Joseph Stump

The Life of Philip Melanchthon

LutheranLibrary.org ● 145

Life of Philip Melanchthon

Also Available from LutheranLibrary.org

- *The Life and Letters of William Passavant* by George Gerberding
- *The Life and Teachings of Theodore E. Schmauk* by George W. Sandt
- *Life Reminiscences of an Old Lutheran Minister* by John Gottlieb Morris

◊ Philip Melanchthon

About The Lutheran Library

The Lutheran Library is a non-profit publisher of good Christian books. All are available in a variety of formats for use by anyone for free or at very little cost. There are never any licensing fees.

We are Bible believing Christians who subscribe wholeheartedly to the Augsburg Confession as an accurate summary of Scripture, the chief article of which is Justification by Faith. Our purpose is to make available solid and encouraging material to strengthen believers in Christ.

Prayers are requested for the next generation, that the Lord will plant in them a love of the truth, such that the hard-learned lessons of the past will not be forgotten.

Please let others know of these books and this completely volunteer endeavor. May God bless you and keep you, help you, defend you, and lead you to know the depths of His kindness and love.

Life of Philip Melanchthon

By Rev. Joseph Stump, A.M.

Pastor of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Philipsburg, N.J.

With An Introduction By

Rev. G. F. Spieker, D.D.

Professor of Church History in the Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia

Reading, PA And New York
PILGER PUBLISHING HOUSE

Contents

List of Illustrations

◊ Schmalcald.
◊ Veit Dietrich.
◊ Henry VIII. of England.
◊ Melanchthon’s Illness.
◊ Cardinal Granvella.
◊ Fr. Myconius.
◊ Death of Luther.
◊ Battle of Mühlberg.
◊ Agricola.
◊ John Bugenhagen.
◊ Nuremberg at the close of the 15th Century.
◊ Elector Maurice of Saxony
◊ Dr. Joachim Mörlin.
◊ Emperor Ferdinand I.
◊ Melanchthon’s Tomb.

Preface

THE LIFE of so distinguished a servant of God as Melanchthon deserves to be better known to the general reader than it actually is. In the great Reformation of the sixteenth century, his work stands second to that of Luther alone. Yet his life is comparatively unknown to many intelligent Christians.

In view of the approaching four hundredth anniversary of Melanchthon's birth[1], this humble tribute to his memory is respectfully offered to the public. It is the design of these pages, by the presentation of the known facts in Melanchthon's career and of suitable extracts from his writings, to give a truthful picture of his life, character and work. In the preparation of this book, the author has made use of a number of biographies of Melanchthon by German authors, and of such other sources of information as were accessible to him. His aim has been to prepare a brief but sufficiently comprehensive life of Melanchthon, in such a form as would interest the people. To what extent be has succeeded in this undertaking, others must judge.

That these pages may, in some measure at least, accomplish their purpose, and make the Christian reader more familiar with the work and merit of the man of God whom they endeavor to portray, is the sincere wish of

THE AUTHOR.

---

1. Philip Melanchthon was born on February 16, 1497. In this Preface, Dr. Stump is referring to February 16, 1897.↩

Introduction

THE APPROACHING quarto-centennial of the birth of Philip Melanchthon will not fail to attract attention to the career of this remarkable man. Owing to the dearth of popular biographies of Melanchthon in the English language, Dr. Krotel's translation of Ledderhose being out of print, the author of the following sketch herewith presents to those who may take an interest in the subject a clear, succinct account of the principal events in Melanchthon's checkered course. He tells the story in a straightforward way, without circumlocution or attempt at rhetorical flourish. Full justice is done to the eminent services of the gifted Reformer, with an evident desire to present his conduct in the best possible light. While the tone of the presentation is of an apologetic nature in regard to incidents along the line which invite criticism of Melanchthon's conduct, discussion of those points is not evaded, and there is no attempt to cover up the weakness of the great scholar. Of course, it was out of the question in a book of limited compass to enter into a very detailed account of every individual transaction in which Melanchthon shared. At the same time, we feel certain that no important element has been entirely overlooked.

Aside from Melanchthon's part in the history of the Reformation period, the most important epoch of Christianity since the time of the Apostles, he claims consideration on the side of classical education. His influence as an educator, which won for him the well-known title of "Preceptor Germaniae," was not confined to his native land, as may be judged from the remark of Hallam, in his "History of Literature," that he became "far above all others, the founder of general learning throughout Europe." No one appreciated the services of Melanchthon in the cause of the Reformation more than Dr. Martin Luther, and it is to Luther's credit, that he treated Melanchthon with uniform consideration. One would fain say the same of Melanchthon's attitude toward Luther.

Melanchthon's weakness was overruled for good. His shoulders were not equal to some of the burdens imposed upon them. His good, sound work

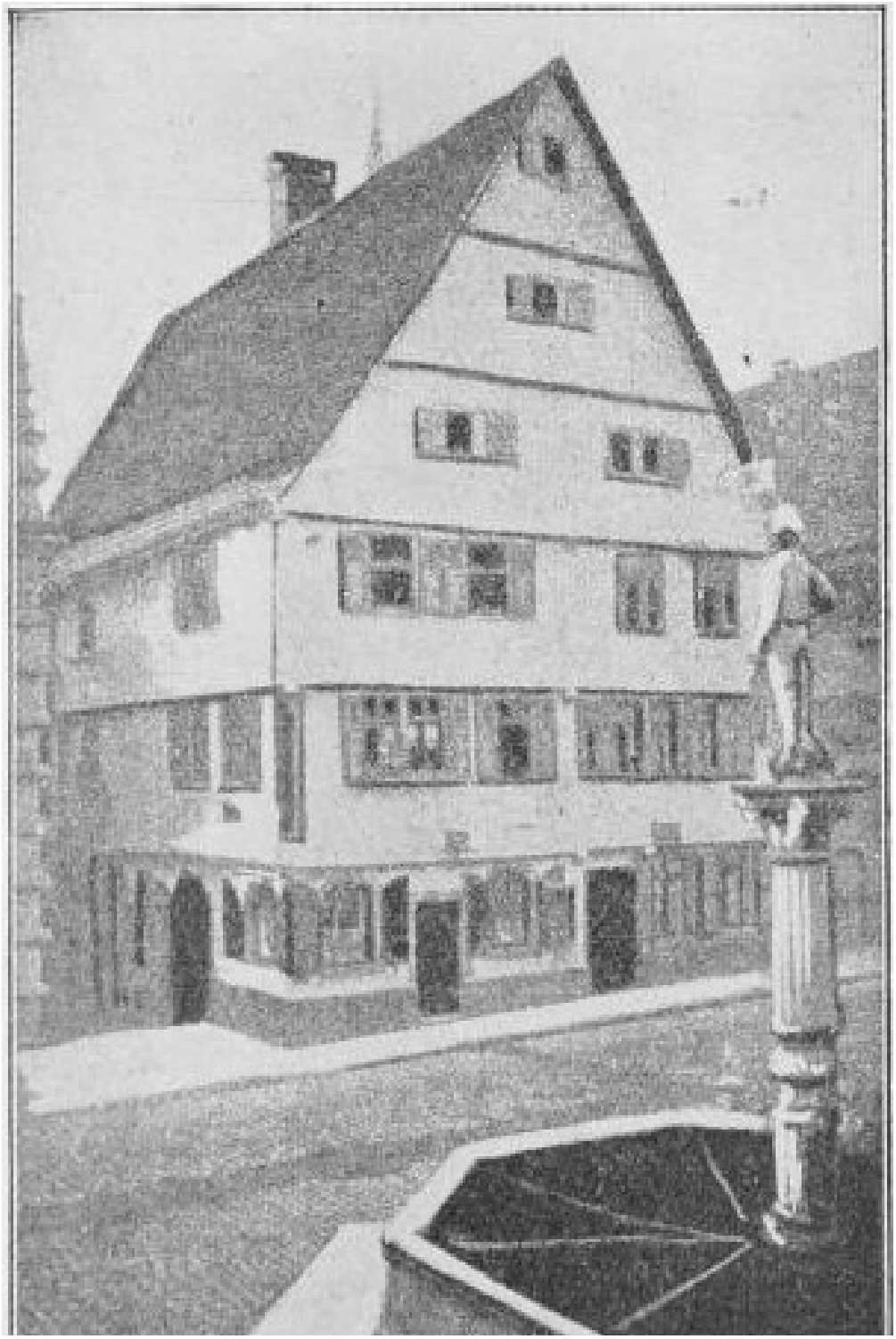
has survived. It is to be hoped that these pages will aid in promoting the study not only of the Life of Melanchthon, but of the whole period in which the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ was restored to its normal and proper position in the Church.

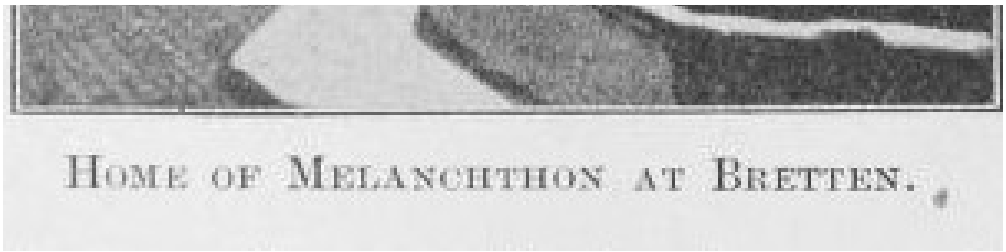
G. F. SPIEKER.

1. His Birth And Parentage

EAST from the city of Carlsruhe, in the Grand-duchy of Baden, Germany, lies the town of Bretten. In the times of the Reformation it belonged to the Palatinate of the Rhine, and boasted a population of three hundred families. At the present day its inhabitants hardly number more than four thousand souls. But it enjoys the enviable distinction of being the birth-place of Philip Melanchthon.

Near the end of the fifteenth century there dwelt in this humble town a young married couple by the name of George and Barbara Schwarzerd. They were in comfortable circumstances and stood high in the regard of the community. Of these parents, Philip Melanchthon was born on February 16, 1497. His family name therefore was Schwarzerd, which means “Black Earth.” It was afterwards changed, in conformity with the custom which prevailed among the learned men of the day, into its Greek equivalent, Melanchthon.





◊ Home of Melanchthon at Bretten.

Philip's father was armorer to the Elector Philip of the Palatinate, and named his first-born son in honor of that ruler. He enjoyed a wide reputation for skill in his profession. He was entrusted with the manufacture of armor for many princes and even for the Emperor Maximilian. His Imperial Majesty was so well pleased with the perfect finish of one suit of this armor, that he bestowed upon its maker a coat of arms which was emblematic of his profession, and consisted of a lion sitting upon a shield and helmet, and holding a pair of tongs and a hammer in his paws.

George Schwarzerd was known as a just and pious man. No priest observed his hours of devotion more scrupulously. He arose every midnight and repeated his prayers. He was free from gross sins and vices, and possessed the same gentle, amiable and peace-loving disposition which so largely characterized his illustrious son. He was not "greedy of filthy lucre." It is recorded of him, that he frequently charged less for his work than his customers would willingly have paid. He shared, however, the superstitions of his age; and when his son Philip was born, he consulted an astrologer to learn his child's destiny. He was told that Philip would at some time in his life be shipwrecked on the Baltic Sea.

Philip's mother was the daughter of John Reuter, the Mayor of Bretten. She was pious, industrious, frugal, domestic in her habits, and an excellent housewife. One of the proverbs which she was fond of quoting and which indicates her ideas of housekeeping ran thus: [1]

"Whoever spends more
Than this plow can restore,
Will come to grief;
Perhaps, hang as a thief."

But while she was a careful housewife and would by no means tolerate extravagance, she was kind to the sick and the poor, and never turned any

one away hungry from her door. Her favorite reply to those who found fault with her extreme liberality was, “Alms-giving does not impoverish.”

Besides Philip, this excellent couple was blessed with four other children; namely, Anna, born in 1499; George, in 1501; Margaret, in 1506; and Barbara, in 1508.

---

1. Wer mehr will verzehren, Denn sein Pflug kann ernachren, Der wird zuletzt verderben, Und vielleicht am Galgen sterben."↩

2. His Childhood. 1504-1509.

LITTLE PHILIP received his first instruction in the town school of Bretten. When he was only seven years of age, a contagious disease broke out in the community, and he was taken out of the school. His education, together with that of his brother George and his mother's youngest brother, was thereupon entrusted to a private tutor, John Unger, whom Reuter engaged by the advice of the learned John Reuchlin, Philip's great uncle. Unger was thorough in his instructions, and understood how to win the affections and respect of his pupils. Melanchthon afterward spoke very highly of him, and declared: "He made me a grammarian. He was an excellent man; he loved me as a son and I loved him as a father; and we shall soon, I hope, meet in heaven."

Philip possessed a remarkable memory. He not only learned easily, but possessed the far rarer power of retaining all that he had learned. He was gentle and amiable in his intercourse with his companions, so that his exceptional gifts excited not so much their envy, as their admiration. The other powers of his mind were as extraordinary as his memory. When educated foreigners came to town, as they frequently did, his grandfather took great delight in engaging him in disputes with them. Philip was nearly always the victor in these contests. He had inherited from his mother a lively temperament, and was at times easily irritated, but he was also quickly appeased. He early learned to control his temper, and sometimes applied to himself the adage: [1]

> "He strikes and thrusts; but when he's done,
> He has not injured any one."

He was afflicted with the habit of stammering, but took pains to overcome it, and in a great measure succeeded.

A double bereavement came to him early in life. His grandfather. Reuter, died October 16, 1507; and eleven days later his father also died. In a

campaign against the Bavarians, in which he had taken part with the Elector in 1504, George Schwarzerd had drunk water from a poisoned well. From that time on, this health had steadily declined. When his end approached, he called his children to his bedside and admonished them in these words: “I am dying; and I desire that you remain one with the Christian Church, that you retain the knowledge of God and lose not your eternal salvation. I have seen great changes in the world, but there are greater ones in store. I pray God to protect and guide you, and I admonish you to fear God and lead a Christian life. Obey Him and hold fast to that which is good.”

JOHN REUCHLIN.

◊ John Reuchlin.

Philip's grandmother Reuter, a sister of the famous Reuchlin, now removed to the neighboring city of Pforzheim, her native place, and took him as well as his brother George with her, in order to enter them in the Latin school of that city. George Simler, the principal of this school, was the object of considerable curiosity and admiration because he was versed in Greek and Hebrew as well as in Latin. These were still rare acquirements, because the revival of learning had just begun. He taught Greek privately to his ablest pupils only. Of these Philip was one; and here was laid the foundation of his subsequent ripe Greek scholarship. John Reuchlin took a great interest in his youthful relative, and presented him with a Greek Grammar and a Greek-Latin lexicon of his own authorship. In order to show his appreciation of Reuchlin's kindness, Philip wrote a Latin comedy, and with the aid of some of his schoolmates, performed it in Reuchlin's presence. It was on this occasion, that his learned relative changed Philip's surname into its Greek equivalent, Melanchthon. By Reuchlin's advice, Philip devoted himself assiduously to the study of the classics, and thus fitted himself for the career in which he subsequently earned the title, Praeceptor Germaniae (Teacher of Germany).

---

1. *Er haut und sticht, Und that doch niemand nichts.*↩

3. At The University. 1509-1516.

MELANCHTHON spent about two years in the school at Pforzheim. He was then, although only thirteen years of age, far enough advanced to enter the University of Heidelberg. He removed to that city and took up his residence in the house of Professor Pallas Spangel. Among his fellow students were Bucer and Brenz, both of whom afterwards distinguished themselves in the work of the Reformation.

While attending this university, Melanchthon continued to devote himself to the study of the classics. But he had to do so privately, because the public instructions dealt chiefly with the foolish speculations and useless subtleties of the scholastics. He himself, in later years, wrote concerning these student-days:

> "The youth were taught scarcely anything but the empty twaddle of the schoolmen and some elements of natural philosophy. As I already understood how to make verses, I began, with a child's craving for knowledge, to read the (newer) poets and to study, in connection with them, the histories and fables of which they treated. This practice gradually led me to the study of the ancient classics."

His attainments in the Greek language soon procured for him great respect both from students and professors. One of the latter, who himself was ignorant of Greek, one day came across a knotty question whose solution required a knowledge of that language. In his dilemma, he asked, "Where will I find a Grecian?" In reply the whole class cried out, "Melanchthon! Melanchthon!" In spite of his extreme youthfulness, he was entrusted with the instruction of the two young sons of the Count of Loewenstein. The preparations which he made for their lessons, he carefully noted down, and these notes formed the basis of the Greek grammar which he subsequently published.

On the tenth day of June, 1511, he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Soon afterwards he applied for the Master's degree, hut was refused,

because, although he possessed the required qualifications, "he was still too young and of too childish an appearance." He was greatly pained by this refusal. For this reason, together with the additional consideration, that the climate of the neighborhood did not agree with him, he wended his way, in the fall of 1512, to the University of Tuebingen. A somewhat freer and more scientific spirit prevailed here, and gave a wider scope to his talents.

Melanchthon continued here the diligent study of the classics. He also applied himself to Hebrew. Indeed, his craving for knowledge was so intense and his facility in learning so great, that he took up many other branches of study. He applied himself to philosophy and jurisprudence under his former teacher, Simler, who was now professor at this university. He paid attention also to astronomy and mathematics, and even to medicine. In 1514 he finished his philosophical course and obtained the Master's degree. He was then employed as private tutor at the university.

About this time, he began to turn his attention to theology. But in this, as in most of his other studies, he was largely dependent on his own private efforts. The public lectures on theology were occupied almost solely with the traditions of the church and the empty subtleties of the schoolmen. The Bible was not taught at all. Melanchthon, however, privately applied himself to the study of the Scriptures and the ancient Church Fathers. He carried a copy of the Bible with him constantly. The studies which he thus pursued were of great advantage to himself and Luther in after years, when they engaged in conflict with the enemies of the Reformation. He carried his Bible with him to church, and ran some risk of being regarded as a heretic because he spent his time in reading the Scriptures, instead of paying attention to the vain ceremonies and empty babblings which occupied the minds of the others.

During his residence at Tuebingen, he was engaged also in literary labors. He corrected proof sheets for the publisher, Thomas Anshelm, published an edition of Terence and a Greek grammar, and so remodeled and improved the *Chronicon, or Universal History*, by John Nauclerus, who had formerly been rector of the university, that it soon became one of the most useful and widely-read historical works of the age. He took an active part, also, with Reuchlin, in contending against the Dominican monks of Cologne, who, in their blind fanaticism, insisted on the burning of all Jewish books and documents.

Melanchthon remained at Tuebingen live years. By this time, although he was scarcely twenty-one years of age and appeared to be still younger than he really was, he had acquired a wide reputation by his scholarly attainments. In the year 1516 the learned Erasmus of Rotterdam publicly said of him: “What promise does not this Philip Melanchthon, a youth, as yet, and almost a boy, give of himself! He is equally at home in both languages [Greek and Latin]. What acuteness of invention, what purity of diction, what a memory for recondite matters, what extensive reading, what delicate grace and noble talents he displays!”

And in a letter to Oecolampadius he wrote: “Of Melanchthon I entertain the most distinguished and splendid expectations. God grant that this young man may long survive us. He will entirely eclipse Erasmus.”

4. The Call And Removal To Wittenberg. 1518.

A WIDER FIELD of usefulness, more suited to a mind of such extensive learning and comprehensive grasp, was now opened to Melanchthon. He had already been invited to the University of Ingolstadt. But by Reuchlin's advice he had declined to go. The bigoted spirit which prevailed there would have imposed an intolerable restraint upon the progressive spirit of Melanchthon. A call now came to him, however, from a field where he would be untrammeled by the scholasticism of the Middle Ages. It was a call to a professorship in the new University of Wittenberg.

