower. By his Christian words he revived Patmore's languishing faith, and the latter complained to the king that the bishop of London prevented his feeding the flock which God had committed to his charge. Stokesly, comprehending whence Patmore derived his new courage,3 removed Bayfield from the Lollards' tower, and shut him up in the coal-house, where he was fastened upright to the wall by the neck, middle, and legs. The unfortunate gospeller of Bury passed his time in continual darkness, never lying down, never seated, but nailed as it were to the wall, and never hearing the sound of human voice. We shall see him hereafter issuing from this horrible prison to die on the scaffold.

Patmore was not the only one in his family who suffered persecution; he had in London a brother named Thomas, a friend of John Tyndale, the younger brother of the celebrated reformer. Thomas had said that the truth of Scripture was at last reappearing in the world, after being hidden for many ages; and John Tyndale had sent five marks to his brother William, and received letters from him. Moreover, the two friends (who were both tradesmen) had distributed a great number of Testaments and other works. But their faith was not deeply rooted, and it was more out of sympathy for their brothers that they had believed; accordingly, Stokesley so completely entangled them, that they confessed their "crime." More, delighted at the opportunity which offered to cover the name of Tyndale with shame, was not satisfied with condemning the two friends to pay a fine of £100 each; he invented a new disgrace. He sewed on their dress some sheets of the New Testament which they had circulated, placed the two penitents on horseback with their faces towards the tail, and thus paraded them through the streets of London, exposed to the jeers and laughter of the populace. In this, More succeeded better than in his refutation of the reformer's writings. From that time the persecution became more violent. Husbandmen, artists, tradespeople, and even noblemen, felt the cruel fangs of the clergy and of Sir Thomas More. They sent to jail a pious musician who used to wander from town to town, singing to his harp a hymn in commendation of Martin Luther and of the Reformation. A painter, named Edward Freese, a

young man of ready wit, having been engaged to paint some hangings in a house, wrote on the borders certain sentences of the Scripture. For this he was seized and taken to the bishop of London's palace at Fulham, and there imprisoned, where his chief nourishment was bread made out of sawdust.2 His poor wife, who was pregnant, went down to Fulham to see her husband; but the bishop's porter had orders to admit no one, and the brute gave her so violent a kick, as to kill her unborn infant, and cause the mother's death not long after. The unhappy Freese was removed to the Lollards' tower, where he was put into chains, his hands only being left free. With these he took a piece of coal, and wrote some pious sentences on the wall: upon this he was manacled; but his wrists were so severely pinched, that the flesh grew up higher than the irons. His intellect became disturbed; his hair in wild disorder soon covered his face, through which his eyes glared fierce and haggard. The want of proper food, bad treatment, his wife's death, and his lengthened imprisonment, entirely undermined his reason. When brought to St. Paul's, he was kept three days without meat; and when he appeared before the consistory the poor prisoner, silent and scarce able to stand, looked around and gazed upon the spectators, "like a wild man." The examination was begun, but to every question put to him Freese made the same answer: "My Lord is a good man." They could get nothing from him but this affecting reply. Alas! the light shone no more upon his understanding, but the love of Jesus was still in his heart. He was sent back to Bearsy Abbey, where he did not remain long; but he never entirely recovered his reason. Henry VIII and his priests inflicted punishments still more cruel even than the stake.