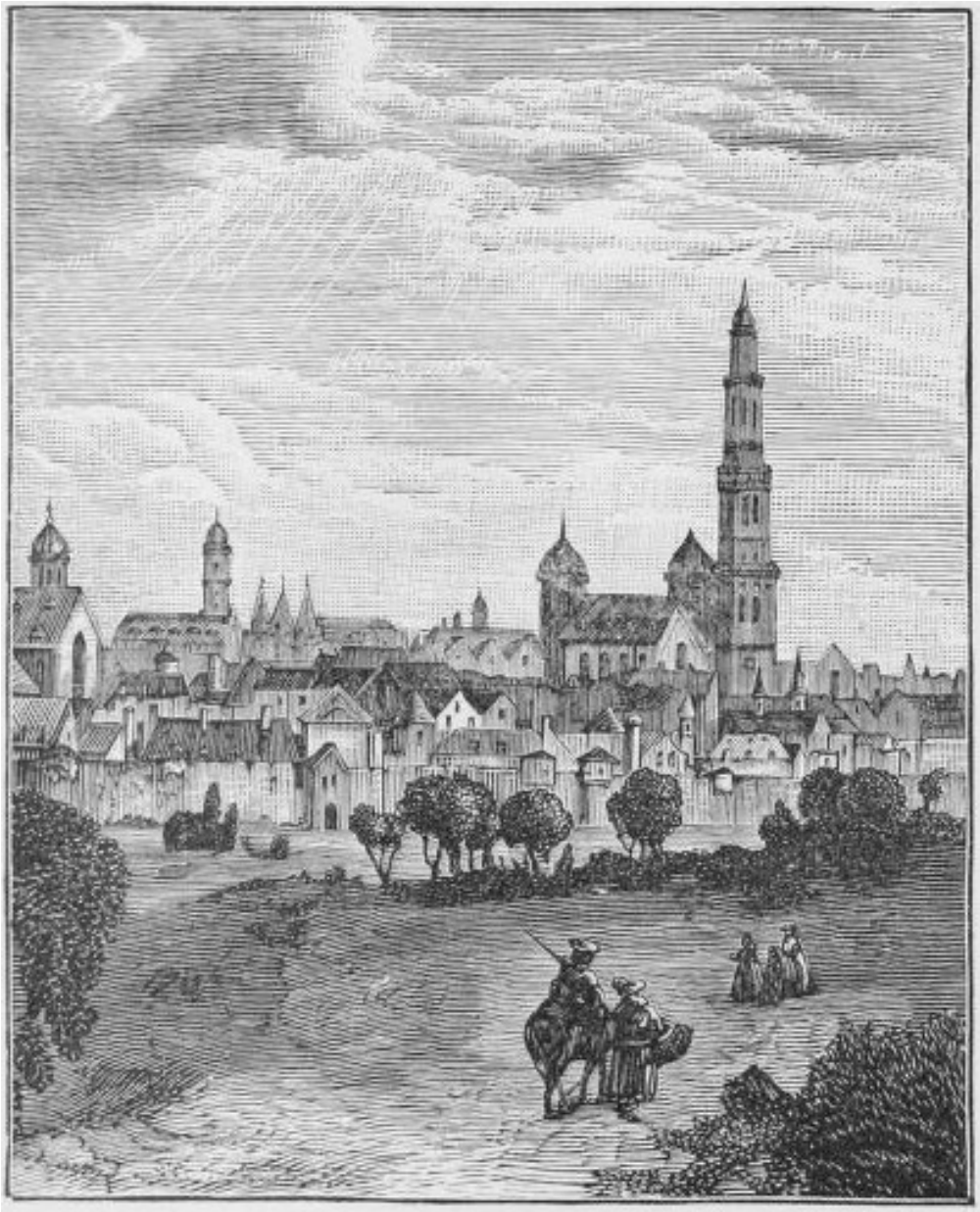
This institution was one of the youngest universities in Germany. It had been founded as recently as 1502, by Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony; but its faculty consisted of some of the most learned and enlightened men of the day. At this time its reputation extended all over Europe; for it numbered among its professors. Dr. Martin Luther. Only a short time before this, that man of God had nailed to the church door at Wittenberg his famous ninety-five theses against the sale of indulgences, and declared his readiness to defend them against any and all comers. The news of his daring act had spread like wild-fire, and Wittenberg had become famous.

ELECTOR FREDERICK III. OF SAXONY.

◊ Elector Frederick III. of Saxony.

The call to this university gave to Melanchthon an opportunity to identify himself with the movement to free mankind from the corruption,

ignorance, and thraldom of papal misrule. He accepted the call. It came to him through Reuchlin, to whom the Elector of Saxony had applied for a competent professor of Greek and Hebrew, and who, in recommending Melanchthon, had said of him, “I know of no one among the Germans who excels him, except Erasmus of Rotterdam, and he is an Hollander.” In notifying Melanchthon of his call to AVittenberg, Reuchlin wrote to him in these words: “I do not intend to address you in poetical language, but in the words of that true promise of God which he gave to the faithful Abraham, ‘Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father’s house, into a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing;.’ This my spirit tells me, and this I hope of thee, my Philip, my handiwork and my consolation. Go, then, cheerfully and joyfully. Be not dismayed; be no woman, but a man. No prophet is without honor, save in his own country.”



◊ Augsburg.

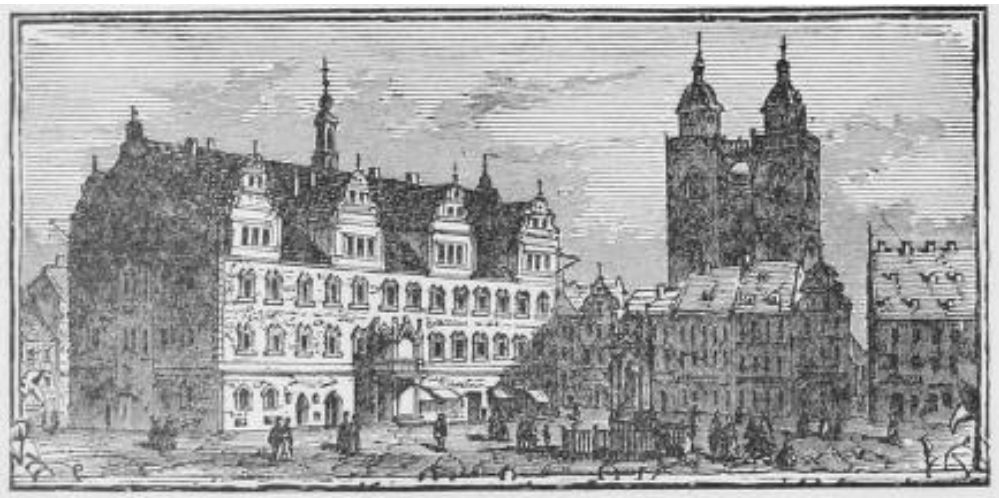
Melanchthon immediately set out for his new field of labor. He paid a farewell visit to his relatives at Bretten and Pforzheim, visited Reuchlin at Stuttgart, and proceeded to Augsburg, where the Imperial Diet was in

session. Here he was presented to the Elector, and made the acquaintance of George Spalatin, the Saxon Court-chaplain. From Augsburg he proceeded to Nuremberg, where he visited the celebrated statesman, Pirkheimer, passed through Leipzig, where he was entertained by the university, and arrived at Wittenberg, August 25, 1518, having resolutely declined a call to Leipzig, as well as a second call to the University of Ingolstadt. The University of Tuebingen scarcely realized the great loss which it sustained by his removal. Simler alone appreciated it, and declared: "Although there are learned men here, none of them are sufficiently learned to appreciate the teaching of this man who has been called away, and who is now about to depart." But God had a work for Melanchthon to do, and that work was to be done at Wittenberg.

5. At Wittenberg.

THE PERSONAL APPEARANCE of Melanchthon was little calculated to confirm the expectations raised by the reputation which had preceded him. He was only twenty-one years of age and looked very boyish. His stature was small, his frame delicate, his manner timid and diffident. When he walked he held one shoulder higher than the other, and when lie spoke he drew his eyebrows together in a curious way, stammered in his utterance, and gesticulated nervously.

Was this the famous scholar whose praises Erasmus and Reuchlin had sung so loudly? Many of the Wittenbergers did not hesitate to give expression to their contempt of his insignificant appearance and timid air, and to question whether the university had made so great an acquisition after all in securing the services of this callow-looking youth. But a careful and unprejudiced observer might have augured better things from his lofty brow, his clear blue eyes, and the intelligence written on every feature of his face. Within this frail tenement of clay, there lodged a gigantic intellect and a noble soul, whose might and worth would soon become apparent even to these scoffers.



Market Place at Wittenberg.

◊ Market Place At Wittenberg.

Four days after his arrival the new professor delivered his introductory lecture. His subject was, “The Improvement of Studies for the Youth.” It was a masterly effort, and he astonished his auditors by his able treatment of the subject. He dwelt on the necessity of going back to the original sources of knowledge, in order to separate the truth from the errors with which, in the process of time, it had become encrusted. To this end it was necessary, he said, thoroughly to master the Greek as well as the Latin language; and in no branch of study was this more necessary than in the domain of theology. Christian doctrine was not to be drawn from the translations and expositions of later times, but from the unadulterated source, the Holy Scriptures themselves.

Luther, who was present in the large audience which had assembled in the lecture-room, was highly delighted with what he heard. He was astonished by the learning, the comprehensive grasp, the reasoning power, and the beautiful diction, which Melanchthon’s discourse revealed; and at the same time, he was gratified with the progressive but sound position which the youthful professor had advanced. It can be readily conceived that he viewed with profoundest joy the prospect of possessing, in the religious struggle upon which he had entered, the support of such a man as Melanchthon. There was among his other colaborers at Wittenberg no man

from whom he might expect such powerful succor as that which the thorough philological training, the clear thought, and the lucid language of Philip promised to give. If such a man as Melanchthon, equipped with the most extensive classical training, and the refined culture of an Erasmus or a Reuchlin, delivered exegetical lectures upon the very text of Scripture, what a triumph the Gospel must achieve!

◊ Martin Luther.

Luther immediately wrote to this friend, the court chaplain, George Spalatin, and expressed the gratification which he felt: “Melanchthon,” he says, “on the fourth day after his arrival, delivered a most learned and elegant address, to the great joy and admiration of all who heard him. Henceforth he no longer needs any recommendation from you. We soon learned to look away from his external appearance; we consider ourselves most fortunate to possess him, and are astonished at his extraordinary gifts. See to it that you commend him most earnestly to our prince. I have no desire whatever for any other teacher of Greek as long as we can retain him. There is but one thing which I fear, and that is, that with his delicate constitution, our manner of living may not agree with him. Furthermore, I have learned that he has been called with too small a salary, so that the Leipzigers, who courted him before he came among us, already flatter themselves that they will be able to lure him away.” Two days later he wrote to the same friend: “I most heartily commend Philip to you. He is a perfect Grecian, a thorough scholar, friendly and amiable. His lecture-room is crowded, and he has caused all the theologians of the upper, middle, and lower classes, to apply themselves to the study of Greek.”

◊ G. Spalatin.

In their subsequent personal intercourse, Luther and Melanchthon were daily drawn into a closer friendship and fuller mutual esteem. Melanchthon was filled with admiration for the clear, forceful intellect, the deep, sincere piety, and the heroic spirit of Luther; while the great Reformer on the other hand was charmed by Melanchthon's amiable disposition, his gentle nature, and the grace and eloquence with which he employed his vast learning.

Each found elements of character in the other which he himself lacked; their natures supplemented each other. Both were laboring with the same high and unselfish aim, and both rejoiced that the Providence of God had brought them into the same field, and permitted them to labor side by side.

With the coming of Melanchthon, a new era of prosperity dawned upon the University of Wittenberg. In the year 1517 there had been no more than two hundred students enrolled; but now they began to pour in from all parts of Germany and other countries of Europe, mainly for the purpose of attending Melanchthon's lectures. The new manner of teaching which he introduced, the charm which his pleasing address and elegant culture threw over every field of research, the attention he bestowed upon the study of the classics, and the habits of clear, well-ordered thinking which he inculcated, filled the students with an enthusiasm and a zeal for study which can be appreciated only when we bear in mind the dry, diffuse, and barren methods of the scholastics which had prevailed so long. The number of his auditors constantly increased till they reached a thousand and even two thousand or more. Among them were princes, counts, barons and other members of the nobility, who came to imbibe learning at the feet of this youthful professor.

In his introductory address, Melanchthon had announced that he would deliver lectures upon the poems of Homer and the Epistle of St. Paul to Titus. As copies of Erasmus's edition of the Greek New Testament were scarce at Wittenberg, he had a special edition of the Epistle to Titus printed for the use of his students. But in addition to the lectures which he had announced, he also undertook, for the present, to give instruction in Hebrew. As his proficiency in this language was by no means equal to that which he possessed in Greek, he labored almost day and night to perfect his knowledge of it. He granted himself no respite. He generally began to work at two o'clock in the morning. He delivered two lectures every forenoon at the university, and the rest of his long working day was given up wholly to his studies, his literary labors, and his constantly increasing correspondence. When the Elector heard that his new professor was likely to kill himself by hard work, he sent him orders to take better care of himself. But there is no evidence on hand to prove that Melanchthon obeyed the orders. He was simply indefatigable.

6. Early Conflicts.

MEANWHILE the Reformation was making rapid progress. The efforts of Rome to bring Luther to silence failed. He was neither daunted by her threats nor beguiled by her persuasions, but continued to teach and preach the truth of the Gospel.

The vain-glorious Dr. Eck now proposed the holding of a public disputation on the doctrines which Luther advanced. The challenge was addressed to Carlstadt hut was meant in reality for Luther. It was accepted. The disputation was opened at Leipzig on June 27, 1519, and lasted for three weeks. During this period, Eck disputed first with Carlstadt on the doctrine of the free will, and then with Luther on the pope's primacy, repentance, indulgences, and purgatory.

◊ Dr. Eck.

Melanchthon, who had obtained permission from the Elector to accompany Luther, did not take any active part in the discussion, but was an interested spectator. It is related, however, that in the course of the dispute he occasionally suggested to the Wittenberg theologians such replies to the voluble Eck, as his extensive reading and ready intellect furnished. Eck was

not at all pleased that this boyish-looking professor should aid his adversaries in laying bare his sophistries and confuting his arguments; and he called out to Melanchthon, “Be quiet, Philip; attend to your studies, and do not disturb me.”

This Leipzig Disputation exerted a strong influence upon Melanchthon’s future life. Not only did it openly array him upon the side of Luther, but it turned his studies more decidedly in the direction of theology. Without any such intention on his part, it also involved him shortly afterwards in a conflict with Eck. Melanchthon had written to OEcolampadius an account of the disputation and exposed some of the weak points in Eck’s arguments. This letter Melanchthon published. Although it acknowledged that Eck’s natural gifts had excited the admiration of his opponents, that vain man took such offense at some passages in it, that he immediately published a pamphlet against the “Wittenberg grammarian,” as he termed Melanchthon, and asserted that Melanchthon understood Greek, to be sure, but was utterly incompetent to judge of matters of faith, and was therefore no proper person for a theologian to argue with. He called Melanchthon contemptuous names, and attempted to belittle him in the eyes of the public.

In reply to this rude attack, Melanchthon published a pamphlet, in which, with exquisite urbanity, he explained to Eck that the Church Fathers, whom the latter regarded as infallible authority, were by no means such an authority, and defined the principles of sound hermeneutics[1] in so able a manner, that Eck plainly perceived that he had made a mistake in wantonly crossing swords with so skillful an antagonist. To the abuse which Eck had seen fit to heap upon him, he replied that, “if Eck did not consider him worthy to treat of important theological questions, he ought at least be willing to permit Christians to converse on religious topics and allow Melanchthon the privilege of feeding his soul upon them; that it would have been far wiser in Eck to encourage the ‘little’ people to read the Scriptures and kindly instruct them if they erred, than to seek to frighten them by such utterances.” Luther could by no means bring himself to regard the matter as lightly as Melanchthon did. He became very indignant at Eck’s conduct, and gave vent to his feelings in a letter which he addressed to Spalatin about this time: “Philip’s opinion and judgment are worth more to me than that of many thousand dirty Ecks; and I am not ashamed, although I am a Master of Arts, Philosophy and Theology, and am adorned with almost all the titles which Eck possesses, to abandon my opinion, if it disagrees with

that of this grammarian. I have frequently done so, and do so still, because of the noble gifts which God, in his bounteous grace, has poured into this frail earthen vessel which Eck affects to despise. I do not praise Philip; he is a creature of God, nothing more: but I honor God's work in him."

The calm and forcible defense which Melanchthon published was so well received by all the enlightened scholars of Europe that Eck, who began to be attacked on other sides also, thought it advisable to beat a retreat and retire into Italy. Melanchthon, almost against his will, was made Bachelor of Theology on September 19, 1519, on account of his extraordinary theological attainments, and was received into the theological faculty of the university. But he could never be prevailed upon to accept the degree of Doctor of Theology, because he did not want to assume the responsibility which he believed doing so would involve. Those who knew him, however, agreed with Luther when he declared: "What we know of the sciences and true philosophy we have to thank Philip for. It is true, he is only a Master of Arts, but he is a Doctor above all Doctors."

From this time onward. Biblical exegesis became his favorite study. In his lectures to the students, he expounded during this year not only the Epistle to the Romans and the Gospel of Matthew, but also some of the books of the Old Testament. He was especially fond, however, of the writings of St. Paul. Luther, himself, sometimes appeared among his auditors, and declared that no one had ever better exhibited the meaning of St. Paul's writings than this youthful professor.

Shortly after this, Melanchthon's celebrated *Loci Communes* appeared in print. He had presented in his lectures at the university the principal truths contained in the writings of St. Paul, and the students were so well pleased with them, that they had them published. Naturally, many imperfections existed in the work thus issued, and therefore Melanchthon revised and enlarged it, and published it himself in the year 1521. This work was the first system of theology of the evangelical Church and met with an extensive demand. Luther was delighted with it, and declared that it was not only worthy of immortality, but of being received into the canon of Scripture. The work passed through more than one hundred editions. It was translated into a number of other languages. It appeared even in Rome under a different name and title, and was eagerly read there until the Inquisition discovered the real name of the author.

While Melanchthon was engaged in these various labors, his relations with Luther daily became more friendly and intimate. In the fall of 1520 Melanchthon wrote: “Luther is too great, too wonderful for me to depict in words; as often as I regard him, he appears greater than before.” He looked up to Luther with a feeling that was greatly akin to awe, and could not cease wondering at his heroic spirit and conduct. Equally high was the esteem in which Luther held Melanchthon. We will hardly be inclined to agree with the assertion which he makes, but the words which he spoke at the time when Melanchthon presented the thesis for his degree certainly express almost boundless admiration for his youthful friend: “This man,” he says, “will do as much as many Martins together, as a most powerful enemy of Satan and the scholastic theology.” To his friend Lange at Erfurt he wrote, about the same time, “This little Grecian excels me also in theology.” He even went so far as to imagine in 1520, that he was only meant to be the forerunner of Melanchthon in the work of the Reformation.

It was not long till Melanchthon had good occasion to use his pen in defense of his heroic friend. A very bitter publication against Luther appeared in Rome in 1520 with the title, “To the Princes and People of Germany against Martin Luther, the Defamer of German Glory.” It was published under the fictitious name of Thomas Rhadinus. In February of the following year, Melanchthon took up the defense of the slandered reformer, under the assumed name of Didymus Faventinus. Among other things he says: “We do not ask for pity or mercy, but strict investigation. Listen to nothing, ye princes, but to the commands of the Bible; think of nothing but your own dignity and the people’s welfare. Our cause is not of man but of Christ. If I defend Luther, it is because he has brought the Gospel to light again. . . . No false calling on the name of Christ or that of his Apostles, Peter and Paul, no threatenings or excommunications, should prevent you from doing your duty as Christian princes. Regard it rather as a privilege granted by God’s grace, that you are called upon, at this time, to see to it that the Gospel of salvation, which had been buried so long but now has begun to shine forth once more, shall not be buried again.” This reply bears noble testimony to his friendship for Luther, his full sympathy with the Reformation, and the possession of a moral courage which did not shrink from an open and strong expression of his convictions. It exerted a powerful influence upon the Reformation, and deprived the Roman Church of much

of the prestige which it had hitherto enjoyed, and of the reverence with which men had regarded it.

Soon after this, Melanchthon was engaged in a second conflict in behalf of his friend. While Luther was absent at the Wartburg, the University of Paris, or the Sorbonne, as it was called, published a pamphlet against him, in which the assertion was made, that he ought rather to be burned than refuted by arguments. Luther, when he learned of it, took the matter very calmly and said, "I have read the decree of the Parisian Sophists and rejoice from the heart over it. God would not have so smitten them with blindness, if he did not intend to put an end to their tyranny." But Melanchthon was very indignant over the matter; and when Eck made haste to translate their decree into German in order to give it a wide circulation, he again entered the lists. He believed that their decree dared not be permitted to go unchallenged, because the theological faculty of the Sorbonne still possessed some of its ancient prestige and authority. The mild and peace-loving Melanchthon for once breaks out into bitter sarcasm. He professes himself to be "scarcely able to believe that such a writing should have emanated from Paris, where once the pious Gerson and other noble men of God lived and labored."

"They bring," he says, "no arguments to confute Luther, but cry out, 'He is a heretic; let him be burned.' What a genuine monkish argument this is, anyway!"

"He finds himself," he declares, "obliged to give credence to the ancient saying, that the French have no brains; for the Parisian theologians are in conflict with both the Holy Scriptures and the Church Fathers."

Shortly after this, there appeared an anonymous publication which is interesting because it shows the high esteem in which Melanchthon was held. The unknown author pretends to take the part of the theologians of Paris against Melanchthon, but in reality, satirizes them most unmercifully. He proceeds in behalf of the Sorbonne to give the marks by which it may be seen that Melanchthon could not possibly know anything of the truth. "The *first* mark," he says, "is this, that he teaches Greek." Hereupon, he purposely confuses the ancient Greeks with the modern Greek Church and asks, " How is it possible that the Greeks, who from time immemorial have been rebels, schismatics and heretics, should be good Romans and Christians? The *second* mark is this, that Melanchthon is hardly as yet twenty-four years old. Such a youth cannot help but be in error, and yet he

ventures to write against such an ancient, great, and honorable university. It is a wonder that his Highness, the Elector Frederick, who is esteemed to be wise, tolerates this foolish youth instead of locking him up until he becomes more prudent. Meanwhile, we ought to have compassion on his youth. The *third* mark is this, that he is acknowledged to be smaller than his master, Luther. How can as much learning be contained in his little body as in the great Sorbonne? The *fourth* and most dreadful of all is this, that he is a layman, that he is not even tonsured. And yet it is said that he is a Bachelor of Theology, and delivers lectures upon the writings of the holy St. Paul, without wearing a monk's cowl. Priests shall listen to laymen! A pupil shall instruct his masters, a youth his elders, and a Greek the Romans! thou dreadful Wittenberg! Thou dost spoil all and make of the church a Babylon. And a *final* mark there is which is hardly credible. He is married! A layman who has a wife teaches Holy Scriptures among monks and clergy, in opposition to the papal decrees, which teach that no one who is married is able to serve God, and whichh forbid the priests to marry, so that they may be all the better able – to play dice! If only the Emperor Charles would destroy with fire and sword this Wittenberg, where so many dangerous innovations in faith and manners are brought forward!"