Terror began to spread far and wide. The most active evangelists had been compelled to flee to a foreign land; some of the most godly were in prison; and among those in high station there were many, and perhaps Latimer was one, who seemed willing to shelter themselves under an exaggerated moderation. But just as the persecution in London had succeeded in silencing the most timid, other voices more courageous were raised in the provinces. The city of Exeter was at that time in great agitation; placards had been discovered on the gates of the cathedral containing some of the principles "of the new doctrine." While the mayor and his officers were seeking after the author of these "blasphemies," the bishop and all his doctors, "as hot as coals," says the chronicler, were preaching in the most fiery style. On the following Sunday, during the sermon, two men who had been the busiest of all the city in searching for the author of the bills, were struck by the appearance of a person seated near them. "Surely, this fellow is the heretic," they said. But their neighbour's devotion, for he did not take his eyes off his book, quite put them out; they did not perceive that he was reading the New Testament in Latin. This man, Thomas Bennet, was indeed the offender. Being converted at Cambridge by the preaching of Bilney, whose friend he was, he had gone to Torrington for fear of the persecution, and thence to Exeter, and after marrying to avoid unchastity (as he says) he became schoolmaster. Quiet, humble, courteous to every body, and somewhat timid, Bennet had lived six years in that city without his faith being discovered. At last his conscience being awakened he resolved to fasten by night to the cathedral gates certain evangelical placards. "Every body will read the writing," he thought, "and nobody will know the writer." He did as he had proposed. Not long after the Sunday on which he had been so nearly discovered, the priests prepared a great pageant, and made ready to pronounce against the unknown heretic the great curse "with book, bell, and candle." The cathedral was crowded, and Bennet himself was among the spectators. In the middle stood a great cross on which lighted tapers were placed, and around it were gathered all the Franciscans and Dominicans of Exeter. One of the priests having delivered a sermon on the words: There is an accursed thing in the midst

of thee, O Israel, the bishop drew near the cross and pronounced the curse against the offender. He took one of the tapers and said: “Let the soul of the unknown heretic, if he be dead already, be quenched this night in the pains of hell-fire, as this candle is now quenched and put out;” and with that he put out the candle. Then, taking off a second, he continued: “and let us pray to God, if he be yet alive, that his eyes be put out, and that all the senses of his body may fail him, as now the light of this candle is gone;” extinguishing the second candle. After this, one of the priests went up to the cross and struck it, when the noise it made in falling re-echoing along the roof, so frightened the spectators that they uttered a shriek of terror, and held up their hands to heaven, as if to pray that the divine curse might not fall on them. Bennet, a witness of this comedy, could not forbear smiling. “What are you laughing at?” asked his neighbours; “here is the heretic, here is the heretic, hold him fast.” This created great confusion among the crowd, some shouting, some clapping their hands, others running to and fro; but, owing to the tumult, Bennet succeeded in making his escape. The excommunication did but increase his desire to attack the Romish superstitions; and accordingly, before five o’clock the next morning (it was in the month of October 1530,) his servant-boy fastened up again by his orders on the cathedral gates some placards similar to those which had been torn down. It chanced that a citizen going to early mass saw the boy, and running up to him, caught hold of him and pulled down the papers; and then dragging the boy with the one hand, and with the placards in the other, he went to the mayor of the city. Bennet’s servant was recognised; his master was immediately arrested, and put in the stocks, “with as much favour as a dog would find,” says Foxe.

Exeter seemed determined to make itself the champion of sacerdotalism in England. For a whole week, not only the bishop, but all the priests and friars of the city, visited Bennet night and day. But they tried in vain to prove to him that the Roman church was the true one. “God has given me grace to be of a better church,” he said.—“Do you not know that ours is built upon St. Peter?”—“The church that is built upon a man,” he replied, “is the devil’s church and not God’s.” His cell was continually thronged with visitors; and, in default of arguments, the most ignorant of the friars called the prisoner a heretic, and spat upon him. At length they brought to him a learned doctor of theology, who, they supposed, would infallibly convert him. “Our ways are God’s ways,” said the doctor gravely. But he soon discovered that theologians can do nothing against the word of the Lord. “He only is my way,” replied Bennet, “who saith, I am the way, the truth, and the life. In his way will I walk;—his truth will I embrace;—his everlasting life will I seek.”

He was condemned to be burnt; and More having transmitted the order de comburendo with the utmost speed, the priests placed Bennet in the hands of the sheriff on the 15th of January, 1531, by whom he was conducted to the Livery-dole, a field without the city, where the stake was prepared. When Bennet arrived at the place of execution, he briefly exhorted the people, but with such unction, that the sheriff’s clerk, as he heard him, exclaimed: “Truly this is a servant of God.” Two persons, however, seemed unmoved: they were Thomas Carew and John Barnehouse, hoth holding the station of gentlemen. Going up to the martyr, they exclaimed in a threatening voice: “Say, Precor sanctam Mariam et omnes sanctos Dei.”—“I know no other advocate but Jesus Christ,” replied Bennet. Barnehouse was so enraged at these words, that he took a furze-bush upon a pike, and setting it on fire, thrust it into the martyr’s face, exclaiming: “Accursed heretic, pray to our Lady, or I will make you do it.”—“Alas!” replied Bennet patiently, “trouble me not;” and then holding up his hands, he prayed: “Father, forgive them!” The executioners immediately set

fire to the wood, and the most fanatical of the spectators, both men and women, seized with an indescribable fury, tore up stakes and bushes, and whatever they could lay their hands on, and flung them all into the flames to increase their violence. Bennet, lifting up his eyes to heaven, exclaimed: “Lord, receive my spirit.” Thus died, in the sixteenth century, the disciples of the Reformation sacrificed by Henry VIII. The priests, thanks to the king’s sword, began to count on victory; yet schoolmasters, musicians, tradesmen, and even ecclesiastics, were not enough for them. They wanted nobler victims, and these were to be looked for in London. More himself, accompanied by the lieutenant of the Tower, searched many of the suspected houses. Few citizens were more esteemed in London than John Petit, the same who, in the house of commons, had so nobly resisted, the king’s demand about the loan. Petit was learned in history and in Latin literature: he spoke with eloquence, and for twenty years had worthily represented the city. Whenever any important affair was debated in parliament, the king, feeling uneasy, was in the habit of inquiring which side he took? This political independence, very rare in Henry’s parliaments, gave umbrage to the prince and his ministers. Petit, the friend of Bilney, Fryth, and Tyndale, had been one of the first in England to taste the sweetness of God’s word, and had immediately manifested that beautiful characteristic by which the gospel-faith makes itself known, namely, charity. He abounded in almsgiving, supported a great number of poor preachers of the gospel in his own country and beyond the seas; and whenever he noted down these generous aids in his books, he wrote merely the words: “Lent unto Christ.”2 He, moreover, forbade his testamentary executors to call in these debts.

Petit was tranquilly enjoying the sweets of domestic life in his modest home in the society of his wife and two daughters, Blanche and Audrey, when he received an unexpected visit. One day, as he was praying in his closet, a loud knock was heard at the street-door. His wife ran to open it, but seeing Lord-chancellor More, she returned hurriedly to her husband, and told him that the lord-chancellor wanted him. More, who followed her, entered the closet, and with inquisitive eye ran over the shelves of the library, but could find nothing suspicious. Presently he made as if he would retire, and Petit accompanied him. The chancellor stopped at the door and said to him: “You assert that you have none of these new books?”—“You have seen my library,” replied Petit.—“I am informed, however,” replied More, “that you not only read them, but pay for the printing.” And then he added in a severe tone: “Follow the lieutenant.” In spite of the tears of his wife and daughters this independent member of parliament was conducted to the Tower, and shut up in a damp dungeon where he had nothing but straw to lie upon. His wife went thither each day in vain, asking, with tears, permission to see him, or at least to send him a bed. The jailors refused her every thing; and it was only when Petit fell dangerously ill that the latter favour was granted him. This took place in 1530, sentence was passed in 1531; we shall see Petit again in his prison. He left it, indeed, but only to sink under the cruel treatment he had there experienced.

Thus were the witnesses to the truth struck down by the priests, by Sir Thomas More, and by Henry VIII. A new victim was to be the cause of many tears. A meek and humble man, one dear to all the friends of the gospel, and whom we may regard as the spiritual father of the Reformation in England was on the point of mounting the burning pile raised by his per secutors. Some time prior to Petit’s appearance before his judges, which took place in 1531, an unusual noise was heard in the cell above him; it was Thomas Bilney whom they were conducting to the Tower. We left him at the end of 1528, after his fall. Bilney had returned to Cambridge tormented by remorse; his friends