---

1. The science of interpreting Scripture.↩

7. Melanchthon’s Marriage And Domestic Life.

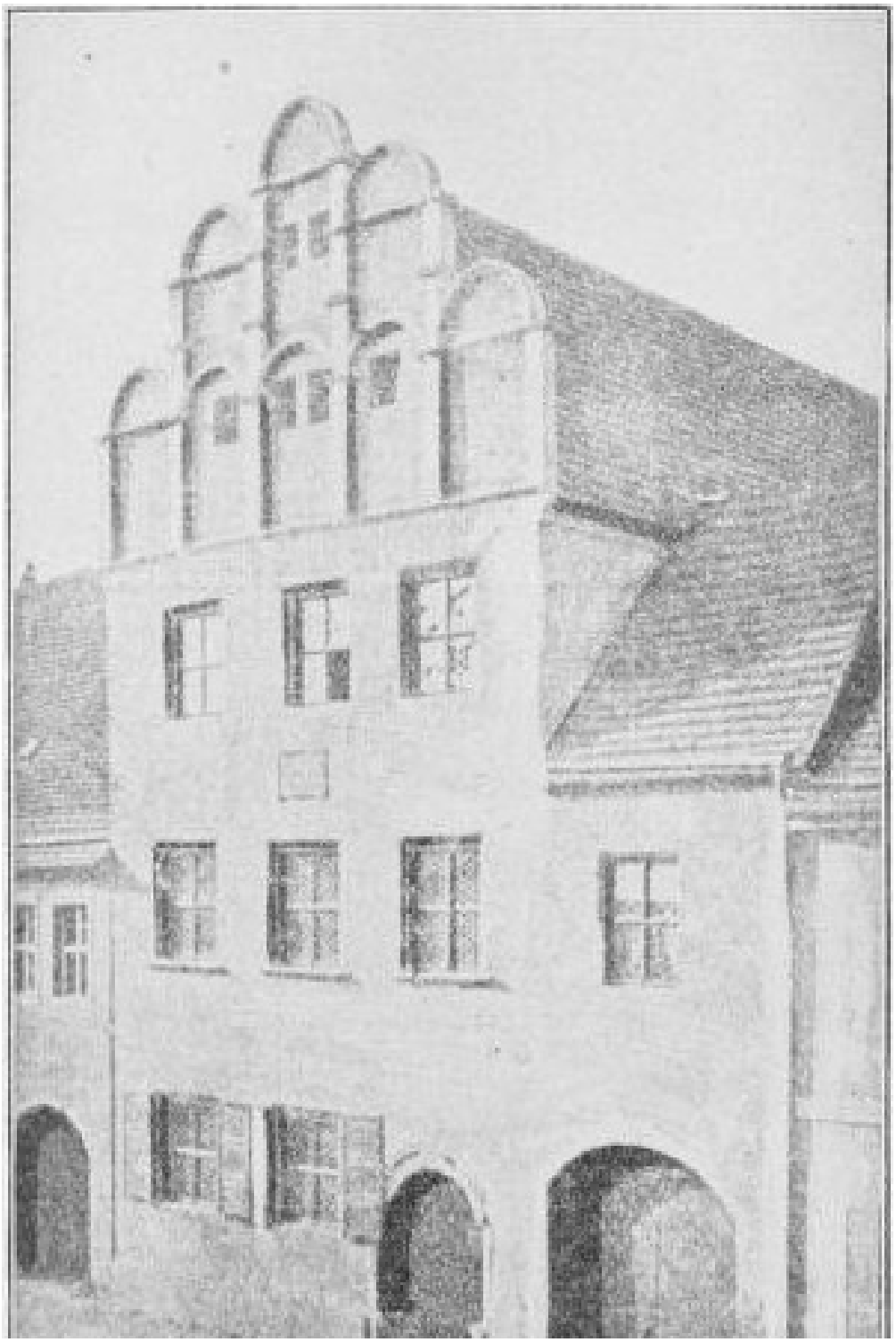
THE STUDIES AND LABORS in which Melanchthon was engaged so engrossed his attention, that he showed no inclination to enter the state of matrimony. It was only when it was suggested to him by others that he thought of it at all, and then not by any means favorably. His friends in Wittenberg, and among them Luther in particular, were anxious that he should be married. His incessant labors were undermining his health; they feared he would break down, and argued that, if he were only married, his wife could compel him to take better care of himself, and that the responsibilities and cares inseparable from the blessed state of matrimony would oblige him to divert his attention sometimes from his intellectual pursuits, and to direct it to family affairs. Luther also hoped that, if he were married to some lady of Wittenberg, Melanchthon would be less likely to accept any of the calls which came to him so frequently from other universities.

Perhaps it was Luther himself, therefore, who looked about for a suitable wife for his beloved Philip, and decided that Catherine Krapp, the daughter of the burgomaster of Wittenberg, was the one he was seeking. But it was easier to select a wife for Philip than to persuade him to take her. He would not listen to it for a long time. He was afraid that he would have to shorten his hours of study, and thus rob himself of his highest enjoyment; he feared that he would be troubled with visitors from the ranks of his wife’s relatives, and that much precious time would be wasted for him. In short, he frowned upon the whole matter. Finally, however, he was persuaded to converse with the lady in question. Whether he was prevailed upon by the persuasions of his friends, or the subtle charms of Miss Catherine herself, who, it should be said, possessed a very sweet and amiable disposition, is perhaps inquiring too curiously; but the fact is, he changed his mind and consented to be married. They were formally engaged on the eighteenth of

August, 1520, and were married on the twenty-fifth of November following.

The union into which they entered was a happy one. Melanchthon's wife turned out to be a woman after his own heart, and he declared that he could not have wished himself a better one from heaven. She was pious, gentle, decorous, and a kind and considerate help-meet. She united in her person the very virtues in which Melanchthon most delighted. She was not without her faults, of course; but they were of such a kind that they did not concern or trouble him much. She carried her generosity to excess, and often gave to the poor what they needed badly enough themselves; she was inclined to attach too little importance to the preparation of the meals; and she manifested an undue solicitude for the health of her husband. But Melanchthon was guilty of excessive liberality himself, and little disposed to find fault with his better half for following his example; he was by no means fond of the pleasures of the table; and he never permitted his wife's concern for his health to interfere with the performance of any duty or important work.

The first few months of his wedded life were not without their trials. His financial condition was anything but prosperous. He had managed to get along tolerably well on his salary of one hundred florins, as long as he was single. But he found it considerably more difficult to do so now that he was married and had to supply the wants of a household. He applied for an increase of salary, but failed to obtain it. The provision made for the support of the university had never been very large, and the elector was averse to levying greater taxes in order to increase the amount. He occasionally presented Melanchthon with good things to eat, or with a piece of cloth for a coat, but granted no increase of salary. The fare in Melanchthon's house was, therefore, very simple, sometimes even meager. But, as the days rolled on, he and his wife gradually accommodated themselves to their circumstances and lived contentedly, even if not in great plenty. Frequently Luther, who received no salary at all and still lived in his monk's cell, called on them and shared their frugal repast.



◊ Melanchthon's Home at Wittenberg.

Fortunately, in the year previous to his marriage, Melanchthon had taken into this house, as his "famulus," or servant, his countryman, John Koch. John, as he was familiarly called, was by no means an ordinary servant, but a sort of private secretary and steward combined. He was a well-educated man, whose opinion Melanchthon highly valued and often consulted, and who rendered him valuable assistance in his literary labors and correspondence. After Melanchthon's marriage John became the presiding genius of his household, and but for him matters would often have gone badly enough. He took complete charge of the finances of the household and did most of the buying for it. While this arrangement was exceedingly fortunate for Melanchthon, it laid a heavy burden on John. The excessive liberality of master and mistress kept him involved in a perpetual struggle with the problem, how to make ends meet.

It may be well at this point, and before we proceed to the further consideration of Melanchthon's public career, to devote some space to the description of his domestic life. He resided in the first story of a house on College street. Naturally, considering the meagerness of his salary, the furniture of the house was scanty and plain. His own private room, or study, contained only a desk, several shelves with books, and a few leather-covered chairs. On the walls of the room there hung a few pictures and maps. At a later period he added a lounge, upon which he occasionally reclined to rest.

The immense amount of work which Melanchthon performed was made possible only by a strict, systematic disposal of his time. He rose regularly at two o'clock in the morning and began his labors. At seven the family gathered in the room adjoining the study, and family worship was held. Usually, John Koch read a chapter of the Bible, which Melanchthon briefly

explained and followed with a prayer. Then all sat down to the breakfast table and partook of the frugal fare. Melanchthon's own breakfast consisted regularly of a cup of hot milk and a bun. At half-past seven he retired to his room and resumed his studies. From nine till eleven he was engaged in delivering his lectures at the university. The one hour of recreation which he allowed himself was from eleven o'clock till noon. This he spent with his family; and while his wife was superintending the preparation of the dinner, he relieved her of the care of the children. At noon the family sat down to dinner. Melanchthon always ate sparingly. He cared little for meat, and declared he would find it easy to adopt the principles of the vegetarians. But he could never accustom himself to the Saxon style of cooking, and declared: "It is a great pity that in this miserable nest (Wittenberg) there is no proper food to be found. There is nothing good to be obtained; and if there ever does happen to be anything good, it is spoiled in the cooking. Everything is barbarous." This declaration was not meant as a reflection on the culinary talents of his wife, for whom he had the highest regard, but referred to the general style of preparing dishes which prevailed in that neighborhood. He missed also the good Rhenish wines of his native home and could never learn to like the wines of Wittenberg. He often jocosely quoted the words of this friend, Peter Mosellanus, about the grapes of the neighborhood: " The finest vinegar grows on yonder hills."

When dinner was over, he retired again to this study. He also received visitors during the afternoon. these robbed him of a great deal of time and often tried his patience sorely. They came upon all kinds of errands. Some wanted letters of introduction to distinguished personages, others wanted testimonials of character, others came to seek his advice, and still others brought their writings and asked him to look through them, correct them, and write a commendatory preface. Sometimes they brought materials for a learned dissertation and asked him to write it out in good form for them, with the understanding that it should be published under their name. Manuscripts were often sent to him for his correction and approval, with a request to supply them with an introduction and have them published for the authors. Sometimes he completely rewrote such manuscripts and let them appear under the name of others. Even many of the lectures delivered by the professors at the University of Wittenberg were written by him. It seems incredible, but is related as a fact, that the bulk of all that was written, publicly spoken, or printed at Wittenberg, owed its form or material

to the hand and brain of Melanchthon. Not only theologians, but philosophers and philologists, and even jurists and physicians, borrowed his pen. For, saving only Erasmus, this wonderful man had scarcely a peer in any branch of learning. In the goodness of his heart he found it almost impossible to refuse any request made of him, and as far as it lay within his power he accommodated all who sought his aid or advice. It is really marvelous what an amount of work this intellectual giant accomplished, in spite of his delicate physical organization and frequent illness.

Amid such various labors and employments, Melanchthon's afternoon passed away. For supper he generally ate little, if anything, hut continued at his labors until nine o'clock, which was his hour for retiring. He made it a rule to go to bed at this hour. He believed it was essential to good health to retire early. But he was evidently just as firm a believer in early rising, and, as we have seen, was regularly found at his desk again at two o'clock in the morning. It is astonishing that so frail a body could withstand the strain of such unremitting toil and such short periods of repose.

Melanchthon was quite as liberal with his purse as with his mental talents; only he had not so much to bestow. Out of the small salary which he received he gave away till it was all gone; and when the cash was exhausted, he supplied himself with it for new gifts by taking to the merchants silver or golden cups which had been presented to him. Naturally those to whom he gave were often unworthy. But even if he discovered this, he was as ready as usual to give to the next one who applied for aid. This excessive liberality often put himself and his family into sore straits, and, even when the faithful John racked his brain to the uttermost for some way to provide for their needs, they would frequently have suffered want, if the elector and others had not sent them things to eat and to wear. It was useless for people to give Melanchthon presents of money. In a very short time, he had given it all away again. His son-in-law, Dr. Peucer, at a later period, spoke very much to the point when he said to Duke Albert of Prussia, who out of gratitude was about to give Melanchthon a present of money: "I wish that nobody would give my father-in-law money. It helps neither him nor his children. He gives it away at once. I see well enough how it goes when he receives his salary; he gives until there is not a farthing left. What is lacking then for the household expenses, I must furnish. But this is not calculated to make either of us rich." This latter aspect of the case, however,

did not trouble Melanchthon. “I have poverty,” he said, “as the companion of my philosophy; but I bear it willingly.”

Melanchthon and his wife had four children: Anna, Philip, George, and Magdalen. George died in infancy. Anna, who was Melanchthon’s favorite child, was married to George Sabinus, a talented man, but one who proved to be wholly unworthy of her, and who filled her and her father’s heart with bitter grief. Anna died at the early age of twenty-three. The love which her father had borne her he transferred to her children, whom he took into his own family. His son Philip, though delicate in infancy, lived to the age of eighty years. He possessed none of the eminent talents of his father, but was a good man, and, when very old, wrote in an album, “I have a desire to depart and be with Christ.” Magdalen was married to the worthy Dr. Caspar Peucer, and their union was a happy one.

8. Melanchthon During Luther's Absence From Wittenberg. 1521-1522.

MEANWHILE the great spiritual struggle which was shaking the very foundations of society was growing fiercer. It was rapidly Hearing that stage when a reconciliation between the reformers and the papal authorities would become impossible. In the fall of the year 1520 Eck returned from Rome with a bull of excommunication against Luther and his adherents. Luther replied by publishing a pamphlet and burning the bull in the presence of a great concourse of students and professors. The die was cast; henceforth men had to choose between truth and falsehood, Luther and the pope. Melanchthon did not hesitate an instant, but placed himself unreservedly upon the side of his friend.

Early in the year 1521 the Imperial Diet assembled at Worms, and Luther was summoned to appear before it. The whole world knows of the heroic stand which he took there for truth and right, his refusal to recant unless convinced from the Holy Scriptures that he was wrong, and the immortal words which he uttered, "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise; God help me. Amen." But after this unequivocal declaration, Luther's life was no longer safe; and the elector, reasoning that captivity at the hands of friends was better than imprisonment and perhaps death at the hands of foes, had the intrepid monk carried off and concealed in the Wartburg.


THE BURNING OF THE PAPAL BULL.

◊ The Burning of the Papal Bull.

During this absence of Luther from Wittenberg, which lasted almost a year, the burden of directing the movements of the Reformation fell upon the youthful shoulders of Melanchthon. But however eminent his talents, this young professor lacked the qualities which were necessary to cope successfully with the seditious spirits which soon forced themselves to the front, no one was more conscious of this fact than he was himself; and when he received the tidings of Luther's sudden disappearance he was filled with dismay, not only at the thought of the dangers to which his friend had perhaps fallen a prey, but also at the sense of the loss which the church would suffer, and the heavy responsibility which would devolve upon him, if it should appear that Luther was really dead. Many believed that he was dead, and the greatest consternation reigned among the friends of the Reformation.

◊ The Wartburg.

When Melanchthon learned the true state of affairs, and heard that Luther was safe and sound at the Wartburg, he was overjoyed. In May he received a letter from Luther, which exhorted him to step into the breach created by the absence of his friend. But the mantle of Luther w^as too heavy for him. He complained in his reply that many w^ho had been

adherents of Luther began now to fall away. AYlien he learned that the Reformer was sick at the Wartburg, and had no medical attendance for fear that the secret of his residence might be betrayed, he was greatly exercised, and wrote to Spalatin: " I am worried about Luther's health; I fear he is devouring himself with secret grief, not over himself, but over us and the Church. You know with what care a vessel in which is contained so great a treasure ought to he preserved. If we were to lose him, I should have no doubt that God is angry with us. Through him the lamp of Israel has been lighted once more. What hopes would remain to us if it were extinguished again? Omit nothing whereby you may help him and all of us. Oh, that I could with my life purchase the life of this, the divinest man on earth!" In the fall of the year he lamented: " Our Elijah is still absent from us. We wait and hope for him. I am tormented daily with the longing for his return."

The labors and trials of Melanchthon were much increased by Luther's absence. Nearly all the business and lectures of the absent professor devolved upon him. Two new professors, Aurogallus and Justus Jonas, were installed at the university, and a new arrangement of the lectures had to be made. In all these matters he had to supply the place of Luther. Yet in spite of this additional labor, he found time during the year to send out his masterly defense of Luther against the Sorbonne, to translate for Bartholomew Bernhard of Feldkirch an apology which that pastor had prepared for marrying in opposition to the papal decrees, and to perform a number of other literary labors.

Before long, however, his attention was almost wholly engrossed by the revolutionary changes which took place in Wittenberg. With all his impetuosity, Luther proceeded conservatively in the work of the Reformation. But during this absence many in Wittenberg became radical, and were inclined to proceed to all manner of extremes. Melanchthon's opinion and advice were consequently wanted everywhere. Taking into consideration his youth and comparative inexperience, his decisions were usually marked by remarkable prudence and sagacity. Thus he gave it as his opinion that the action of the Saxon pastors who had married was not to be condemned, because the decree forbidding the marriage of the clergy was of very late origin, had been difficult to enforce, and found no warrant in Scripture. He also was appointed by the elector as a member of the commission charged with delivering an opinion on the course of the Augustinian monks, who, by the advice of one of their number, Gabriel

Zwilling, had decided to abolish the reading of private masses, and to administer the Communion in both kinds, instead of giving the laity simply the bread, as had hitherto been the Romish custom. The elector feared that this action was premature, and would lead to trouble. The commission, however, in its report, sanctioned the action of the monks; and when the elector was dissatisfied with this opinion and offered objections to it, they replied that they would abide by their first report, and could not, in the interests of the truth, deliver a different opinion. The elector, therefore, decided to let matters take their course, and did not attempt to interfere. The movement among the monks gained strength, and in December of the same year they formally abolished these abuses at a provincial convention held in Wittenberg. But Melanchthon was not equal to all the emergencies which arose during Luther's absence. Both his youth and his mental bias were against him. He was more fitted for reflection and contemplation than for practical decision and action. Many matters came before him, upon which he felt himself incompetent to pronounce judgment without a careful and lengthy investigation, but which should have been decided at once. This was the case in his experience with the Zwickau prophets. These claimed that they were directly inspired by the Holy Spirit, and possessed a spiritual knowledge superior to that of those who depended on the Bible for their information. They also denied the validity of infant baptism, and declared that the temporal government, which was guilty of much wrong, must be abolished and replaced by another, of which Storch, by divine appointment, was to be the head. Their confident bearing perplexed Melanchthon. He did not possess that eminently practical spirit and that knowledge of human nature which Luther possessed; and he was much puzzled to know how he should regard and treat these men. He sighed for the return of Luther, believing that he alone could be relied on to decide upon their claims. He even requested the elector to send for him, but this the elector refused to do. Their denial of the validity of infant baptism troubled Melanchthon greatly, and he did not know just how to refute them. Luther, on the other hand, when he heard of the matter, made short work of it, and wrote: "If they have nothing to say but this, that, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,' and that children do not believe, I am not in the least disturbed. How will they prove that children do not believe? Will they say, 'Because they do not speak and show their faith?' That would be fine, indeed. If this were so, then how many hours are we Christians when we sleep or are busy

at work? Cannot God preserve faith in the child as if it were in constant sleep?"

The fanatics, however, gained many adherents. One of the most violent of these was Carlstadt. Under his leadership, the excited populace burned the images in the churches, destroyed the altars, abolished private confession, introduced radical changes in the public worship, condemned education as useless, advised all the students to learn a trade, and desired wholly to abolish the clergy and theological training. As authority for their violent measures, they appealed to their Christian liberty and the Holy Spirit whom they claimed to possess. All who did not run with them to the same excess were vigorously denounced as heretics. Melanchthon was powerless to quell the disturbance. He had hesitated too long before he came to a decision in the matter; and when he had made up this mind, the mischief was done, and he was unable to undo it. The situation was too much for him. He was no preacher, and he had no gifts as a popular orator. He could not hope, therefore, to mend matters by publicly declaiming against the fanatics. He was at his wits' end, and could only pray for Luther's return. The disorder was increasing daily.