in vain crowded round him by night and by day; they could not console him, and even the Scriptures seemed to utter no voice but that of condemnation. Fear made him tremble constantly, and he could scarcely eat or drink. At length a heavenly and unexpected light dawned in the heart of the fallen disciple; a witness whom he had vexed—the Holy Spirit—spoke once more in his heart. Bilney fell at the foot of the cross, shedding floods of tears, and there he found peace. But the more God comforted him, the greater seemed his crime. One only thought possessed him, that of giving his life for the truth. He had shrunk from before the burning pile; its flames must now consume him. Neither the weakness of his body, which his long anguish had much increased, nor the cruelty of his enemies, nor his natural timidity, nothing could stop him: he strove for the martyr's crown. At ten o'clock one night, when every person in Trinity Hall was retiring to rest, Bilney called his friends round him, reminded them of his fall, and added: "You shall see me no more.… Do not stay me: my decision is formed, and I shall carry it out. My face is set to go to Jerusalem."3 Bilney repeated the words used by the evangelist, when he describes Jesus going up to the city where he was to be put to death. Having shaken hands with his brethren, this venerable man, the foremost of the evangelists of England in order of time, left Cambridge under cover of the night, and proceeded to Norfolk, to confirm in the faith those who had believed, and to invite the ignorant multitude to the Saviour. We shall not follow him in this last and solemn ministry; these facts and others of the same kind belong to a later date. Before the year 1531 closed in, Bilney, Bainham, Bayfield, Tewkesbury, and many others, struck by Henry's sword, sealed by their blood the testimony rendered by them to the perfect grace of Christ.

CHAPTER XVI

Wolsey's Terror—Impeachment by the Peers—Cromwell saves him—The Cardinal's Illness—Ambition returns to him—His Practices in Yorkshire—He is arrested by Northumberland—His departure—Arrival of the Constable of the Tower—Wolsey at Leicester Abbey—Persecuting Language—He dies—Three Movements: Supremacy, Scripture, and Faith.

While many pious Christians were languishing in the prisons of England, the great antagonist of the Reformation was disappearing from the stage of this world. We must return to Wolsey, who was still detained at Esher. The cardinal, fallen from the summit of honours, was seized with those panic-terrors usually felt after their disgrace by those who have made a whole nation tremble, and he fancied an assassin lay hid behind every door. "This very night," he wrote to Cromwell on one occasion, "I was as one that should have died. If I might, I would not fail to come on foot to you, rather than this my speaking with you shall be put over and delayed. If the displeasure of my Lady Anne be somewhat assuaged, as I pray God the same may be, then I pray you exert all possible means of attaining her favour." In consequence of this, Cromwell hastened down to Esher two or three days after taking his seat in parliament, and Wolsey, all trembling, recounted his fears to him. "Norfolk, Suffolk, and Lady Anne perhaps, desire my death. Did not Thomas a Becket, an archbishop like me, stain the altar with his blood?" … Cromwell reassured him, and, moved by the old man's fears, asked and obtained of Henry an order of protection.

Wolsey's enemies most certainly desired his death; but it was from the justice of the three estates, and not by the assassin's dagger that they sought it. The House of Peers authorized Sir Thomas More, the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, and fourteen other lords, to impeach the cardinal-legate of high treason. They forgot nothing: that haughty formula, Ego et rex meus, I and my king, which

Wolsey had often employed; his infringement of the laws of the kingdom; his monopolizing the church revenues; the crying injustice of which he had been guilty,—as, for instance, in the case of Sir John Stanley, who was sent to prison until he gave up a lease to the son of a woman who had borne the cardinal two children; many families ruined to satisfy his avarice; treaties concluded with foreign powers without the king's order; his exactions, which had impoverished England; and the foul diseases and infectious breath with which he had polluted his majesty's presence. These were some of the fourty-four grievances presented by the peers to the king, and which Henry sent down to the lower house for their consideration.