Luther himself became convinced that his presence was imperatively necessary. Writing a heroic letter to the elector, in which he relieved that ruler of all responsibility for his safety, and expressed his confidence in the protection of a higher power than that of the elector, he hastened to Wittenberg. His appearance was hailed with joy. On the following Sunday he entered his pulpit, and for eight days in succession preached against the fanatics. In a short time order was again restored by Luther's simple preaching of the Word of God. To that Word also he gave the credit. In one of the sermons which he delivered on his return, he thus referred to what he had hitherto been instrumental in achieving: "I opposed the sale of indulgences and all the papists, but not with force. I simply preached and wrote God's Word. And even while I slept or enjoyed myself in the company of Philip and Amsdorf, that Word has weakened popery to such an extent that no prince or emperor has ever been able to do it equal injury. I have done nothing; the Word has done it all."

9. New Labors. A Visit To Bretten. Melanchthon And Erasmus. 1522-1524.

AFTER HIS RETURN to Wittenberg, Luther called upon Melanchthon for aid in revising the translation of the New Testament, which the former had made at the Wartburg. This required much patient labor and research. There were still many obscure passages which Luther's knowledge of Greek had not been sufficient to master, and which Melanchthon was asked to explain. There were still many questions about customs, coins, weights, and measures, which he was requested to answer, he spared no efforts nor pains to assist in ascertaining the exact sense of the original. When he could not reach a satisfactory conclusion himself concerning a word, he applied for information and advice to various friends. Often he and Luther sought for days at a time to discover the exact German word which they needed for their purpose, and even then did not always succeed to their satisfaction. But at last, after much toil, the work was ready for the press, and was published in Wittenberg in the fall of 1522, The demand for it was very great. In a few months a second edition was necessary, and it was reprinted in Basle and other places. Luther had always insisted on the authority of the Word of God as the only rule of faith and life, and the people were eager to possess that Word and read it for themselves.

The effect of this publication of the New Testament in the language of the people is thus described by Cochlaeus, a bitter enemy of the Reformation:

> "Copies of the New Testament have been multiplied to an astonishing extent: so that shoemakers, women, and laymen of all kinds read it, carry it about with them, and have learned its contents by heart. In consequence of this, they have, in a few months, become so presumptuous that they have emboldened themselves to dispute, not only with Catholic laymen, but with priests and monks, and even with Magistrates and Doctors of Theology. It has even happened, at times, that Lutheran laymen have been able to quote offhand, more passages of Scripture than the monks and priests themselves; and Luther has long ago convinced his crowd of adherents that they should not believe any doctrine which is not derived from the Holy Scriptures. The most learned Catholic theologians are now looked upon by the Lutherans as ignoramuses in the Scriptures; and here and there laymen have been heard to contradict theologians in the presence of the people, and to charge them with preaching falsehood and things of man's devising."[1]

While the New Testament was in press Luther and Melanchthon began work upon the translation of the Old. They were assisted by Aurogallus, the professor of Hebrew. In the beginning of the year 1523 the five books of Moses were published; in 1524 the historical books of the Old Testament appeared. But the work of translating the prophetical books proceeded slowly. It was found exceedingly difficult "to make those ancient prophets speak in good German." "Job," said Luther, "seems just as unwilling to put up with our translation as with the consolations of his friends." And he thus describes the difficulties which they encountered: "Magister Philip, Aurogallus, and myself are laboring upon Job; but it goes so slowly that in four days we hardly complete four lines. When the translation has been made, any one can read it easily enough. He can fairly run over it with his eyes, without once stumbling; and he will not dream of the obstructions which lay in our way, and how we had to sweat and worry before we had them removed."

The work of translating the Old Testament progressed so slowly that the complete Bible in German was not published until the year 1534. This was due not only to the difficulties which the translators encountered in their work, but also to the fact that they were frequently interrupted by other labors which the rapid progress of the Reformation rendered necessary. The Bible was constantly revised and corrected by Luther and his friends, up to the time of his death. The last edition published by Luther himself appeared in 1545. Others, besides the three men mentioned above, took part, from time to time, in the work. Those principally engaged were Luther, Melanchthon, Aurogallus, Cruciger, Jonas, and Bugenhagen or Pomeranus. Concerning the share which different individuals took in the work, Melanchthon said: "Dr. Pomeranus is the grammarian; he devotes himself

to the elucidation of the text. I am the dialectician; I note the connection in which the text is found, and what may logically and scripturally be deduced from it. Jonas is the orator; he is able to apply the words of the text beautifully and plainly to actual life. But Dr. Martin is all in all; the speech and writing of this wonderful man and chosen instrument of God pierce through heart and marrow, and leave their impress and comfort in the hearts of the people."

THE TRANSLATORS OF THE BIBLE.

◊ The Translators of the Bible.

Although Melanchthon was much occupied with theological labors, he was not willing to give up his position as professor of Greek. Under the impression that this office was not honorable enough for such a man as Melanchthon, it was proposed, at Luther's suggestion, to relieve him of it, and to give it to some one else. It was thought, also, that if this were done, Melanchthon would be enabled to devote himself more fully to theology. But he objected strenuously to such a procedure, and declared that he would rather give up teaching theology than Greek grammar. As may be gathered from some of the letters which he wrote at the time, he did not, even though he was fond of theological studies, feel at home in the office of theological professor. He was averse, also, to taking any step which might detract from the high esteem in which the classical studies were then held; for he considered it of the highest importance for the triumph of religious truth that the study of the classical languages should be appreciated at its proper value. He wrote to Spalatin, therefore, that, in view of the importance of a thorough classical training for the study of theology, and of the evil effects which, on account of the scarcity of competent teachers of languages, his giving up of the Greek professorship might produce upon the university, he could not consent to such a change. He was then suffered to have his way, and bear the burden of a double professorship of Greek and of theology.

The instruction which he gave in the Greek language did not, however, materially interfere with this theological activity. In the very next year, 1523, he published his "Annotations upon Some Obscure Passages in Genesis." Several commentaries written by him upon books of the New Testament also appeared, namely, on St. Matthew, St. John, and the Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians. His commentaries on Romans and Corinthians were published for him by Luther. Melanchthon's great modesty prevented him from giving them to the public. But Luther appreciated their value, secretly obtained a copy of them, and, without asking for permission, published them, jokingly remarking in the introduction to them, which he addressed to Melanchthon: "It is I who publish these your annotations and send you to yourself. If you take no pleasure in yourself, very well; it is sufficient that we take pleasure in you. If there be any blame in this matter it rests on you. Why did you not publish these writings yourself? Did I not often beg, urge and command you to do so?"

For almost six years Melanchthon had now been laboring without permitting himself any but the shortest periods of repose. He needed a rest. An obstinate attack of insomnia threatened ruin to body and mind. He proposed, therefore, to take a vacation. A friend and fellow-professor, William Nesen, had determined to go to his home, at Frankfort-on-the-Main, and Melanchthon decided to accompany him to that point, and proceed from there to Bretten, on a visit to his mother. He mentioned his plan to Luther, and confided to him some conscientious scruples about the propriety of taking such a step. Luther quickly removed his scruples by replying: "Go, dear brother Philip; start upon your journey in God's name, since even our Lord did not preach and teach incessantly, but occasionally went upon visits to his friends and relatives. One thing only I ask of you: return to us soon. I will meanwhile pray diligently for you. And now go."

Accordingly, on the morning of April 16, 1524, in company with Nesen, Francis Burkhard of Weimar, John Silberborner of Worms, and Melanchthon's most intimate friend and biographer, Joachim Camerarius of Bamberg, he started upon his journey. The companionship of Camerarius was especially agreeable to him. These two men, who all their life long remained the closest friends, were so nearly of the same age, were engaged in such similar studies and occupations, and were so much alike in their views and dispositions, that they found it mutually their greatest delight to converse or correspond with each other. Camerarius, like his friend, was professor of the Greek language, and held a position in the University of Erfurt. Directing their course through Leipzig, where they learned that their friend, Peter Mosellanus, lay at the point of death, and visited him, the travelers proceeded through Eisenach to Fulda. Here they learned the sad tidings, that Ulrich Von Hutten, that talented and well-meaning, but ill-advised scholar and knight, who had sought refuge from the persecutions of Rome upon an island in the Lake of Zurich, had died in his place of exile. From Fulda they journeyed to Frankfort, where Nesen remained behind, while the others proceeded on their way to Bretten. When Melanchthon beheld his native town, it is reported that, in deep emotion, he dismounted from his horse, and, falling upon his knees, exclaimed, "O my native land! I thank Thee, O Lord, that I am permitted to behold it again." His mother almost fainted with surprise and joy when she beheld him. After his three companions had tarried for a few days at Bretten, they bade farewell to

Melanchthon and continued their way to Basle, where they expected to visit Erasmus.

◊ Joachim Camerarius.

Melanchthon's mother was not very well pleased with her illustrious son, because he had married one of the daughters of Wittenberg instead of the one which she, in her motherly solicitude, had selected for him in Bretten. But in the joy of their reunion and the sweet converse of mother and son, she soon learned to forget her vexation, and became reconciled. It soon appeared, too, that she was displeased with the prominent part which

he had taken in the religious controversies of the times. They frequently discussed the subject between them. But she could not be brought to see the difference between an attack upon the errors and superstitions of the prevailing belief and an attack upon religion itself. She remained a Roman Catholic to the end.

While Melanchthon sojourned in Bretten the University of Heidelberg, in recognition of his distinguished services in the cause of learning, sent him, by the hand of three of its professors, a valuable and beautifully chased goblet of silver. Perhaps the university desired by this means to make amends for refusing, twelve years before, to grant the Master's degree to the youthful student who since that time had become so famous. Another delegation also came from Heidelberg an errand which was by no means so pleasant to him. The papal legate, Cardinal Campegius, was then staying at Heidelberg, having gone thither from the diet recently held at Nuremberg. Hearing that Melanchthon was visiting at Bretten, and realizing the importance of detaching him, if possible, from the cause of the Reformation, he sent his private secretary, Frederic Nausea, to Bretten, to endeavor to bring about such a result. In the interview which followed, it was plainly hinted to Melanchthon that, if he would only desert Luther, a glorious future in the Roman Catholic Church was open before him. But Melanchthon was not a man who could be moved by such inducements to turn traitor to the truth; and he therefore replied: "What I have once come to regard as true I hold fast and maintain, without respect to the favor of any mortal and without regard to advantage, honor, or gain. I will never desert those who first brought better things to light; but at the same time I shall ever remain true to myself by teaching and defending the truth without descending to quarrels and abuse. I advise all who have a sincere desire for peace and unity to do what lies within their power to heal the wounds which can no longer be concealed, and to restrain the senseless fury of those who constantly seek to inflame them. It is impious and insane to threaten with destruction all who adhere to Luther."

While Melanchthon tarried at Bretten his three companions, as we have stated, continued their journey as far as Basle, and paid a visit to Erasmus. As this famous scholar had been one of the first to recognize and admire the extraordinary talents of Melanchthon, and the latter had always regarded that eminent humanist with the highest esteem and almost with veneration for his distinguished services in the revival of classical learning, it may be

well to say a few words concerning the relations between these two men. In its earlier stages Erasmus had been friendly to the Reformation. He had himself, in his satirical writings, attacked some of the prevalent abuses. He had rejoiced at the defeat of monasticism, and had persistently refused to write against Luther. Many of the papists even accused Erasmus of collusion with the "heretics." But Luther was too unsparing for him. Erasmus wanted a reformation which could be accomplished peaceably, and actually desired only the reformation of external abuses. He was averse to positive statements of doctrine, and found fault with what he called Luther's want of moderation. Finally, it came to a breach between them. But with Melanchthon, the great Hollander continued to the end on friendly terms.

◊ Erasmus of Rotterdam.

Melanchthon had been possessed with a strong desire to accompany his friends on their visit to Erasmus. But he feared that his doing so would add to the distresses which that scholar suffered. These were great enough already. The neutral position which Erasmus had endeavored to maintain in the pending controversies, had made him an object of suspicion to both parties. By the Lutherans, he was accused of being a coward and time-

server; by the Roman Catholics, of being at heart a Lutheran. His position was far from enviable. It was rumored at the present time, that he was about to take the part of King Henry VIII. of England in his controversy with Luther, and was preparing a pamphlet for that purpose. Under these circumstances, and in order not to involve Erasmus in any greater embarrassments than those under which he already labored, Melanchthon deemed it advisable not to go to Basle. Erasmus appreciated his motives; and, although he published, during the year, his pamphlet on the "Free Will," and fiercely attacked in it the position which Luther and Melanchthon maintained, he still endeavored to remain on friendly terms with Melanchthon, and wrote him a lengthy letter, in which he set forth his opinion of the Reformation.

In this letter he assures Melanchthon first of all, of the pleasure which he would have experienced, had he been favored with a visit; "for he had always been an admirer of Melanchthon's great gifts, and doubly so, since he had read his Loci Communes. He would not deny, he said, that there were many things in that excellent work with which he could not agree; but he had no desire to raise a controversy over them nor over other points which he might mention. He asserted, that he was not only not opposed, in general, to the restoration of evangelical truth, but actually desired it, and had always hoped that Luther would use more moderation. For this reason, he had hitherto exerted his influence to restrain the fury of the theologians and the rage of the princes, and had anxiously waited for the time when the cause of the Gospel might be promoted without great disturbance. This, he added, he still continued to do. At every suitable opportunity he wrote to the emperor and other princes. To a certain extent he played the part of Gamaliel; and he hoped for a happy issue of the matter. Then he proceeds to mention the divergence of views which had arisen among the adherents of the reformers, and the inconsistent and disorderly conduct of many among them, as a reason, why he could not ally himself with them. 'I see here,' he says, 'many persons of such a character, that, even if I approved of all that Luther writes, I would not care to be counted as belonging to their party.' Finally, he referred to the controversy with Luther upon which he had just entered, and declared that, since his views differed so materially from those of Luther, and the latter had informed him in his last letter that a further silence would be regarded as an evidence of timidity and cowardice, he

owed it to himself, his Church and his friends, to take up the pen against Luther and publish his pamphlet on the freedom of the will."

This publication of Erasmus attacked the position which not only Luther, but Melanchthon also, had maintained. Both of the reformers had taught the total depravity of human nature, and held that the Holy Spirit must bring about a new will in the human heart, and, even in the regenerate, must prompt to everything that is good. But Melanchthon did not take any active part in this controversy between Luther and Erasmus. He wrote a reply, however, to the letter which he had received, and said that there was, indeed, "some reason for the complaints made about the conduct of many of the adherents of Luther's doctrine; but that Luther was as much displeased with such people as Erasmus, and to lay the blame of their unworthy actions upon Luther or to the doctrine which he taught was a gross injustice. He himself, he declared, could not with a good conscience, reject Luther's doctrines, though he would do so at once if he saw that they were unscriptural. But as this was not the case he would not, even at the risk of being considered superstitious or foolish, nor yet in order to avoid conflict with the present order of things, permit himself to waver in his faith."

We left Melanchthon in the pleasant society of his mother, enjoying a well-earned and much-needed vacation. After an absence of about four weeks, his friends came back from Basle, and preparations were immediately made for the return to Wittenberg. His mother, of course, would gladly have kept him longer. But this could not be, and the farewells had to he said. She saw her son but once more on earth, and that was during the second Diet of Speyer. She died in 1529.

The homeward journey led Melanchthon and his friends back to Frankfort. On the way thither they were met by Philip of Hesse, who was traveling on the same road with a large train of followers. Aware of the presence of Melanchthon in that neighborhood and perceiving a group of horsemen who looked as if they might be learned men, the landgrave approached them and asked whether Philip Melanchthon was among them. Melanchthon replied in the affirmative, and, as a mark of respect, was about to dismount; but he was prevented from doing so by the landgrave, who insisted on having the company of the party over night. There were many things, the prince said, which he desired to have them explain. He bade Melanchthon not to fear any harm from him. Melanchthon assured the prince that he was not afraid, and that, besides, he was a very unimportant

individual and had, therefore, the less reason to fear. “Yet,” replied the prince, “Cardinal Campegius would be overjoyed if you were given over into his hands.” After they had indulged in some unimportant conversation, Melanchthon respectfully asked permission to continue his journey, and the landgrave consented, provided that, after his return to Wittenberg, Melanchthon would send to him a detailed account of the causes and progress of the recent innovations in religious matters. To this Melanchthon readily assented; and, after his arrival at Wittenberg, he prepared such a document and sent it to the prince. The result was remarkable; for, as early as 1525, Philip of Hesse openly declared in favor of the Reformation. It is a great pity that the unbridled sensuality of this otherwise worthy prince subsequently involved Melanchthon and the Reformation in serious difficulty.

PHILIP I., LANDGRAVE OF HESSE.

◊ Philip I., Landgrave of Hesse.

The journey of Melanchthon, which began so joyfully, ended sadly. Burkhard was left behind, ill, at Frankfort; Nesen was drowned in the Elbe, on July 5th, while he was crossing that river in a boat; and Camerarius had to leave his friend and go to Bamberg. Melanchthon and Silberborner

returned alone, in sorrow, to Wittenberg, arriving there July 15th, after an absence of almost three months.

A spirit of melancholy settled down upon Melanchthon. He longed particularly for the company of his bosom friend, Camerarius, and wrote to him: “I live here as though I were in a desert. I have little intercourse with any but small minds, in whom I can take no pleasure. Consequently, I sit at home like a lame cobbler.” That Luther was not counted among the small minds to which he refers, is self-evident.

---

1. From *Life of Luther*, translated by Dr. Schaeffer.↩

10. The Peasants' War. Luther's Marriage. The Saxon Visitation. 1525-1527.

IN THE YEAR 1525 Germany became the scene of great political disturbances. The peasants, oppressed with excessive taxes and other burdens, broke out in a general insurrection. They falsely applied Luther's doctrine of Christian liberty to political and social life, and attempted to institute a sort of communism. They formulated their demands in twelve articles, which they endeavored to base upon the Scriptures. But even when these demands were granted by the princes, the peasants were not satisfied. Led by the fanatical preacher, Thomas Münzer, who considered these demands far too moderate, they rioted in all manner of lawlessness. Many who were opposed to the insurrection were frightened into joining the army of the rebels. Fire and devastation were spread everywhere, and thousands were cruelly slain.

By many the blame for this insurrection was laid upon the Reformation. But there had been such revolts before the Reformation was begun, and the peasants in this instance merely endeavored to use the doctrines of the reformers to shield their lawless conduct. The reformers took a decided stand against their murderous practices. Luther sympathized with the peasants under their oppressions, but he could have no sympathy with the method which they pursued to obtain redress for their grievances. He published an "Exhortation to Peace on the Twelve Articles of the Peasants in Swabia," earnestly appealing to the consciences of princes and peasants. But, incited by their fanatical leaders, the peasants paid no heed to his exhortations, and continued their violent measures till they were completely vanquished by the princes at the battle of Frankhausen and reduced to submission.

◊ Thomas Münzer.

Melanchthon was called on personally to give his opinion of the matter. The peasants had rebelled in the Palatinate also. On the eighteenth of May the Elector of that State wrote to him that he had hitherto dealt very mildly with the peasants, and proposed to take up the consideration of the Twelve Articles in the assembly of deputies, which was to convene after Pentecost; and he requested Melanchthon, as one "who had been born and raised in the Palatinate, who was more learned and experienced in the Scriptures than others, and who was well known, and, doubtless, inclined to peace and

justice, to come to Heidelberg; or, if that was impossible, to send his opinion."

Melanchthon found that he could not go to Heidelberg; but he prepared a pamphlet "Against the Articles of the Peasants." This, as well as Luther's second pamphlet on the subject, gave offence to many. Melanchthon was called a court-theologian. He has often, since that time, been severely criticized for his pamphlet. Perhaps his verdict was needlessly harsh. But we must remember that it was given at a time when the peasants were plunging into all manner of lawlessness and perpetrating fearful atrocities. They had themselves rendered a milder verdict impossible from one to whom all disorder was an abomination. The peasants had said that they would submit their cause to the decision of God's word. Accordingly Melanchthon proceeded to explain the Scriptural doctrines which bore on the question. "There were many," he said, "who had, no doubt, sinned in ignorance, and who, if they were better instructed, would forsake such wicked ways and have regard for the judgment of God and their own souls." He referred to the thirteenth Chapter of Romans as the Christian's guide in these matters, and argued from it that the Gospel demands obedience to the government and forbids rebellion, even when rulers do evil. He insisted on the maintenance of order; but, at the same time, he counseled the princes to be just and merciful in their dealings with their subjects. In case, however, that the peasants cannot be prevailed upon to put an end to their wicked conduct, then, he said, they are to be treated as murderers. When the insurrection had been subdued, he added to his pamphlet an appendix, in which he appealed to the princes to exercise clemency toward their conquered subjects. The peasants, he said, had already suffered severely for their conduct, and "many of them had sinned through fear or folly."

During the progress of the peasants' war, the Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony died very peacefully on May 5, 1525. Melanchthon assisted Luther at the funeral services, and delivered a Latin oration, in which he dwelt upon the excellent character of the deceased ruler and his great love for God's word. The death of this prince was a great blow to Melanchthon. He liked the careful, moderate, prudent conduct of this elector. But when John the Constant, the brother of the deceased ruler, took charge of the government, it was found that he was as staunch a supporter of the Gospel

and as faithful a friend to Luther and Melanchthon as his predecessor has been.

ELECTOR JOHN THE CONSTANT.