It was at first thought that nobody in the commons would undertake Wolsey's defence, and it was generally expected that he would be given up to the vengeance of the law (as the bill of impeachment prayed), or, in other words, to the axe of the executioner. But one man stood up, and prepared, though alone, to defend the cardinal: this was Cromwell. The members asked of each other who the unknown man was; he soon made himself known. His knowledge of facts, his familiarity with the laws, the force of his eloquence, and the moderation of his language, surprised the house. Wolsey's adversaries had hardly aimed a blow before the defender had already parried it. If any charge was brought forward to which he could not reply, he proposed an adjournment until the next day, departed for Esher at the end of the sitting, conferred with Wolsey, returned during the night, and next morning reappeared in the commons with fresh arms. Cromwell carried the house with him; the impeachment failed, and Wolsey's defender took his station among the statesmen of England. This victory, one of the greatest triumphs of parliamentary eloquence at that period, satisfied both the ambition and the gratitude of Cromwell. He was now firmly fixed in the king's favour, esteemed by the commons, and admired by the people: circumstances which furnished him with the means of bringing to a favourable conclusion the emancipation of the church of England. The ministry, composed of Wolsey's enemies, was annoyed at the decision of the lower house, and appointed a commission to examine into the matter. When the cardinal was informed of this he fell into new terrors. He lost all appetite and desire of sleep, and a fever attacked him at Christmas. "The cardinal will be dead in four days," said his physician to Henry, "if he receives no comfort shortly from you and Lady Anne."—"I would not loose him for twenty thousand pounds," exclaimed the king. He desired to preserve Wolsey in case his old minister's consummate ability should become necessary, which was by no means unlikely. Henry gave the doctor his portrait in a ring, and Anne, at the king's desire, added the tablet of gold that hung at her girdle. The delighted cardinal placed the presents on his bed, and as he gazed on them he felt his strength return. He was removed from his miserable dwelling at Esher to the royal palace at Richmond; and before long he was able to go into the park, where every night he read his breviary.

Ambition and hope returned with life. If the king desired to destroy the papal power in England, could not the proud cardinal preserve it. Might not Thomas Wolsey do under Henry VIII what Thomas a Becket had done under Henry II. His see of York, the ignorance of the priests, the superstition of the people, the discontent of the great,—all would be of service to him; and indeed, six years later, 40,000 men were under arms in a moment in Yorkshire to defend the cause of Rome. Wolsey, strong in England by the support of the nation, (such at least was his opinion,) aided without by the pope and the continental powers, might give the law to Henry and crush the Reformation. The king having permitted him to go to York, Wolsey prayed for an increase to his

archiepiscopal revenues, which amounted, however, to four thousand pounds sterling. Henry granted him a thousand marks, and the cardinal, shortly before Easter 1530, departed with a train of 160 persons. He thought it was the beginning of his triumph.

Wolsey took up his abode at Cawood Castle, Yorkshire, one of his archiepiscopal residences, and strove to win the affections of the people. This prelate, once “the haughtiest of men,” says George Cavendish, the man who knew him and served him best, became quite a pattern of affability. He kept an open table, distributed bounteous alms at his gate, said mass in the village-churches, went and dined with the neighbouring gentry, gave splendid entertainments, and wrote to several princes imploring their help. We are assured that he even requested the pope to excommunicate Henry VIII. All being thus prepared, he thought he might make his solemn entry into York, preparatory to his enthronization, which was fixed for Monday the 5th of November.

Every movement of his was known at court; every action was canvassed, and its importance exaggerated. “We thought we had brought him down,” some said, “and here he is rising up again.” Henry himself was alarmed. “The cardinal, by his detestable intrigues,” he said, “is conspiring against my crown, and plotting both at home and abroad;” the king even added, where and how. Wolsey’s destruction was resolved upon. The morning after All Saints day (Friday, 2nd November), the earl of Northumberland, attended by a numerous escort, arrived at Cawood, where the cardinal was still residing. He was the same Percy whose affection for Anne Boleyn had been thwarted by Wolsey; and there may have been design in Henry’s choice. The cardinal eagerly moved forward to meet this unexpected guest, and, impatient to know the object of his mission, took him into his bedchamber, under the pretence of changing his travelling dress. They both remained some time standing at a window without uttering a word; the earl looked confused and agitated, whilst Wolsey endeavoured to repress his emotion. But at last, with a strong effort, Northumberland laid his hand upon the arm of his former master, and with a low voice said: “My lord, I arrest you for high treason.” The cardinal remained speechless, as if stunned. He was kept a prisoner in his room.