◊ Elector John the Constant.

In the midst of these stirring times, in the month of June, 1525, Luther surprised Melanchthon and everybody else by his marriage with Catherine Von Bora. This marriage between Luther, who had been a monk, and Miss Von Bora, who had been a nun, created an immense sensation. Melanchthon thought that the step itself was right and proper. He had long before this defended the right of the clergy to marry. But he feared that it was ill-advised in Luther to take the step at that particular time. He feared that it

would detract from Luther's influence in that troubled period when his influence was so sorely needed. Nevertheless, he stood by his friend faithfully; and whenever Luther afterwards became disheartened by the new attacks which the report of his marriage brought upon him, Melanchthon encouraged him to the best of his ability. When the wedding dinner was given on June 27th, and Luther invited his parents and friends, Melanchthon was present among them, and added to the mirth of the festive occasion by flashes of wit and merriment.

Amid all the distractions and anxieties of this period, Melanchthon steadily directed his efforts to the advancement of education and the building up of good Christian schools. During a period covering many years he found time, in spite of his numerous other engagements, to give elementary instruction to a number of young men who lived with him in his own house. He did this on account of the lamentable lack of suitable preparatory schools. He lost no opportunity, however, to provide for this lack, whenever he found it possible to do so. In the spring of 1525, with Luther's help, he re-organized the schools of Eisleben and Magdeburg. In the fall of the same year, he went to Nuremberg and assisted in the establishment of a gymnasium[1] in that city; and in the following spring he returned to Nuremberg and formally opened the school. He delivered an address in Latin, in which he dwelt upon the importance of education, and the credit which the movers in this enterprise deserved. He declared that "the best defenses of a city lie in the culture, wisdom and virtue of its citizens;" and that "the cause of true education is the cause of God."

Nuremberg, at this time, was one of the most enlightened and prosperous cities of Germany. It numbered among its inhabitants some of the most distinguished intellects of the age, among whom were Willibald Pirkheimer, Jerome Baumgärtner, Lazarus Spengler, Jerome Ebner and Caspar ITutzel. With all of these, Melanchthon stood in intimate relations, and with Baumgärtner he carried on a life-long correspondence. Among his other friends in this city was the distinguished painter, Albrecht Dürer, who during this visit of Melanchthon painted a likeness of him which is considered one of the best in existence. After spending a short time very pleasantly in the company of these friends, Melanchthon returned to Wittenberg. He had hardly arrived there before he was attacked by a severe illness from which his friends feared that he would not recover. But by the fall of the year he was again able to resume his duties.

◊ Melanchthon by Dürer.

In January of the year 1526, he was formally appointed as a professor of theology; and his salary was raised to two hundred florins. This appointment was made much against his will. He feared, in his extreme

modesty and conscientiousness, that he would not be able, with his delicate health, to do full justice to the position. But Luther urged him to accept it; and, fearing that this influence might not be altogether sufficient to prevail upon his over-scrupulous colleague, he communicated with the elector, and requested him to write to Melanchthon. "Your Electoral Grace," he says, "has commanded the university to give Magister Philip two hundred florins per year. Now, however, the man proposes to decline it, because, he says, he is not able to read lectures regularly and without interruption. He declares that he cannot with a good conscience accept it. He thinks that your Electoral Grace will expect the impossible from him. My talking and remonstrances are of no avail. I pray your Electoral Grace, therefore, kindly explain the matter to him yourself, and make him understand that your Grace is satisfied if he only assists, according to his ability, in the theological department, just as he has done hitherto, whether it be but once a week or oftener." Finally Melanchthon's scruples were overcome, and he accepted the position and the increase of salary. the latter he certainly needed.

In the year 1527, Melanchthon took part with Luther in the visitation of the schools and churches of Saxony. It was high time for such a step. Affairs were in a wretched condition. In many places no religious instruction was given at all, because there were either no pastors and teachers stationed there, or those who were stationed there were grossly ignorant themselves. The greatest disorder imaginable reigned nearly everywhere. In one instance, it was found that in one congregation the pastor preached the Gospel, but that in another part of his parish he read the Romish mass. The financial condition of many of the churches was equally bad. Many of the legacies on which the churches depended for their support had been withdrawn, and on others the interest was withheld. It was the object of the visitation to bring order out of this chaos. Melanchthon was charged with making a beginning in Thuringia. The spiritual distress which he discovered rent his heart, and he often went aside and wept over what he saw.

As a basis for the re-organization of the churches and schools, Melanchthon was commanded by the elector to prepare an "Instruction of the Visitors to the Clergy of Saxony." This work was to contain a statement of the lines on which that re-organization was to be effected. To prepare such a work was by no means an easy task. It was necessary to give the

distinctive doctrines of the evangelical Church in a popular form, to guard them against misapprehension, and to give prominence to that which was practical and edifying. The work which Melanchthon was charged with preparing was to be the guide for placing all the churches of Saxony on an evangelical basis. Evangelical truth was to take the place of popish traditions; Scriptural ceremonies were to supersede Romish abuses. Yet all appearance of introducing novel or strange doctrines was to be avoided. It was a work, therefore, which required not only a deep insight into the essence of the Gospel, but rare tact and discretion. Melanchthon, however, was the very man for the occasion. He drew up a work which was admirably adapted to its purpose. It is valuable as an expression of Melanchthon's theological views, and shows that he viewed theology largely from an ethical standpoint.

Pastors, he says, are not only to preach of the forgiveness of sins, but also of the need of repentance; because there can be no true faith and no real forgiveness of sins without repentance. They are, therefore, not to omit the preaching of the Ten Commandments. The three essentials of a Christian life, he declares, are repentance, faith, and good works. These latter are necessary. God does not bestow grace on account of them, but only for Christ's sake. Yet the Christian must do good works, because God has commanded them. He also corrects some misapprehensions concerning the meaning of Christian liberty, and states that it consists of "freedom from the power of the devil and the wrath of God; freedom from the ceremonial law of Moses; freedom from absolute obedience to human regulations in the Church." He urges the preachers to seek the edification of their hearers, to refrain from abuse of persons, and to condemn the vices and sins of those to whom they preach. They are not to be continually declaiming against the pope and the bishops, but to preach those things which will conduce to a true Christian spirit and life in their congregations. He also added a chapter on the improvements to be made in the schools.

The doctrinal position of this work agreed with Luther's and received his approval. But its temper was so mild and conciliating, and it was worded so moderately in comparison with Lather's stormy utterances, that many of the Roman Catholics imagined that Melanchthon was tending toward Romanism again. They even made overtures to him. He says in a letter written to Camerarius about this time, that Faber, the court preacher of King

Ferdinand of Bohemia, had held out all manner of promises to induce him to desert the Lutheran cause.

An attack was made upon this book by John Agricola, rector of the school at Eisleben. He had hitherto been a friend of Melanchthon. But when this work appeared, he published a severe criticism of it, and maintained that to teach that repentance is to be brought about by preaching the law, is unscriptural and Romanizing. He raised a great stir by his writings. The elector, therefore, arranged a meeting at Torgau between Agricola, Melanchthon, Luther, and Bugenhagen, for the purpose of putting an end to the dispute. Apparently, Agricola was convinced of his error; but ten years later he began the controversy anew, and, in his antinomian zeal, went so far as to say that "Moses ought to be hanged on the gallows."

In the summer of 1527, on account of the plague which had broken out in Wittenberg, the university was removed to Jena. It was to that city, therefore, that Melanchthon, on his return from visiting the churches in Thuringia, wended his way. He resumed his labors at the university and devoted his attention to his lectures on Demosthenes and the proverbs of Solomon, and to the investigation of many ecclesiastical questions which arose. He also prepared two articles against the Anabaptists, in which he defended the practice of infant-baptism, explained the meaning, use, and advantage of the sacrament, and refuted the teachings of the Anabaptists concerning the government and community of goods. In October of the year 1528, he made a second tour of visitation through parts of Thuringia.

---

1. A high school or college.↩

11. The Second Diet Of Speyer. The Marburg Colloquy. 1529.

WHILE MELANCHTHON and others were busy with the visitation and re-organization of the churches in Saxony, a great peril seemed to threaten the evangeUcal cause. It was rumored that a league of Roman Catholic princes had been formed for the purpose of attacking the Lutherans. Philip of Hesse declared that he himself had obtained from Otto von Pack, counselor of Duke George of Saxony, a copy of a document, sealed with the ducal seal, which plainly stated that the Landgrave of Hesse and the Elector of Saxony were to be attacked and deprived of their dominions, if they did not renounce their heresies. He pictured the consequences of such a league so graphically, that the elector, who was generally cautious and conservative, consented to a counter-league with him. In accordance with this agreement, an army of twenty-six thousand men was immediately to be placed in the field. The landgrave was in favor of beginning operations at once. He actually led his army to the frontier. But the elector began to have scruples about the propriety and justice of such a war, and decided to seek the advice of his theologians. These replied that, whether the report of a Roman Catholic league was true or untrue, in neither case would the elector be justified in beginning warlike operations. They advised him to lay the whole matter before the emperor, and rather to break with Philip of Hesse than to wage an unjust war.

Melanchthon concurred in the opinion of the other theologians. He also wrote a special letter to the elector, in which he said: “In times of affliction it is certainly the greatest comfort to have a good conscience and to know that God is our friend. But if we should grasp the sword and begin war with an evil conscience, then would we lose this comfort.” The elector himself agreed with these opinions, but the landgrave was not satisfied. Writing to his father-in-law, Duke George, he demanded to know whether, or not, the duke was willing to sever his connection with the Roman Catholic league

and keep the peace. To his astonishment, the duke replied, that there was no such league in existence; that the report was false; and that the document which the landgrave had seen was a forgery of the deepest dye. To this day, the existence or non-existence of such a league is an open question. The evangelical party was not fully inclined to believe the declaration of Duke George, but the warlike preparations ceased.

With the relations between them thus strained, the princes of the realm assembled for the Imperial Diet at Speyer in the year 1529. Melanchthon accompanied the elector. At a previous diet, held in the same city in 1526, it had been decided, that "a universal, or at the 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 he able to render an account to God and the emperor." That decree had left the Reformation comparatively free to continue its progress. But at the second Diet of Speyer, now held, all this was changed. It was a diet in which the Roman Catholic princes manifested more open hostility toward the evangelical party than ever before. They were angry with themselves for adopting the resolution of the year 1526; and they were highly gratified, therefore, when, at the opening of this present diet, the emperor declared that, by virtue of the imperial power vested in him, he annulled the resolution of the previous diet. A new decree was passed, which insisted on the enforcement of the edict of Worms. As this edict had placed Luther and his adherents under the ban, its re-enactment filled the evangelical party with apprehension.

Melanchthon's soul was heavy with grief and forebodings. His natural disposition inclined him rather to magnify than to make light of difficulties and dangers. He did not possess the gigantic faith of Luther, which was content to entrust the Church to the care of God. Consequently, the proceedings of the diet filled him with dismay. He trembled for the security of the evangelical cause. Perhaps the excessive anxiety which took possession of him may account for the unjust censure which he passed upon the conduct of the Lutheran princes in this diet. He vainly imagined that the Roman Catholics would not have passed the obnoxious decree at all, or would have annulled it again, if some minor and unessential points had been conceded to them. But he credited the Roman Catholics with good intentions which they never possessed. They were bent on crushing out the Reformation. The princes judged far more correctly than he of the temper

and spirit of their foes, and of the course which had to be pursued in dealing with them. Yet it must be said to Melanchthon's credit, that after the decree of the diet was passed, he was as much opposed as any one to yielding obedience to its unholy demands; and that he advised, as a last resort, the presentation of a formal protest against the resolution of the diet.

Accordingly, on April 15, 1529, the Lutherans presented their celebrated *Protest* and Appeal. Those who signed it, and thus became the first to bear the name of Protestants, were the Elector John of Saxony, the Elector George of Brandenburg, the Dukes Ernest and Francis of Luneburg, the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, Wolfgang, Prince of Anhalt, and the representatives of fourteen imperial cities.

On the sixth of May Melanchthon arrived again at Wittenberg. Both he and Luther expected that a religious war would follow. Melanchthon was so troubled at the prospect that Luther wrote: "Philip worries himself so much about the Church and the general welfare, that he is injuring his health." To these public sorrows, which weighed him down, were added, also, private griefs. In July of this year his mother died; in August his little son, George.

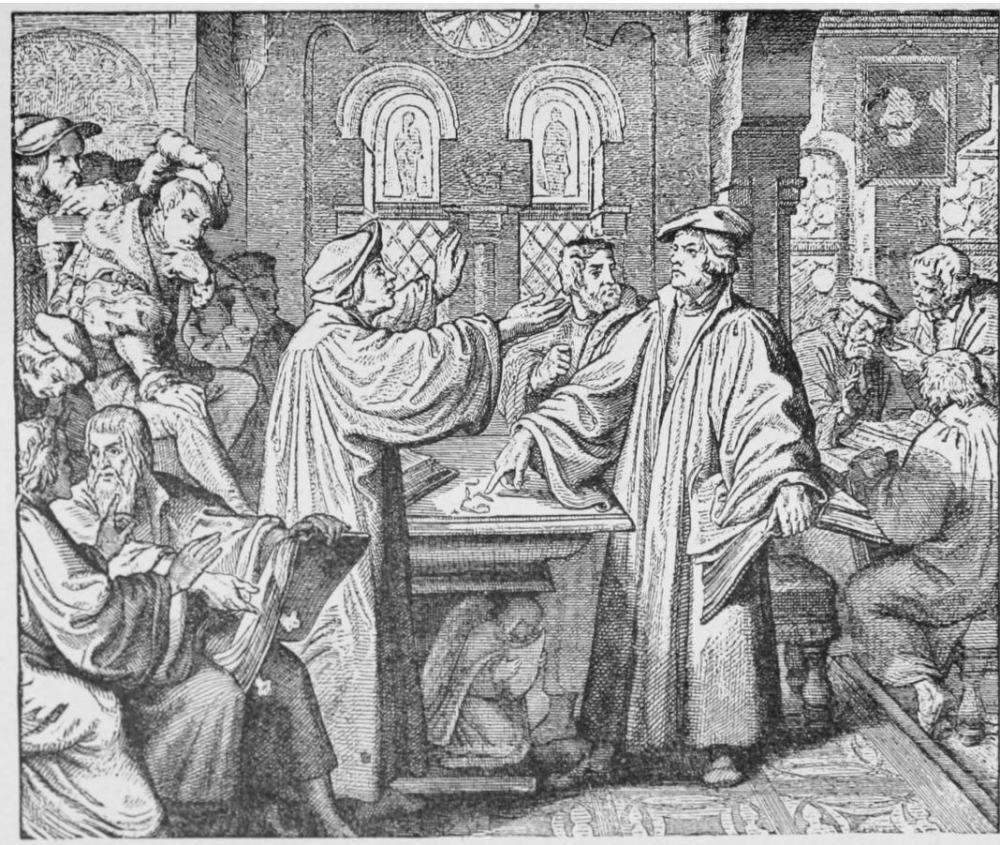
WOLFGANG, PRINCE OF ANHALT.

◊ Wolfgang, Prince of Anhalt.

While the Protestant camp was thus seriously threatened by the Roman Catholics from without, it was hampered by dissensions within. The Reformed party, led by Zwingli of Switzerland, differed from the Lutherans on a number of points, but particularly on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. This divergence of views had led to violent controversies between them. Luther, and with him Melanchthon, maintained that they must abide by the plain words of Christ, "This is my body; This is my blood." They held,

therefore, that Christ is really present in the Lord's Supper. Zwingli, on the other hand, denied the real presence. He maintained that when Christ said, " This is my body," He meant, "This signifies my body." He claimed that Christ's body could not be present at so many different places at the same time. This was not only a limitation of divine power, but a denial of the participation of Christ's glorified body in the attributes of his divinity.

Philip of Hesse was greatly concerned about this disagreement. He thought that the political situation imperatively demanded a union between the Lutherans and the Reformed. He therefore planned the holding of a conference, in which the differences should be discussed and an agreement, if possible, be reached. Neither Luther nor Melanchthon believed that such a conference would secure the desired result. But the landgrave persisted in his project. Finally, in October, 1529, a Colloquy was held at Marburg. On the one side were Luther, Melanchthon, Jonas, Brenz, and Osiander; on the other, Zwingli, OEcolampadius, Bucer, and Hedio. After a discussion lasting several days, the Zwinglians accepted the Lutheran view in everything but the Lord's Supper. On this they would not yield. It was agreed, however, that for the sake of peace, all parties should refrain in the future from controversies on the point on which they had failed to unite. Fifteen articles, prepared by the Lutherans, were then produced, and all were subscribed by the Zwinglians except the last, which maintained the real presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper.



COLLOQUY OF MARBURG.

◊ Colloquy of Marburg.

The Zwinglians now wanted to be acknowledged by the Lutherans as brethren. But as long as they maintained their erroneous view of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, and refused to subordinate their reason to the plain word of Scripture, Luther felt that he could not do so. He told them, "Ye have a different spirit from ours." Luther has been severely censured by many for this refusal. But he could not do otherwise. If he had accepted the proffered hand of fellowship, it would have been an acknowledgment on his part that he regarded the difference of views between them as unessential. But he could not make such an acknowledgment. There was not only a difference of doctrine but a difference of spirit between the two reformers. Luther unconditionally accepted the plain text of Scripture; Zwingli refused to accept what he could not understand. No one, we think, will claim that Melanchthon was

polemically inclined or was unwilling to make concessions for the sake of peace. He has been blamed, and justly too, for yielding too much. But even Melanchthon, mild and peace-loving as he was, could not consent, any more than Luther, to accept the hand of fellowship and brotherhood with the Zwinglians. He saw that vast perils threatened the pure truth of God's Word if the Zwinglian method of interpretation prevailed. He wrote to a friend concerning the Zwinglians at this Colloquy: "They seemed to be more trifling even than they had been before this conference. They contended very strongly that we should call them brethren. But look at their stupidity; while they condemn us, they yet desire to be considered by us as brethren. We cannot give our consent to this."

12. The Diet Of Augsburg. 1530.

THE YEAR 1530 was, unquestionably, one of the most important in the history of the Reformation. It was also a momentous one in the life of Melanchthon. In the public negotiations and transactions of that year, no one took a more important part than he.

The Emperor Charles V. had defeated the Turks, made peace with King Francis of France, and become reconciled with the pope. He had leisure now to give his attention to the religious difficulties which disturbed his realm. Accordingly in the beginning of the year 1530, he summoned a diet to meet on April 8th, at Augsburg. In his proclamation, he promised to give an impartial hearing to both sides in the controversy, so that a just decision might be reached. But the recollection of the action of the diet of Speyer of the previous year, and expressions which the emperor had made since that time, caused many of the Lutherans to doubt the sincerity of his peaceful declarations. Some of them even considered it dangerous to attend the diet, and spoke of resorting to arms. But better counsel finally prevailed, and they resolved to attend.

◊ Charles V.

On March the 14th, the Elector John of Saxony directed Luther, Melanchthon, Jonas, and Bugenhagen, to prepare, for presentation at the diet, a statement of the doctrines and ceremonies in dispute. By March 21st, the first three of these theologians were to bring their statement to Torgau and be ready to accompany the elector to Augsburg. The time allotted for

the preparation of this important document was exceedingly brief But fortunately there were on hand some articles which were adapted to the purpose. At Marburg fifteen articles had been drawn up by Luther to effect an agreement with the Zwinglians; and on the basis of these, Luther, with the assistance of the other theologians, had prepared the seventeen articles of Schwabach. These were now revised to express the doctrinal position of the reformers; and special articles on the abuses prevailing in the Roman Catholic Church were drawn up. The latter, now known as the Torgau Articles proper, together with the revised Articles of Schwabach, were then taken to Torgau and laid before the elector. He was pleased with them, and directed Melanchthon to give them a finished form, and write an introduction to them.

◊ Coburg.

These preparations having been made, the elector, his theologians, and a retinue of one hundred and sixty horsemen, set out on April 3rd, for the city of Augsburg. They traveled leisurely by way of Eisenach and Weimar till they arrived at Coburg. Here, in the castle of the Duke of Coburg, near the boundary of the elector's dominions, Luther was left behind. It was unsafe for him to travel farther. He was still resting under the papal excommunication and the imperial ban. In the elector's dominions, and surrounded by his friends, he was comparatively safe. But if he had ventured to appear in Augsburg, he would certainly have been seized or assassinated. An imperial safe-conduct was denied him: and, much as his heart yearned to go, he had to remain behind. Upon Melanchthon, therefore, devolved the duty of taking, as far as possible, Luther's place in the diet, and becoming the chief representative of the the Lutheran cause.

On the second of May the electoral party arrived in Augsburg. During the journey Melanchthon had employed his spare time in the preparation of the Confession which was to be presented at the diet. When, on his arrival, he found the emperor and many of the princes still absent, he continued to devote himself assiduously to this difficult undertaking. To Luther belonged the substance of the Confession, but to Melanchthon we are indebted for its perfect form. Careful in his style, appreciating the necessity of selecting the proper words in a document so important, and gifted with a wonderful power of clear and exact expression, no more suitable person could have been found for that work than Melanchthon. On May 11th, he had the Confession completed and ready for presentation. A messenger was dispatched with it to Coburg for Luther's examination and approval. Luther replied; "I have read the Apology (Confession) of Magister Philip. I am well pleased with it, and I find nothing to improve or alter in it; neither would it do for me to attempt it, because I cannot tread so softly and gently. May Christ our Lord help that it may bring forth much and great fruit, as we hope and pray. Amen."