It is doubtful whether Wosley was guilty of the crime with which he was charged. We may believe that he entertained the idea of some day bringing about the triumph of the popedom in England, even should it cause Henry’s ruin; but perhaps this was all. But, an idea is not a conspiracy, although it may rapidly expand into one.

More than three thousand persons (attracted, not by hatred, like the Londoners, when Wolsey departed from Whitehall, but by enthusiasm) collected the next day before the castle to salute the cardinal. “God save your grace!” they shouted on every side, and a numerous crowd escorted him at night; some carried torches in their hands, and all made the air re-echo with their cries. The unhappy prelate was conducted to Sheffield Park, the residence of the earl of Shrewsbury. Some days after his arrival, the faithful Cavendish ran to him, exclaiming: “Good news, my lord! Sir William Kingston and twenty-four of the guard are come to escort you to his majesty.”—“Kingston!” exclaimed the cardinal, turning pale, “Kingston!” and then, slapping his hand on his thigh, he heaved a deep sigh. This news had crushed his mind. One day a fortune-teller, whom he consulted, had told him: “you shall have your end at Kingston; and from that time the cardinal had carefully avoided the town of Kingston-on-Thames. But now he thought he understood the prophecy…. Kingston, constable of the Tower, was about to cause his death. They left Sheffield

Park; but fright had given Wolsey his death-blow. Several times he was near falling from his mule, and on the third day, when they reached Leicester Abbey, he said as he entered: “Father abbot, I am come hither to leave my bones among you;” and immediately took to his bed. This was on Saturday the 26th of November. On Monday morning, tormented by gloomy forebodings, Wolsey asked what was the time of day. “Past eight o’clock, replied Cavendish.—“That cannot be,” said the cardinal, “eight o’clock.… No! for by eight o’clock you shall lose your master.” At six on Tuesday, Kingston having come to inquire about his health, Wolsey said to him: “I shall not live long.”—“Be of good cheer,” rejoined the governor of the Tower.—“Alas, Master Kingston,” exclaimed the cardinal, “if I had served God as diligently as I have served the king, he would not have given me over in my gray hairs!” and then he added with downcast head: “This is my just reward.” What a judgment upon his own life! On the very threshold of eternity (for he had but a few minutes more to live) the cardinal summoned up all his hatred against the Reformation, and made a last effort. The persecution was too slow to please him: “Master Kingston,” he said, “attend to my last request: tell the king that I conjure him in God’s name to destroy this new pernicious sect of Lutherans.” And then, with astonishing presence of mind in this his last hour, Wolsey described the misfortunes which the Hussites had, in his opinion, brought upon Bohemia; and then, coming to England, he recalled the times of Wickliffe and Sir John Oldeastle. He grew animated; his dying eyes yet shot forth fiery glances. He trembled lest Henry VIII, unfaithful to the pope, should hold out his hand to the reformers. “Master Kingston,” said he, in conclusion, “the king should know that if he tolerates heresy, God will take away his power, and we shall then have mischief upon mischief … barrenness, scarcity, and disorder to the utter destruction of this realm.”

Wolsey was exhausted by the effort. After a momentary silence, he resumed with a dying voice: “Master Kingston, farewell! My time draweth on fast. Forget not what I have said and charged you withal; for when I am dead ye shall peradventure understand my words better.” It was with difficulty he uttered these words; his tongue began to falter, his eyes became fixed, his sight failed him; he breathed his last. At the same minute the clock struck eight, and the attendants standing round his bed looked at each other in affright. It was the 29th of November 1530.

Thus died the man once so much feared. Power had been his idol: to obtain it in the state, he had sacrificed the liberties of England; and to win it or to preserve it in the church, he had fought against the Reformation. If he encouraged the nobility in the luxuries and pleasures of life, it was only to render them more supple and more servile; if he supported learning, it was only that he might have a clergy fitted to keep the laity in their leading-strings. Ambitious, intriguing, and impure of life, he had been as zealous for the sacerdotal prerogative as the austere Becket; and by a singular contrast, a shirt of hair was found on the body of this voluptuous man. The aim of his life had been to raise the papal power higher than it had ever been before, at the very moment when the Reformation was attempting to bring it down; and to take his seat on the pontifical throne with more than the authority of a Hildebrand. Wolsey, as pope, would have been the man of his age; and in the political world he would have done for the Roman primacy what the celebrated Loyola did for it soon after by his fanaticism. Obliged to renounce this idea, worthy only of the middle ages, he had desired at least to save the popedom in his own country; but here again he had failed. The pilot who had stood in England at the helm of the Romish church was thrown overboard, and the ship, left to itself, was about to founder. And yet, even in death, he did not lose his courage. The last throbs of his heart had called for victims; the last words from his failing lips,

the last message to his master, his last testament had been … Persecution. This testament was to be only too faithfully executed. The epoch of the fall and death of Cardinal Wolsey, which is the point at which we halt, was not only important, because it ended the life of a man who had presided over the destinies of England, and had endeavoured to grasp the sceptre of the world, but it is of especial consequence, because then three movements were accomplished, from which the great transformation of the sixteenth century was to proceed. Each of these movements has its characteristic result. The first is represented by Cromwell. The supremacy of the pope in England was about to be wrested from him, as it was in all the reformed churches. But a step further was taken in England. That supremacy was transferred to the person of the king. Wolsey had exercised as vicar-general a power till then unknown. Unable to become pope at the Vatican, he had made himself a pope at Whitehall. Henry had permitted his minister to raise his hierarchical throne by the side of his own. But he had soon discovered that there ought not to be two thrones in England, or at least not two kings. He had dethroned Wolsey; and resolutely seating himself in his place, he was about to assume at Whitehall that tiara which the ambitious prelate had prepared for himself. Some persons, when they saw this, exclaimed, that if the papal supremacy were abolished, that of the word of God ought alone to be substituted. And, indeed, the true Reformation is not to be found in this first movement. The second, which was essential to the renewal of the church, was represented by Cranmer, and consisted particularly in reestablishing the authority of holy Scripture. Wolsey did not fall alone, nor did Cranmer rise alone: each of these two men carried with him the systems he represented. The fabric of Roman traditions fell with the first; the foundations of the holy Scriptures were laid by the second; and yet, while we render all justice to the sincerity of the Cambridge doctor, we must not be blind to his weaknesses, his subserviency, and even a certain degree of negligence, which, by allowing parasitical plants to shoot up here and there, permitted them to spread over the living rock of God's word. Not in this movement, then, was found the Reformation with all its energy and all its purity. The third movement was represented by the martyrs. When the church takes a new life, it is fertilized by the blood of its confessors; and being continually exposed to corruption, it has constant need to be purified by suffering. Not in the palaces of Henry VIII, nor even in the councils where the question of throwing off the papal supremacy was discussed, must we look for the true children of the Reformation; we must go to the Tower of London, to the Lollards' tower of St. Paul's and of Lambeth, to the other prisons of England, to the bishops' cellars, to the fetters, the stocks, the rack, and the stake. The godly men who invoked the sole intercession of Christ Jesus, the only head of his people, who wandered up and down, deprived of every thing, gagged, scoffed at, scourged, and tortured, and who, in the midst of all their tribulations, preserved their Christian patience, and turned, like their Master, the eyes of their faith towards Jerusalem:—these were the disciples of the Reformation in England. The purest church is the church under the cross. The father of this church in England was not Henry VIII. When the king cast into prison or gave to the flames men like Hitton, Bennet, Patmore, Petit, Bayfield, Bilney, and so many others, he was not "the father of the Reformation of England," as some have so falsely asserted; he was its executioner. The church of England was foredoomed to be in its renovation a church of martyrs; and the true father of this church is our Father which is in heaven.