Inasmuch, however, as the emperor still delayed his coming, Melanchthon continued his work of revision and endeavored to give the Confession a still more perfect form. The pains which he took with this task were extraordinary. He dreaded lest in so critical a document, he might, by some incautious statement or some lack of precision, be to blame for very evil consequences. He thought that he could not be conscientious or scrupulous enough. Every word of the German and Latin text, he felt, must

be carefully weighed before it was employed. Often his anxiety deprived him of sleep at night; and often, with tears in his eyes, he complained to his friends of the heavy burden resting upon him. By May 22nd, the Confession had assumed a new form, and was again sent to Luther. Still this conscientious servant of God was not satisfied. He continued to toil at his task of revision and improvement; and a third time, in its final form, the Confession was sent to Coburg for Luther's approval.

While Melanchthon was busily engaged in This work, he was greatly in demand on other accounts. It was necessary, under existing circumstances, to decide beforehand how the Lutherans ought to conduct themselves, should the emperor see fit to make of the Lutherans various demands of a religious nature. Thus, for instance, a command came from the emperor prohibiting the Lutherans from preaching in Augsburg;, until the religious difficulties had been settled. The elector immediately sought Melanchthon's advice.

Melanchthon replied that, inasmuch as they were the emperor's guests in Augsburg, they ought to obey. With this opinion Luther himself agreed. But the elector and the Saxon chancellor, Brueck, could hardly be prevailed upon to yield. They protested to the emperor against the injunction. Finally an agreement was reached, in accordance with which no one whatever was to preach in Augsburg except by appointment of the emperor.

Melanchthon was greatly disturbed during this time by the conduct of the Landgrave Philip of Hesse. This fiery and impetuous prince, while he was ready to sign the Confession, was also exceedingly anxious that the Zwinglians, who were present at Augsburg, should be recognized as brethren. To this Melanchthon was not willing to agree. But the landgrave, greatly to Melanchthon's discomfort, persisted in his efforts. The latter found it necessary, therefore, to write to Luther and request him to communicate with the landgrave upon the subject.

It was not till June 15th, that the emperor, accompanied by his brother. King Ferdinand, the papal legate Cardinal Campegius, and a brilliant train of soldiers and courtiers, arrived at Augsburg. Almost immediately upon his arrival, the Lutherans were obliged to take a determined stand in opposition to his wishes. They refused, as a matter of conscience, to take part in the procession of the festival of Corpus Christi which occurred on the following day.

The diet was formally opened June 20th, and announcement was made of the matters to be acted upon. These were the war with the Turks, and the religious dissensions of the empire. The emperor declared that if the edict of Worms had been preserved, the religious difficulties of the realm would not have assumed such large proportions; but that, nevertheless, the questions at issue should now receive careful consideration. This language of the emperor was not exactly of the kind to inspire the Lutherans with the hope of a favorable outcome of the diet. Yet it was mild in comparison with the utterances of many of the Roman Catholic princes. Melanchthon was filled with forebodings, and felt constrained to make every effort for the maintenance of peace. Unfortunately, he permitted himself to be drawn into negotiations which have not redounded to his credit.

Immediately after the emperor's arrival, Alphonsius Waldesius or Valdez, a secretary to the emperor, entered into communication with Melanchthon, and, in accordance with a preconcerted plan of the Romanists, represented to him that the emperor's conception of the Lutheran doctrines was entirely wrong, and that, if his Imperial Majesty were properly enlightened, a settlement of the pending difficulties could be easily effected. He declared that in Spain it was supposed that the Lutherans denied the existence of God and the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and that the best service which could be rendered to God was to kill them. He asked what the Lutherans really taught. Melanchthon replied that there were only a few questions after all on which the two parties actually differed, namely, the use of both forms in the sacrament, the marriage of priests, and the celebration of the mass. If these questions were satisfactorily settled, the others, he claimed, could be readily adjusted. Shortly afterward Valdez informed him that the subject had been well received by the emperor, and that Melanchthon was requested by his Imperial Majesty to draw up a brief statement of the articles in question and transmit them privately, because it would be well to avoid public stir or controversy. But the elector heard of the matter, and put a stop to it. The articles requested were never prepared. All that Melanchthon was allowed to do was to show to Valdez the Confession which had been drawn up for public presentation. But this was not what the imperial secretary wanted; and after he had read it, he declared that "it contained more bitterness than its adversaries would consent to endure."

When it had thus become apparent that the Lutherans would not consent to have their cause disposed of in this underhand way, the emperor suddenly, on June 22nd, commanded the elector and his allies to be ready on Friday, June 24th, for the reading of their Confession of Faith. This sudden action considerably embarrassed the Lutherans. Melanchthon had been prevented, by the negotiations with Valdez, from fully completing his work upon the Confession. No copies of it had as yet been made and no introduction written. The Lutherans requested a day's delay, but their request was denied. In great haste, therefore, with the aid of Chancellor Brueck, a suitable introduction was prepared and the German text transcribed. But the transcription of the Latin text was not completed in time, and Melanchthon's own manuscript had to be used. Nine princes and cities signed the Confession. Some of the Roman Catholics feared the effect which the public reading of the Confession might produce upon the minds of those who heard it. They endeavored, therefore, at the last moment, to prevent it from being read, and said it would be sufficient if the Confession were simply presented to the emperor. But the Protestants insisted that their honor was at stake, that they had been publicly accused and must publicly answer. The voice of the truth was not to be stifled by its enemies. The Confession was read. But owing to the lateness of the hour, its reading was postponed until the next day after the one which had been at first appointed for the purpose. The emperor commanded it to be read in Latin; but the Lutherans maintained that, on German soil, it should be read in the German language. And they prevailed.

Accordingly, on June 25, 1530, a day that shall remain memorable as long as time endures. Chancellor Bayer read that noble document, the Augsburg Confession, in a voice so loud and clear that it was distinctly heard, not only in the hall where the illustrious assemblage of princes was gathered, but beyond it, in the court, where a vast multitude was standing in eager expectation. With a calm dignity inspired by the consciousness of the rectitude of their cause, the Lutheran princes and delegates listened to the reading of their "good confession before many witnesses." Well did Spalatin say, "One of the greatest deeds ever done in the world has been done this day," and Dr. Brueck declare, as he presented the Confession, "With the help of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, this confession shall remain invincible against the gates of hell, to eternity." Many of the Roman Catholic princes and priests learned for the first time, from the hearing of

this confession, what the Lutherans really taught, and formed a juster conception of the evangelical cause. The bishop of Augsburg declared to his friends, “What has here been read is the pure and unadulterated truth; we cannot gainsay it.”


DIET OF AUGSBURG.

◊ Diet of Augsburg.

The character of the Augsburg Confession could not well have been better adapted to the occasion and purpose of its presentation. It was plain, simple, clear, scriptural, and firm but irenical in tone. It was meant to allay controversy and disputation; to obtain, if possible, a favorable hearing for the truth; and to put the Lutherans in the right light before the emperor and the diet. There was no man living whose character and talents fitted him so well for its preparation as Melanchthon. Richly gifted with the faculties of clear thought and exact expression, he presented the doctrines of the Lutheran Church so plainly and distinctly that a misconception of them was almost impossible. Peace-loving by nature, and dreading the consequences of a rupture with the emperor, he framed the wording of the Confession so mildly that, if a favorable reception of the evangelical doctrines had been attainable at all, it would certainly have been accorded to this presentation of them. If Melanchthon had done nothing else but write the incomparable

Augsburg Confession, he would richly deserve to be held in grateful remembrance and lasting renown by every lover of the truth.

The Augsburg Confession consisted of two principal parts or divisions: the first contained twenty-one doctrinal articles; the second, seven articles on the abuses which were to be condemned. The subjects treated in the first part are:

1. Of God;
2. Of Original Sin;
3. Of the Son of God and the Holy Spirit;
4. Of Justification;
5. Of the Ministry of the Church;
6. Of New Obedience;
7. Of the Church;
8. What the Church is;
9. Of Baptism;
10. Of the Lord's Supper;
11. Of Confession;
12. Of Repentance;
13. Of the Use of Sacraments;
14. Of Ecclesiastical Orders;
15. Of Ecclesiastical Rites;
16. Of Civil Affairs;
17. Of Christ's Return to Judgment;
18. Of Free Will;
19. Of the Cause of Sin;
20. Of Good Works;
21. Of the Worship of Saints.

The articles of the second part are as follows:

22. Of Both Kinds in the Lord's Supper;
23. Of the Marriage of Priests;
24. Of the Mass;
25. Of Confession;
26. Of the Distinctions of Meats and of Traditions;
27. Of Monastic Vows;

28. Of Ecclesiastical Power.

What impression the reading of the Confession produced upon the emperor, it is difficult to determine. According to some reports, he listened with apparent indifference, either because he did not understand German sufficiently, or because he had already made up his mind what course to pursue. But when the reading was finished and Chancellor Brueck was about to present to the imperial secretaries the German and Latin text of the Confession, the emperor graciously extended his hand to receive them, delivered the German copy to the Archbishop of Mayence for preservation in the imperial archives, and kept the Latin copy for himself. Subsequently, he had his copy translated into Italian and Spanish. In this reply to the Lutherans, he said that he would deliberate further upon this important matter, and expected of them that they would not print their Confession. But inasmuch as, in a very short time, defective copies of it became circulated, and no less than seven different faulty editions surreptitiously made their appearance in print, Melanchthon published an authorized edition of the Augsburg Confession in German and Latin, while the diet was yet in session.

◊ Chancellor Gregor V. Brueck.

The emperor now took counsel with the heads of the papal party. The most moderate among them advised him to have the Confession examined by impartial men. Others urged the immediate enforcement of the edict of Worms. A third party demanded a written confutation of the Lutheran Confession. The counsel of these last was adopted; and a number of zealous

Roman Catholic theologians were appointed by the emperor to draw up such a confutation. The Lutherans were asked whether they would rest their case with the articles already presented, or whether they had any others which they desired to submit. They replied, July 10th, that there did, indeed, remain many other errors and abuses which deserved censure, but they did not think it necessary to present these separately; for the condemnation of the remaining abuses was involved in that of those already presented, because all were the outgrowth of similar causes.

For six weeks the Roman Catholics labored at the preparation of their confutation. In the meantime Melanchthon was in a very troubled state of mind, and his conduct was not always such as can be commended. He longed for a peaceable solution of the pending difficulties, but began to fear that it might not be attained. So he meditated day and night how a reconciliation might be effected. He hoped even against hope. When everything indicated that the Roman Catholics would never consent to renounce their errors of doctrine and practice, he still planned for the attainment of the unattainable. This excessive desire for peace, and this persistent blindness to the impossibility of obtaining it upon an evangelical basis, was Melanchthon's evil genius. In former days, he had more than once stood up boldly for the defense of the truth. But now his exaggeration of the importance of peace led him to take many doubtful steps. After all, it resolved itself into a question of faith. Luther never doubted the ultimate triumph of the Gospel. Melanchthon constantly trembled for it, and thought that he must help to save it; and this anxiety not only threatened to undermine his constitution, hut involved him in conciliatory efforts which threatened to compromise the Gospel, and which certainly did compromise himself.

His mental distress was so great, that he neglected his correspondence with Luther until others told him that Luther was irritated by it. Then he hastened to make amends, and communicated to his friend at Coburg his trials and fears, and presented these as his reason for not writing oftener. Luther wrote him a pretty sharp letter in reply, and we are bound to admit that Melanchthon needed and deserved it. He says: "Grace and peace in Christ; in Christ, I say, and not in the world. As regards the apology for your silence, my dear Mr. Philip, we will speak of that at some other time. But as regards the great anxiety of which you write and which is wearing you out, I am bitterly opposed to it. That this anxiety has taken such a

strong hold of you, is not because the occasion for it is so great, but because of our unbelief The danger was much greater in the days of John Huss and of others, than it is in our times. And even if the danger were great, He also is great who has begun and conducts this matter. The cause is not ours. Why do you fret yourself so incessantly? If the cause be unjust, let us recant; but if it be just, why do you make God, who has given us such great promises, a liar, when he tells us to be of good cheer and content? He says, 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord;' and again, 'The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart' Do you suppose that he speaks thus to the wind or to beasts? I, also, often shudder; but not always. Your philosophy and not your theology torments you so, as though you could accomplish anything by your useless worry. What can the devil do more than slay us? I beg of you, for God's sake, that, as you defend yourself in all other respects, you will defend yourself against yourself. You are your own greatest enemy; you give Satan so many weapons to use against you."

In reply to one of Melanchthon's letters, asking what further might be yielded for the sake of peace, Luther wrote that more than enough had already been yielded; that he could not for a moment think of conceding more than the Confession had conceded, unless he was convinced from Scripture, or by more weighty reasons than were now brought to bear upon him; and that he would rather fall with Christ than stand with the emperor. Unfortunately, Melanchthon lacked the resolute spirit and heroic faith of his friend. He had, indeed, no intention of giving up any part of the Gospel; but he was ready, for the sake of peace, to concede the very last point which did not absolutely conflict with the Scriptures.

It must be said to his credit, however, that when placed before ,the alternative of denying Christ or suffering for refusal to do so, he did not hesitate to decide for Christ. This is plain from his interview with the papal legate, Campegius. Surrounded by a large number of his bitterest enemies, and threatened with the wrath of the emperor and his most powerful princes if he refused, Melanchthon was asked if he would yield. But his reply was: "We cannot yield nor be unfaithful to the truth. But we pray, for God's sake and Christ's, that our adversaries will not take offense at this, but will, if they are able, dispute with us; and concede to us those things which we cannot with a good conscience forsake." When Campegius and the others thundered threats without number at him, he replied: "We commit our cause to the Lord God. If God be for us, who can be against us? Finally, let come

what will, fortune or misfortune, we must abide by it." Whatever other missteps Melanchthon may have made, he nevertheless deserves to be honored for the decision with which, after all, when confronted with the alternative, he chose rather to suffer than to deny his Saviour.

If only Melanchthon had let matters rest here, his record at the diet of Augsburg would have been creditable enough. But not long afterward he wrote a very humble and obsequious letter to this same Cardinal Campegius, in which he said that the Lutherans would be most obedient servants of the pope, if only they were not rejected because they had abolished some abuses. He expected a favorable reply; but he was informed that the cardinal could take no steps without the consent of the Roman Catholic Princes. Consequently, Melanchthon had his labor for his pains, and the not very comfortable reflection, that he had made a sad spectacle of himself, had lowered himself in everybody's eyes, and yet had not helped his cause in the least. The cardinal, of course, did not keep this letter a secret; and Melanchthon had to endure many a bitter rebuke on account of it. From beyond the Alpine mountains there came a letter from one of his admirers in Venice, inquiring whether it was true that he had written such a humble letter to the cardinal, and begging him to remember that all true Christians in Europe were anxiously looking to him in these troubled times and resting their greatest hopes upon him.

In the meantime the Roman Catholic theologians, among whom were Eck and Cochlaeus, finished their so-called Confutation of the Augsburg Confession. Their first draft had been so harsh that the emperor bade them prepare a new one. At last it was ready, and was read before the diet on August 3rd. It followed the arrangement of the Augsburg Confession, but was filled with falsehoods and puerile arguments. When it had been read, however, the emperor gave the Lutherans to understand that, after this complete confutation of their position, they must forsake their errors and re-unite with the holy Roman Church. If they refused, he would act "as behooved the protector and guardian of the Holy Christian Church, and a true Christian emperor." It began to look as if war were inevitable.

But while the emperor appeared ready to resort to arms, he was prevented from doing so by the differences which existed among the Roman Catholic princes themselves. They could not agree upon the policy to be pursued. Finally it was determined to effect a compromise. On August 6th, a committee consisting of a number of Roman Catholic princes and

bishops held a meeting and drew up a document for that purpose. But the conditions were such that they could not be accepted by the Lutherans. Melanchthon, indeed, advised that the princes ask for the waiving of a few points, and accept the balance. But the princes thought otherwise, and replied to the proposal, that while they were disposed to maintain peace and harmony, they could not and would not be untrue to God's word. Melanchthon rendered himself particularly obnoxious to many because he was willing to restore jurisdiction to the Roman bishops. Theoretically, his plan might have done; but practically, it would have had very evil consequences. For if the bishops had regained their jurisdiction, they would soon have put an end to the pure preaching of the Word of God.

Philip of Hesse was completely dissatisfied with the course which affairs were taking. He left the diet in disgust on August 16th. He was opposed to yielding anything whatever, and wrote to his counselors whom he left at the diet: "I have read your report; but I cannot consent that such measures as you mention, whether proposed by the papists or by the evangelical party, shall be adopted by us. For they are measures which imply deception and are consequently suited to the papists only. Abide by the directions which I left with you. If the papists would permit in their countries the pure preaching of the Gospel, allow the marriage of priests and monks, and abolish prayers for the dead and the invocation of the saints, much for charity's sake might be conceded to them. The preaching of the Gospel would, no doubt, by degrees reform the remaining abuses. But if the papists want to keep on sitting in their devil's roses and prohibit the pure preaching of the Gospel, freedom of marriage and the administration of the Lord's Supper in accordance with Christ's institution, then you must not recede one hair's breadth. The jurisdiction of the bishops is not to be allowed; for they are unwilling to permit the preaching of the Gospel in their territories. What a farce it would be, it they should appoint, as examiners of Christian preachers, men who in doctrine and life are no better than a Caiphas, an Annas or a Pilate! Show to the cities this my handwriting, and tell them to be men, not women. Stop the play of that worldly-wise philosopher, that timid Philip."

The evangelical party agreed, however, once more to argue the points of difference with their opponents. On August 15th, a committee, consisting of two princes, two jurists, and three theologians from each side was formed, and began its sittings the following day. The articles of the Augsburg

Confession were taken up one by one for consideration. In many of the doctrinal articles the Roman Catholic theologians agreed with the Lutherans, and in others of them they showed a disposition to find fault rather with the wording than the substance. On a few of them , such as those on Justification, Repentance and Good Works, they could not agree. But the greatest difficulty was encountered in the articles on the abuses. No agreement whatever could be reached on the denial of the cup to the laity, celibacy and private masses. There were, all told, fourteen points on which they were unable to unite.

When the larger commission had failed to effect an agreement, a smaller one was formed on August 24th. This consisted of only six persons, Melanchthon and Eck being the only theologians present. But This effort at agreement also failed. Melanchthon had at last begun to see that making concessions to people whose only concern was to shield the Roman hierarchy and who had no desire to learn or obey the truth, could not possibly do any good; and he consequently took a much bolder stand than he had in the earlier discussions. But now, because of the contrast between his conduct in the earlier and later stages of the negotiations, he was blamed and upbraided by both sides. The Lutherans found fault with him on account of the willingness he had displayed to yield so much for the sake of peace; the Roman Catholics, on the other hand, accused him of insincerity in his earlier conduct, because he took a so much bolder position toward the end.

It would have been far better for Melanchthon's peace of mind, as well as for his credit with his contemporaries and posterity, if he had taken an uncompromising: stand for the truth from the very beginning of the negotiations. But while his conduct cannot be justified, it can, to a large extent at least, be explained by his excessive desire for peace and his false estimate of the character of his enemies. Perhaps he credited his adversaries with the same openness to conviction, and the same desire to know and obey the truth, which he himself possessed. But he should have known better. His own past experience should have taught him that the men with whom he was dealing were seeking only to uphold the papal system at all hazards. Perhaps he did know better; but the imminent dangers which he saw threatening the evangelical cause warped his judgment, so that he attempted what even his own reason in calmer times would have told him was altogether impossible.

With all his exalted gifts, Melanchthon was not equal to the difficult position in which he found himself at the head of the Protestant party in Augsburg. He lacked that determined and decisive character, that keen insight into human nature, that clear perception of the unalterable hostility and malevolent designs of his foes, which Luther possessed in so remarkable a degree, and which, had Melanchthon possessed them, would have enabled him to pursue a steadfast and consistent course, and to steer clear of negotiations in which nothing could possibly be accomplished except at a sacrifice of the Gospel. He should have recognized and boldly faced the truth, that, dreadful as was the alternative, war would still be preferable to any compromise which he might hope to effect with such enemies. Luther knew his opponents better. He knew that they were too shrewd to be satisfied with a concession of non-essentials and too strongly attached to Rome to yield up any of her errors; that they would be satisfied with nothing short of the suppression of Lutheranism; and that peace could be secured only by a sacrifice of the truth.

It was Melanchthon's misfortune not to recognize this, or if he did recognize it, to permit his fears to get the better of his judgment.

Melanchthon opposed any kind of an agreement with the Zwinglians who had come to Augsburg. The emperor hated them worse than he did the Lutherans. The political tenets which they combined with their theology, and their denial of the real presence in the Lord's Supper, made them particularly obnoxious to Charles V. When, therefore, the Strasburg theologians Bucer and Capito sought an interview with Melanchthon, he refused to meet them. He told them that he entertained no hostility toward them, but that he could not convince himself of the truth of their doctrine, nor assume the responsibility of burdening the princes with the odium which its approval would cause them to incur. Consequently, the Zwinglians were obliged to hand in their own separate Tetrapolitan Confession.

After the negotiations of the smaller commission, mentioned above, had proved fruitless, the emperor summoned the Lutheran princes before him and declared to them, by the mouth of Count Frederick of the Palatinate, that he was exceedingly displeased to see so small a minority obstinately defend their own peculiar doctrines in the face of the whole world; that he would indeed pray the pope to call a council; hut that he demanded of them in the meanwhile, that they return to the faith of the Romish Church,

because it was proper that the minority should yield to the majority. The princes protested against this demand, and declared that they would abide by the Word of God. And on the same day, as an emphasis to this protest, Melanchthon, with the assistance of the other theologians, drew up a paper in which the Romish private mass was rejected in unequivocal terms. The moderate Roman Catholic princes again endeavored to effect an agreement, but accomplished nothing.

Finally, on September 22nd, the emperor summoned the Estates before him to hear the decree of the diet. He said that the Lutherans had been thoroughly confuted from the Four Gospels and other writings, and that he would give them till April 15th, of the following year to decide whether, in the articles still disputed^ they would unite with him and the pope or not. During this period of grace they should not publish or sell anything new in matters of faith, should draw no one over to their side, and should join him in suppressing the Sacramentarians and Anabaptists.

Thereupon Chancellor Brueck arose in behalf of the Lutherans, and declared that they did not by any means consider themselves confuted by the paper which had been prepared by their opponents; and that they desired to submit another document in defense of the Augsburg Confession. But the emperor would not permit them to do so. This other document to which Brueck referred was the first sketch of Melanchthon's "Apology of the Augsburg Confession." Melanchthon had for some time been in consultation with the other theologians, and finally, between September 12th and 20th, he had prepared this work. But as he had nothing but Camerarius' notes, taken during the reading of the Confutation, to serve for his guidance in writing the first sketch of the Apology, he afterwards, from November 1530 to April 1531, having meanwhile obtained a copy of the Confutation, rewrote the entire work. It was composed in Latin, and was afterwards translated into German by Justus Jonas. It was adopted as one of the confessional symbols of the Lutheran Church, and it is, perhaps, the most thorough and learned of them all. The ability with which it is executed may be judged from the fact that, at a later time, in reply to a fierce assault of the Jesuits, the Apology without note or comment was reprinted as an ample refutation of all their charges.

◊ Justas Jonas.

After the emperor had refused to receive the Apology of Melanchthon, the religious negotiations of the diet were, of course, at an end. Consequently, on the following day, September 23rd, the elector, with Melanchthon and the other theologians, departed from Augsburg, leaving a few of the Saxon counselors behind to hear the general final decree of the

diet. The travelers proceeded through Nuremberg to Coburg, where Luther was anxiously awaiting them.

Luther had foreseen the outcome of the diet, and had written to his friends shortly before they left Augsburg: “More has been accomplished, after all, than we dared hoped for. You have rendered to Caesar the things which are Caesar’s and unto God the things which are God’s. To the emperor you have rendered full obedience by appearing at the diet at the cost of so much money, labor and trouble; but to God the special offering of the Confession, which shall penetrate into all the courts of kings and princes, shall rule in the midst of its enemies, and shall proclaim its sound to all the world, so that he who will not believe it is left without excuse. May Christ confess us as you have confessed him, and glorify those who glorify him. Amen.” To Melanchthon himself Luther had written: “Ye have worthily accomplished God’s holy work, as becometh saints. Rejoice in the Lord and be joyful, ye righteous. Ye have suffered long enough in the world. Look up now and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. I will pronounce you holy, as true members of Christ. And what other praise would ye seek?”

On the way to Wittenberg, Melanchthon was continually meditating upon his Apology. He wrote upon it even while he was eating his meals. Luther once snatched the pen from his hands, saying: “We can serve God not only by work but also by rest.” After an absence of nearly seven months, Melanchthon beheld once more his beloved Wittenberg, rejoined his family circle, re-entered his lecture-hall, and sat down again at his own desk. One of his first occupations was to publish the Augsburg Confession.

On November 19th, the final decree of the diet was published. It condemned all the doctrines of the Lutherans which conflicted with Romish teaching and practice; and commanded that all innovations which had been introduced should be abolished, and all things restored to their ancient state. No Protestant hand signed this decree.

13. The Schmalkald League. The Religious Peace Of Nuremberg. Melanchthon Invited To France And England. 1531-1535.

THE FINAL DECREE of the Diet of Augsburg had been so full of menace to the Lutherans, that even Melanchthon acknowledged the propriety and necessity of taking proper measures of defense. A league was therefore formed at Schmalkald by the Lutheran , princes on March 29, 1531. The four Zwinglian cities were also received into the league. Melanchthon did not oiFer any objections. He knew that the emperor already hated the Lutherans as much as he very well could. Besides, Bucer had approached more nearly to the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper, and confessed that Christ's body is truly present in that sacrament. Only the manner of the union of Christ's body with the visible elements remained in dispute.

When the emperor saw that the Protestants were united for mutual defense and that possibly an alliance might be effected by them with France and England, he began to think it prudent to assume a less warlike aspect. He was threatened too with a new attack by the sultan Suleiman, and had to make terms either with the Turks or with the Protestants. He decided upon the latter course, and called a diet at Ratisbon (Regensburg). But in the meantime, the the Zwinglians suffered a severe defeat at Cappel, and Zwingli himself was among the slain. This seemed to the emperor a favorable time to suppress the evangelical party in Germany. He therefore sent an embassy to offer to the sultan most ignominious terms of peace. But

the sultan would not accept them, and preferred to prosecute his purpose of establishing a universal dominion.

◊ Sultan Soliman.

The emperor was thus reduced to the necessity of entreating the assistance of the Protestants. But they were willing to lend aid only on certain conditions. At the diet, held at Ratisbon and afterwards transferred to Nuremberg, the Protestants demanded, as the price of their assistance, not a compromise, but absolute freedom in religious matters, and the calling of a free general council where the religious questions should be decided

solely in accordance with the Word of God. There was no recourse but to grant their demands, and accordingly, on July 23, 1532, the Religious Peace of Nuremberg was established. By the terms of this peace, no State was to give offence to any other on account of religious matters, until a council had been held; and all were to treat each other with true Christian friendship and love. This agreement brought joy to the troubled heart of Melanchthon.

Soon afterwards, on August 16th, the Elector John the Constant of Saxony was gathered to his fathers. He had gone to Schweinitz on a hunting expedition, and died there. Luther and Melanchthon arrived at his bedside in time to see him breathe his last; but he was no longer able to speak to them. He raised his hands as a token of recognition, and soon afterward expired. His body was removed to Wittenberg, where Luther preached the funeral sermon and Melanchthon delivered an academical address. His son, John Frederick, surnamed the Magnanimous, succeeded to the electoral dignity.

◊ John Frederick the Magnanimous

In the year 1533, Pope Clement VII. took steps toward the assembling of a council. In June of that year he dispatched a papal nuncio, accompanied by an imperial orator, to inform the new elector of the proposed council,

and to demand that all should unconditionally submit to its decision. In accordance with the advice of this theologians, the elector consented to the holding of such a council; hut refused to bind himself beforehand to obey its decrees, because, as Melanchthon had said, councils no longer made all their decisions conform to God's Word.

All the negotiations from 1531 to 1534 were of such a nature that Melanchthon was little disturbed in his private work and had ample time to devote himself to his studies, his lectures, and his literary labors. During this period he published a number of works. One of them, his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, he dedicated to the Archbishop Albert of Mayence, the same who had figured so prominently in the scandalous sale of indulgences against which Luther had protested. It is said that when the archbishop received the work, he became so angry that he trampled it under his feet and cried out, "He is possessed by St. Valentine." Nevertheless, the reputation of Melanchthon as a scholar was so great that the archbishop, who posed as a patron of arts and letters, dared not deny him recognition. He sent Melanchthon, therefore, a costly present.

The high regard in which Melanchthon was held, not only in Germany but in other European countries, is evident from the numerous calls which came to him to go elsewhere. In 1534 he received one from Poland, and another from Wurtemberg, where Duke Ulrich desired to have the University of Tubingen re-organized and the Reformation speedily introduced. But Melanchthon declined both these calls, much to the gratification of the elector.

Meanwhile the Reformation had made some progress in France, and it looked for a time as if that country would become Protestant. Francis I. was a bitter enemy of Charles V. and was anxious to enter into an alliance with the Schmalkald League. At the advice of this minister, William Bellay, he not only sent ambassadors to treat with the Protestant princes, but instructed them to request Melanchthon's opinion as to the manner in which a union might be effected between the two religious parties of France.

On August 1st, Melanchthon sent a paper of eight articles containing very much the same principles of accommodation which he had recommended at Augsburg. In the *first* article he says, that the pope might retain his primacy and the bishops their jurisdiction, if they would not use their authority for the purpose of suppressing the truth; in the *second*, that traditional customs, though often allowable, are not to be regarded as

obligatory nor as deserving merit; in the *third* that confession is to be retained, but the enumeration of specific sins abolished; in the *fourth*, that in the matter of justification it was necessary wholly to drop the scholastic doctrine of good works and to maintain that of justification by faith alone; in the *fifth*, that an agreement on the subject of the mass would be very difficult to reach, yet the celebration of private masses ought to be abandoned, and the Lord's Supper administered in both kinds; in the *sixth*, that the adoration of the saints must be abolished because it conflicts with Scripture and the early Church, but that the following form might be allowable: "Grant, O God, that we, assisted by the prayers of thy saints, etc.;" in the *seventh*, that all cloisters need not necessarily be abolished, but that some might be permitted to remain for the purpose of training up young men for the Church, provided these be left at liberty to leave whenever they choose; in the *eighth,* that the celibacy of the priesthood is contrary to Scripture and the practice of the ancient Church. In conclusion he stated that these articles were not meant to be final, but to serve as a basis for deliberation by learned men.

A long time elapsed before he received any reply. At last, on March 4th, 1535, he received a communication from John Sturm of Strasburg, from which he learned that matters had taken a bad turn in France. Some fanatics, for whom the Reformation was not making progress rapidly enough, had posted up at a number of places, and among these on the gates of the Louvre, hand-bills which contained reflections upon the doctrines, ceremonies and clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. The king had thereupon become greatly incensed, and had caused six Lutherans to be publicly condemned and burned to death. He had, indeed, become somewhat appeased, when it was explained to him that Lutheran doctrines were in no way responsible for insurrection and riot. But the situation was still extremely bad, and the only hope of improvement, Melanchthon was told, lay in his going to France. The king held him in high esteem and would be inclined to follow his advice.

Upon the receipt of this letter, Melanchthon immediately wrote to William Bellay and entreated him to protect the Gospel. A little later he replied to John Sturm and submitted the reasons why it was impossible for him at that time to go to Paris, and why, if he did go, he feared little good would be accomplished. In answer to these communications he received letters not only from Bellay and from Sturm, but a very friendly epistle

from King Francis himself, urging him to come to France as soon as possible and assist in bringing about unity and harmony in its religious affairs.

Melanchthon thereupon immediately hastened from Jena, where on account of the plague which reigned at Wittenberg the university had been temporarily established, to the Elector at Torgau, and asked for a furlough of several months. Luther seconded this appeal, both of them apparently believing in the sincerity of Francis I. But the elector refused his consent. He believed that it would do no good and only result in involving them in difficulties with the emperor. He feared also, as his letter to Brueck shows, that Melanchthon might be prevailed upon to make concessions to which Luther and the other theologians could not consent. “Nor is it to be supposed,” he says, “that the French are in earnest. On the contrary, it is altogether likely that, when they see how good-natured Philip is, they will take advantage of him, and afterward decry him as inconsistent. Those who are favorable to this matter in France are more Erasmian than evangelical.”We are firmly determined rather to lose Philip’s services entirely, than to let him go to France with our goodwill and consent."

Melanchthon was consequently obliged to reply to the king, that, much as he would like to do so, it was impossible for him to come. He also wrote to William Bellay and complained to him of the harsh treatment which he had received from the elector. Indeed, he took the elector’s refusal so much to heart, that for a number of weeks he remained in a very dissatisfied frame of mind. It was not till in October, when he met the elector again and the prince took great pains to show his good-will toward him, that Melanchthon became reconciled. Shortly afterward he saw himself that his journey would have proved fruitless; because the king, while he desired a political union with the Protestant princes, was in no sense desirous of a true reformation of the Church, and gave his approval to the action of the Sorbonne when it condemned as heretical the eight articles which Melanchthon had forwarded to France.

A similar result followed the negotiations with Henry VIII. of England. This royal potentate had made an attack upon Luther, and had received from the pope the title of " Defender of the Faith." None the less, he was ready to break with the pope when that pontiff would not consent to Henry’s divorce from his wife Catherine, an aunt of Charles V. Accordingly in 1534, Henry VIII. proclaimed himself the Supreme Bishop of the Church of England.

During this year, he twice invited Melanchthon to cross the channel. He was extremely anxious to escape from the scandal which his matrimonial affairs had created. And therefore in March, 1535, he dispatched Anthony Barnes to Wittenberg to confer with the theologians there, and to endeavor to enter into a union with the evangelical States.

Melanchthon took this opportunity to write to the king and earnestly commend the cause of the Gospel to him. He also dedicated to that ruler the second edition of his Loci Communes. Henry was highly pleased, and sent the Wittenberg theologian a gracious letter and a present of two hundred florins. At a later period, however, when he saw how he had been deceived in the king's intentions, Melanchthon omitted this dedication from his work.

In September of the same year, Barnes came to Wittenberg a second time. Not having been able to obtain their sanction for Henry's divorce proceedings, he proposed now to confer with the Saxon theologians on unity of doctrine, and to request permission for Melanchthon to go to England. Luther seconded this request, as he had the one from France. But the elector again refused his consent. He believed that the English king was only trying to use religious matters as a cloak for his scandalous conduct. The negotiations, however, lasted until the following spring. Besides Barnes, two other men. Bishop Fox and Archdeacon Heyth, arrived from England and took part in the discussions. The university being at that time stationed at Jena, Melanchthon was obliged to make numerous journeys to Wittenberg to meet these envoys. But he could not be brought to sanction Henry's divorce, nor to yield his convictions on the marriage of the clergy and the mass, the two points which were most controverted by the Englishmen. He drew up two papers and sent them to England by the hand of the royal ambassadors. Barnes himself dissuaded Melanchthon from making the journey to that country, because circumstances began to be unfavorable there for the progress of the Reformation.

14. The Wittenberg Form Of Concord. Journey To Tuebingen. Accused Of Heresy.

OTHER NEGOTIATIONS now claimed the attention of Melanchthon. It has been mentioned in the previous chapter that as early as 1531 Bucer had acknowledged the presence of Christ's body in the Lord's Supper. This able divine made it his lifework to bring about harmony between the Protestants upon this point. In September, 1534, he published a Form of Concord. In the same month Melanchthon wrote to Philip of Hesse that he had spoken with Luther, and that Luther was satisfied with Bucer's publication, provided the latter really believed what his words expressed. He exhorted the landgrave to take action in the matter, and added, "All that I am able to do in order to promote Christian unity, I am heartily willing to do. I know of no more agreeable task in the world." The landgrave then made arrangements for a meeting between Bucer and Melanchthon at Cassel. Luther, although he cherished no great expectations as to the result, consented to the arrangement, and gave to Melanchthon, in writing, a basis on which a union might be effected. At the meeting, which took place the following December, Bucer declared it to be his belief that when the bread and wine are dispensed, the body of Christ is given and received. He made promise, also, that he and his friends would henceforth teach in accordance with the Augsburg Confession and its Apology. With this explanation Luther was satisfied, while Melanchthon returned to Wittenberg: almost better pleased with Bucer's than with Luther's view on the minor points upon which those two could not unite.

This agreement between Bucer and the Wittenberg theologians having been reached, there poured into Wittenberg, from all sides, letters declaring that their authors would gladly unite on such a basis. Luther was deeply moved, and wrote in reply to a letter from Augsburg, "If this Form of

Concord is established, I shall sing with tears of joy, 'Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.'" And Melanchthon wrote to the ministers of Augsburg: "I would willingly risk my life to promote this Concord."

The spring of 1536 was appointed by the elector for the holding of a convention in Eisenach at which a Form of Concord was to be formally adopted. But while everything looked so promising, Melanchthon was suddenly seized with the fear that, by the holding of such a convention, greater discord among the theologians, and greater divisions and public controversies than existed before, might be produced. For about this time, letters of Zwingli and OEcolampadius, prefaced by a letter of Bucer, were published; and in this letter Bucer had praised the other two men for their orthodoxy. Melanchthon feared that this fact might be brought up at the convention, and matters be made worse than before.

CASPAR CRUCIGER.

◊ Caspar Cruciger.

Luther's physical condition rendered it impossible for him to travel to Eisenach when the time for the convention approached. Bucer and his friends, therefore, came on to Wittenberg. They arrived May 21, 1536. On the following day the convention was opened. Among those present besides Bucer were Luther, Melanchthon, Jonas, Cruciger, Rorarius, Pomeranus,

Weller, Menius, Myconius and Capito. Bucer opened the meeting with a lengthy address in which he expressed this joy over the occasion which had brought them together, as one for which he had striven for four long years. Luther replied that after reading the letters of Zwingli and OEcolampadius with the preface by Bucer, he had little hope of concord, and believed that it would be better to leave matters as they were, than to make them a hundred times worse by a fictitious union. Bucer justified himself as best he could, and declared that his letter had been written the previous year, and that it had now been published in opposition to his express will and command. The Upper Germans, he said, meant this matter sincerely, and no deception was intended. Luther then demanded to know whether Bucer and his friends would publicly recant their former doctrine as one which was opposed to the Scriptures and the teaching of the ancient Church, and whether they would confess and teach that, by virtue of Christ's power and the words of institution, the true body and blood of Christ are in the sacrament and are received by all, whether believing or unbelieving, who partake of it. This was the crucial test and would reveal whether Bucer and his friends, in their previous declaration of the real presence, meant a bodily or merely a spiritual presence of Christ. On the next day, the conference having been postponed till that time on account of Luther's ill-health, Bucer gave his reply and said in this own name and in that of his friends, that the bread of the Lord's Supper is truly the body of Christ, and is truly received not only with the heart but with the mouth; and that he had meant to deny only the local presence and the gross natural eating of the Lord's body. With this confession Luther and his friends were highly pleased; Bucer and Capito began to weep; and all thanked God that a union had finally been effected.

On May 29th, the Wittenberg Form of Concord, drawn up by the skillful pen of Melanchthon, was signed by both parties. It declared, first, that there were two things in the sacrament, the heavenly and the earthly elements; and that the body and blood of Christ are really and essentially present with the bread and wine, not locally, but sacramentally; secondly, that the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation was false; and thirdly, that even the unworthy receive the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament, but receive it to their condemnation. This Wittenberg Form of Concord was received everywhere by the Protestants with great satisfaction. Even the Swiss, to a large extent, agreed to it. Melanchthon, as may be supposed, heartily rejoiced over it. It gave promise of rest from controversy for years to come,

and healed in a great measure the divisions which had existed in the Protestant camp.

After the conclusion of these negotiations, Melanchthon concluded to carry out a long-cherished plan, and travel to Tuebingen and Bretten. There were some family matters about which, in the interest of his children, he desired to speak with his brother. Besides this, his friend Camerarius lay dangerously ill at Tuebingen and desired to see him. The elector willingly gave his consent and offered him the use of a horse and carriage for the journey.

But just as he was about to depart, an event occurred which delayed his journey for a month. A new pope, Paul III, had ascended the throne, and now summoned a council to convene in Mantua in May of the following year. The elector was greatly perplexed to know how he should act; and called upon the Wittenberg theologians to advise him what he ought to do, if, as a rumor had it, a papal nuncio should come to Weimar. Melanchthon showed from the history of the Church that this council, being by no means a free and general one, might be wholly repudiated; but he recommended that, for appearance's sake, this should not be done, because the Protestants had so frequently appealed to a council, and a refusal to recognize this one would be used as an argument against them by their enemies. He thought it would be wiser simply to protest against having the pope as the judge. But the elector thought differently. He even suggested the holding of an opposition council. With his own hand he wrote on the paper at the bottom of Luther's opinion, that the best thing to do would be to send some one to the border of his dominions to tell the papal nuncio to be gone; because "the pope is not the head of the Church, but the worst foe of evangelical believers; and in summoning a council he is seeking nothing else, but to fortify his anti-Christian power and destroy the Lutherans."

When this matter had been decided, Melanchthon, on August 25th, started upon his journey. He was accompanied by Jacob Milichius, a fellow-professor, who intended to go to this native city of Freiburg. Proceeding by way of Frankfort and Bretten, Melanchthon arrived in Tuebingen, September 24th. He remained here three weeks enjoying the society of his bosom friend, Camerarius, who was now quite restored to health. Duke Ulrich, of Württemberg, again offered Melanchthon a professorship in the university. But, as he could not make up his mind to leave Wittenberg, he declined. He went, however, to the duke's court at Nuertingen and

consulted with him about the university. He also wrote a letter to Brenz, and begged of him to accept a professorship at Tuebingen, for one year at least, for the sake of the good which might be accomplished. Brenz consented and removed to Tuebingen. The duke treated Melanchthon very kindly and gave him a present of one hundred florins.