S. The Emergence Of Christianity

The Emergence of Christianity by J. H. Merle d'Aubigné * The enfeebled world was tottering on its foundations when Christianity appeared. The national religions which had satisfied the parents, no longer proved sufficient for their children. The new generations could not repose contented within the ancient forms. The gods of every nation, when transported to Rome, there lost their oracles, as the nations themselves had there lost their liberty. Brought face to face in the Capitol, they had destroyed each other, and their divinity had vanished. A great void was occasioned in the religion of the world. A kind of deism, destitute alike of spirit and of life, floated for a time above the abyss in which the vigorous superstitions of antiquity had been engulfed. But like all negative creeds, it had no power to reconstruct. National prepossessions disappeared with the fall of the national gods. The various kingdoms melted one into the other. In Europe, Asia, and Africa , there was but one vast empire, and the human race began to feel its universality and unity.

Then the Word was made flesh.

God appeared among men, and as man, to save that which was lost. In Jesus of Nazareth dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. This is the greatest event in the annals of the world. Former ages had prepared the way for it: the latter ages flow from it. It is their centre and their bond of unity.

Henceforward the popular superstitions had no meaning, and the slight fragments preserved from the general wreck of incredulity vanished before the majestic orb of eternal truth. The Son of Man lived thirty-three years on earth, healing the sick, converting sinners, not having where to lay his head, and displaying in the midst of this humiliation such greatness and holiness, such power and divinity, as the world had never witnessed before. He suffered and died – he rose again and ascended into heaven. His disciples, beginning at Jerusalem, travelled over the Roman empire and the world, every where proclaiming their Master as the author of everlasting life. From the midst of a people who despised all nations, came forth a mercy that invited and embraced all men. A great number of Asiatics, of Greeks, and of Romans, hitherto dragged by their priests to the feet of idols, believed the Word. It suddenly enlightened the whole earth, like a beam of the sun.1 A breath of life began to move over this wide field of death. A new people, a holy nation, was formed upon the earth; and the astonished world beheld in the disciples of the Galilean a purity and self-denial, a charity and heroism, of which it had retained no idea.

Two principles especially distinguished the new religion from all the human systems that fled before it. One had reference to the ministers of its worship, the other to its doctrines. The ministers of paganism were almost gods of these human religions. The priests of Egypt, Gaul, Dacia, Germany, Britain, and India, led the people, so long at least as their eyes were not opened. Jesus Christ, indeed, established a ministry, but he did not found a separate priesthood: he dethroned these living idols of the world, destroyed an overbearing hierarchy, took away from man what he had taken from God, and re-established the soul in immediate connexion with the divine fountain of truth, by proclaiming himself sole Master and sole Mediator. "One is your master, even Christ;

and all ye are brethren."2 As regards doctrine, human systems had taught that salvation is of man: the religions of the earth had devised an earthly salvation. They had told men that heaven would be given to them as a reward: they had fixed its price; and what a price! The religion of God taught that salvation comes from him alone; that it is a gift from heaven; that it emanates from an amnesty – from the grace of the Sovereign Ruler: "God hath given to us eternal life."3

Undoubtedly Christianity cannot be summed up in these two points; but they seem to govern the subject, as far as history is concerned. And as it is impossible for me to trace the opposition between truth and error in all its features, I have been compelled to select the most prominent.

Endnotes:

1 Oia tiV hliou bolh. Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. ii. 3.

2 Matthew 23:8.

3 1 John 5:11.

* Extract from "History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century" by J. H. Merle d'Aubigné, 1846. French edition 1835. Published by Baker Book House (USA), reprinted from the edition issued in London in 1846. Vol 1, pp 7-8.

* About the author: J. H. Merle d'Aubigné (1794-1872) was a famous Christian historian and one of God's great gifts to the Church. A preacher and scholar of Presbyterian persuasion, he was born in Geneva, the son of Protestant refugees from France. As an unconverted student of the ministry he met the Scottish minister Robert Haldane in Geneva, who expounded and preached to Merle d'Aubigné and his fellow students from the Epistle to the Romans, and the whole group of students at length all came to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

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