◊ John Brenz.

Melanchthon now began his journey homeward. At Nuremberg he tarried for a few days with his friends Baumgärtner, Ebner, Dietrich, Roting and Osiander. While here, he prepared an opinion on Private Confession,

because a controversy raged in Nuremberg on that subject, and his friend Osiander was involved in it. Then he proceeded to Wittenberg. He was destined to find trouble awaiting him. During his absence, Cruciger had delivered a lecture in which he said, that good works are a _"sine qua non"[1] of salvation. Conrad Cordatus, a preacher in Niemegk, who was present at the lecture, took Cruciger to task for using that expression. In defending himself against the charge of heresy, Cruciger said that the words were those of Melanchthon himself. We have seen in a former chapter that Melanchthon often wrote the lectures for other professors. It appeared that this particular lecture had been arranged and written out by him. The very words in dispute were down in black and white in his own handwriting. When Cordatus discovered this, he went to Luther and accused Melanchthon of heresy. It is not known what Luther said in reply. No doubt for Melanchthon's sake he desired to avoid controversy, if possible. While Melanchthon was still upon his journey, he heard of the matter, and wrote a letter in explanation and justification of his words. He claimed that his words had been wrongly interpreted, that he had no intention of teaching differently from Luther himself, and that he did not mean to say that good works earned or merited eternal life.

On November 5th, he arrived in Wittenberg and immediately wrote a friendly and conciliatory letter to Cordatus. But it did not accomplish much good. Cordatus refused to let the matter rest, and finally referred it for decision to Jonas, the rector of the university. Other events, however, were now at hand, which left the Wittenbergers neither leisure nor desire to pursue this matter any further.

---

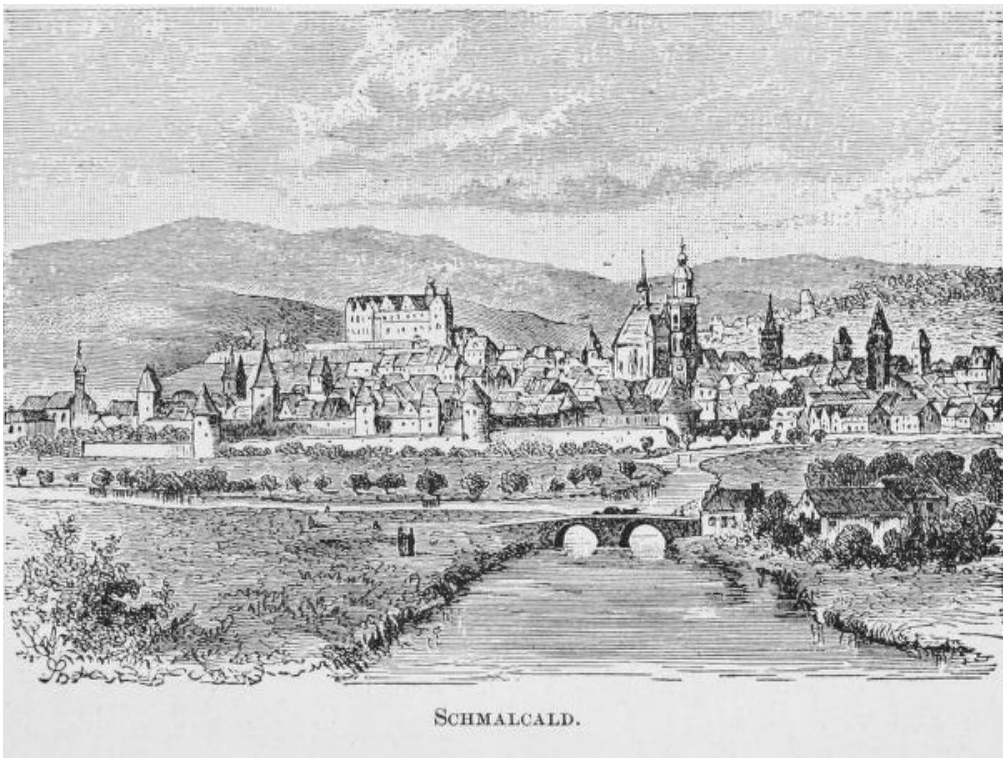
1. An indispensable condition.↩

15. The Convention At Schmalkald. Attacks Upon Melanchthon. 1537-1539.

AS THE POPE INSISTED on his project of holding a council at Mantua, it was necessary for the Protestants to decide whether they would attend or not. Accordingly, they held a convention for this purpose at Schmalkald on February 7, 1537. At the elector's request, Luther prepared a paper which has become known as the Schmalkald Articles, and which forms one of the confessional symbols of the Lutheran Church. It was divided into three parts. The first treated of those points on which there existed no controversy, and the treatment of these therefore was very brief. The second treated of the Office and Work of Jesus Christ or of Our Redemption, and contained the articles which were disputed by the Roman Catholics and which would come up before a council. This second part treated of Justification, Mass, Invocation of the Saints, Charitable Institutions and Cloisters, and the Papacy. It unconditionally rejected the primacy of the pope, as unscriptural and incompatible with true Christianity. The third part treated of the Law, Repentance, the Gospel, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, the Office of the Keys, Confession, Excommunication, Ordination, Marriage of the Priests, the Church, Justification and Good Works, Monastic Vows and Human Ordinances.

These articles were approved and signed by the theologians. In adding his signature, Melanchthon wrote as follows: "I, Philip Melanchthon, approve the above articles as pious and Christian. Of the pope, however, I hold, that if he would allow the Gospel, then the superiority which he now possesses over the bishops, might, by human law, for the sake of peace and of the general tranquility of those Christians who now do or may in time to come live under him, be conceded to him also by us." Of course, such an evangelically minded pope as he had in view was not likely to sit upon the

papal throne. But if it might yet be possible for such a one to be found, then Melanchthon thought that, as a matter of outward order and government, the retention of the office would be good for the welfare of the Church.



◊ Schmalcald.

Toward the end of January, 1537, Melanchthon, together with Luther and Bugenhagen, left Wittenberg and arrived at Schmalkald, February 7th. Eight days later the Convention of Schmalkald was opened. Soon after his arrival, Luther was seized with a severe attack of illness and was obliged to return home. But as he passed out of the gates of the city, he said to the friends who had accompanied him thus far: “May God fill you with hatred against the pope.” The convention fulfilled this wishes. It resolved upon a formal separation from the Romish Church and a repudiation of its authority. Melanchthon alone recommended that the jurisdiction of a council should not be absolutely denied; because the pope had the right to. call a council, and it might be possible after all to have the decision entrusted to impartial judges. But the majority of the convention argued that, with his great power, the pope would force himself upon them as the

judge, if a council were held. Melanchthon realized the danger which his advice involved, and reluctantly yielded.

A resolution was passed that, in addition to the articles prepared by Luther, a separate paper should be drawn up on "the power and primacy of the pope," and that this should serve to give the reasons why they refused to submit their cause to the decision of a council. As usual, it was Melanchthon who was entrusted with this task. He drew up a document in which he proved that the pope was not by any divine right the head of the Church, and that consequently he had no absolute claim to obedience; that the office of the bishops was only a human regulation and might be abolished. It was signed by the theologians and pastors present at the convention, and delivered to the papal nuncio and the imperial ambassador. Then, when the theologians had recommended to the princes a letter and more conscientious use of the property and possessions of the Church, the convention adjourned.

Melanchthon set out for Wittenberg. On the way thither he met Luther, who was now restored to health, and they returned to the city together. Melanchthon's heart was filled with joy over Luther's recovery, and in his letters he called on all his friends to rejoice and thank God for the restoration of this man whose life was so precious to the Church.

Hardly had he returned to Wittenberg when he received from Cordatus a letter accusing him of taking Cruciger's part. This was true. Melanchthon could not well have done otherwise, because the words to which objection was made were written by him. He therefore invited Cordatus to an interview. But instead of coming as requested, Cordatus wrote a letter to Justus Jonas, rector of the university, demanding that Cruciger publicly recant his error. Jonas tried to quiet Cordatus, and even intimated to him that vanity was at the bottom of the matter. Thereupon Cordatus wrote to Chancellor Brueck, lamenting that there were "so many at Wittenberg who antagonized the blessed teaching of the pious man Luther, who, after all, is the only Doctor in these things." Luther himself seems to have taken the matter rather coolly. But at the same time, when, on June 4, 1537, at a promotion to the doctorate, the discussion of the doctrine of good works came up, he felt constrained to declare that the expression, "good works are necessary to salvation," was untenable. Melanchthon himself afterward saw that while he meant the formula to be understood in the sense that good

works are necessary as the fruit of faith or as commanded by God, it was liable to misinterpretation; and therefore he abandoned it.

About the same time, Melanchthon was involved in another difficulty of a similar nature. Indeed, we may say, from this time until his death, he was almost continually the object of attack by friend or foe. His whole subsequent life was embittered by the difficulties in which he successively became involved. In the spring of 1537, Jacob Schenck of Freiberg wrote to Jonas and Melanchthon for advice. He asked whether he ought to distribute the communion in both kinds even against the will of the authorities. Jonas prudently made no reply. But Melanchthon good naturedly sent on his confidential opinion, that under certain circumstances one kind alone might be distributed. Schenck was dissatisfied with the reply, sent it to the elector, and accused Melanchthon of heresy. Here was another sore trial. Melanchthon became thoroughly discouraged and wrote to Brenz, that he was contending with a hydra, and that, when he had struck off one of its heads, two others sprang up in its place.

The elector began to be concerned about these matters, and through his Chancellor, Dr. Brueck, made written inquiry of Luther and Bugenhagen whether it was true, as reported, that Melanchthon and Cruciger and many students and pastors differed from them in some doctrines. In the fall of the year he came in person to Wittenberg. Schenck also was expected. But as he did not put in his appearance, the elector dispatched his chancellor for a private interview with Luther. The substance of Brueck's report was about as follows: "Dr. Martin declared that he would not have believed that Melanchthon would cling so tenaciously to his fantasies. Luther," he said, "seemed to be troubled because he could not tell how Philip regarded the sacrament, and because it looked as if Melanchthon, since his return from Cassel, had become almost Zwinglian in his views. Luther did not know what Philip believed in his heart, but it seemed strange that he should recommend the giving of the sacrament in one kind. If Melanchthon persisted in this opinion, then the Word of God must come first. He would pray for Philip. If, for the sake of tyrants and of the preservation of the peace, the sacrament might be administered in one kind, it would be necessary, on the same principle, to concede justification by works. I think," added the chancellor, "that it would do no harm if Dr. Martin should speak earnestly and cordially with Philip."

Matters actually proceeded so far that Melanchthon was to be cited to appear and answer to the charge of heresy. On October 13th, he wrote to Veit Dietrich:

> "Yesterday I heard that several articles were to be presented to me for subscription. I have no definite information; everything is kept secret. I fervently hope that, if they are displeased, they will bring their complaints openly and frankly. I have to-day prepared a defense of myself. I shall show why, in certain doctrines, I have more fully defined this or that point; namely, in order that dangerous, equivocal and vague expressions might be avoided. I shall show that, in doing this, I have not sought to originate a new sect or secretly to fight against Luther, but to accomplish these two purposes: first, to provide for the youth, simple, clear and well-defined instruction in Christian doctrine; and secondly, to promote the study of the other branches of learning." But on the day which had been appointed for the hearing, Luther was taken ill. Soon afterward Schenck joined Agricola, the antinomian; and this whole matter, which threatened to become a very unpleasant business, was dropped.

◊ Veit Dietrich.

But Melanchthon's troubles still continued to multiply. In the summer of 1538 he was made rector of the university. It became a part of his duties to act as censor of the press. But hardly had he assumed his new office, when a young Magister of Wittenberg, Simon Lemnius, published a small volume

of epigrams, in which he ridiculed some prominent citizens of the town and some of the professors, among them being Luther and Melanchthon. A great hue and cry was raised against Melanchthon, and he was not only blamed for permitting the publication to appear, but accused of complicity in it. To make matters worse the book highly lauded Archbishop Albert of Mayence as a patron of the Muses. It was this which particularly incensed Luther. "This lampooner," he exclaimed, "praises that miserable town-clerk of Halle (Archbishop Albert), and makes a saint out of the devil."

Melanchthon did all that lay in his power to clear himself of the unjust suspicion which rested upon him. He forbade the author of the lampoon to leave the city; and when Lemnius nevertheless took refuge in flight and failed to appear in answer to a citation, Melanchthon forbade him to return to Wittenberg. He also wrote to the elector, stating that while he was to blame for not reading the book through before permitting it to be published, he had not intentionally committed any wrong; that the very fact that Melanchthon himself and his wife were attacked ought to clear him of all suspicion of complicity in the work.

These successive annoyances disturbed him greatly. He wrote to his friend Camerarius that he would leave the city if he had not so recently accepted the office of rector. Indeed it would appear that Melanchthon was regarded on nearly all sides as a suitable object of attack upon one pretext or another. The most innocent occasions were turned against him by his enemies. Thus, in the summer of 1537, he had received a letter from Cardinal Jacob Sadoletus, an eminent writer of Italy, who extolled Melanchthon's services in the cause of classical learning. Although Melanchthon did not even answer this letter, yet there were many who took offence at it. Instead of rejoicing that his distinguished merits had extorted praise even from his enemies, they spoke as if they thought that it was not at all impossible that this letter would incline him to regard the papists more favorably. The sensitive nature of Melanchthon suffered exceedingly under these successive accusations, insinuations and attacks. He often felt as if he would like to go elsewhere in order to be rid of these vexations. But he deemed it his duty to remain and not become the cause of any split in the evangelical party. In 1539 he wrote to Camerarius: "Here I am, bound and fixed to Mount Caucasus. Pangs of mind of the sharpest kind, which for three long years I have borne continuously, and other daily burdens, have so consumed me that I fear I cannot live long."

16. The Frankfort Suspension. Labors In Ducal Saxony And Brandenburg. Second Convention At Schmalkald. The Landgrave's Bigamy. Melanchthon At Death's Door. 1539-1540.

MEANWHILE the political sky was dark with overhanging clouds. A "Holy League" of Roman Catholic princes had been formed at Nuremberg in 1538 with the avowed purpose of sustaining the imperial chamber in its proceedings against the Protestants. Opposed to it stood the Schmalkald League; and a war seemed inevitable. But at this juncture the emperor was greatly in need of the aid of the Protestants against Suleiman the Turk. The Electors of Brandenburg and the Palatinate offered to act as mediators, and a convention was held at Frankfort.

On January 31, 1539, Melanchthon started for that city; but he took little active part in the proceedings of the convention. For a long time no agreement could be reached. The Protestants demanded a permanent peace, which should under no circumstances be disturbed; and asked that the Imperial Chamber consist of an equal number of Protestant and Roman Catholic members. But on April 5th, Melanchthon wrote to Camerarius: "We are here weaving the veil of Penelope. Hardly have we rejected one basis of peace, when another is laid before us which differs from the preceding only in words and not in meaning. I hope that the empire may

remain at peace; but as yet no reasonable conditions could be obtained from the imperial orator. He demands that we shall receive no new confederates; and this outrageous demand is brought forward again and again with new sophistries, although it has been rejected so often. This is the whole history of the convention. At first I disputed over various points; but after the imperial orator made such unreasonable demands, I ceased disputing. If no truce is concluded, we shall make public the reasons why we rejected these demands."

It was for this latter purpose that Melanchthon was commissioned to draw up, in the German language, three papers. The first was to treat of the right of defense in case the Protestants were attacked; the second was to show that upright persons could not take up arms against them; the third, that all the godly must assist them. Having finished these, he also wrote to Henry VIII. of England. That ruler had sent Christopher Mount, as his ambassador, to Frankfort to enter into an alliance with the evangelical states. Melanchthon exhorted the king to abolish the remaining Romish abuses in the Church of England. Louis von Baumbach and the Saxon vice-chancellor, Francis Burkhard, were sent to treat with Henry, and carried Melanchthon's letter with them. The king received them kindly, but could not he induced to reform the Church in an evangelical manner. The letter was only coldly received. Consequently, the elector refused to listen to any proposals for a journey of Melanchthon to England. He feared nothing would be accomplished. Henry VIII. was very headstrong, and, to make matters worse, imagined himself to be a great theologian. The quality of his learning, however, may he judged from some of the arguments which he employed. Thus he maintained, for instance: Because evil works merit eternal wrath, therefore it follows that good works merit eternal salvation. And again, concerning the marriage of priests he argued: If the king has the power to pass an ordinance that, so long as a man is stationed at court, he dare not marry, the king also has the power to forbid the priests to marry. These arguments he considered unanswerable.

HENRY VIII. OF ENGLAND.

◊ Henry VIII. of England.

On April 19th, the Frankfort Suspension was agreed upon. In accordance with this agreement the imperial orator or vice-chancellor was to suspend for a period of eighteen months all proceedings against the Protestants, and a religious discussion of doctrines and usages was to be held during the summer of the same year.

On April 20th, Melanchthon departed from Frankfort, and was immediately employed in aiding the cause of the Reformation in the dukedom of Saxony. Early in January of this year, he had gone to Leipzig in company with Brueck and Bucer to consult with George von Carlowitz and a renegade Protestant preacher, George Wizel, concerning the introduction of the Reformation. But it soon became apparent that Duke George would not accept the Holy Scriptures, but only the teachings of the Church during the first eight or nine centuries of its history, as the standard according to which reforms were to be made. Nothing, therefore, had been accomplished. But on April 17th, Duke George died and was succeeded by his brother Henry. This prince desired the introduction of the Reformation into his dominions, and held a consultation for that purpose with the elector at Annaburg. In returning to Wittenberg, Melanchthon came by way of Annaburg and took part in the deliberations. In May he went to Leipzig and was present there when, at the festival of Pentecost, the evangelical service was used for the first time. On May 28th, he made public a paper on the reformation of the Leipzig University, and maintained that it was highly necessary to inaugurate the teaching of sound doctrine and to obtain professors who were equal to the task. A great disputation took place on June 20th between Cruciger and Myconius on the one side and the Dominicans on the other. The Dominicans were worsted, and in the following November the university formally cut itself loose from Roman Catholicism. It was high time for such a step. The university had been rapidly losing ground by its obstinate adherence to Romish errors. Its former glory and prestige were in danger of being wholly lost. A thorough reformation of the institution, requiring several years, was now undertaken; and Melanchthon rendered valuable services in bringing it about. To his great joy, his bosom friend, Joachim Camerarius, was called to Leipzig as one of the new professors, and the two friends could now frequently visit one another.

The greater part of July Melanchthon spent in visiting some of the churches in the duke's dominions. He found them in a deplorable condition.

At many places it was impossible to find a man to whom the care of souls might be entrusted. Many pastors had to he brought from other regions as a temporary supply.

In the fall of this same year Melanchthon, at the invitation of Elector Joachim II. of Brandenburg, traveled to Berlin to assist in the introduction of the Reformation in that ruler's territory. On arriving, October 12th, he found a form of discipline introduced which still contained many Romish errors. He directed the elector's attention to them, and prepared a new one which was more in accord with the spirit of the Gospel and was largely modeled after that of Nuremberg. Even this new order allowed a number of Romish practices to stand, because the people were not yet strong enough in the faith to abolish all. Melanchthon wrote to Veit Dietrich, however, that private masses and the invocation of the saints were abolished, priests were permitted to marry, the Lord's Supper was administered in both kinds, and the preaching of the pure Gospel was enjoined.

After these labors were completed and Melanchthon had returned to Wittenberg, he found his family plunged in deep distress. His brother-in-law, Sebald Muenster, together with that jurist's wife, had been suddenly taken off by the plague. The shock which this news gave to his already overtaxed system brought Melanchthon to the verge of the grave. His friends despaired of his recovery. He himself believed that his hour had come; and he therefore prepared a will. In this will, he maintained this adherence to the evangelical truth which Luther had brought to light, exhorted his children to be faithful to the Gospel and to beware of the papacy, and expressed his gratitude to his spiritual father Dr. Luther, and to many friends, the elector, Dr. Brueck, Camerarius, Burkard, Jonas, Cruciger and others. That portion of the will which refers to Luther reads: " I desire to thank the venerable Dr. Martin Luther, because I have learned the Gospel from him, and to express my gratitude for the many kindnesses which he has shown me; and I desire that he shall be regarded by my family as a father; for I have seen and experienced with what eminent and truly heroic qualities of mind and soul, with what great and noble virtues, and what extraordinary piety this man is endowed by God." But to the great joy of his friends, Melanchthon rallied and recovered his health. Shortly afterwards he published his "Commentary on the Soul," one of his most beautiful works.

On February 18, 1540, Melanchthon started for Schmalkald to attend a second convention to be held at that place. The purpose of this convention

was to consult with regard to the religious conference appointed to be held at Speyer. As early as January 18th, the elector had requested the theologians to prepare an opinion, as to "whether the evangelical princes might conclude a worldly peace with the bishops; and in what and how far the princes might yield in the approaching religious discussion." The task of writing this opinion devolved again upon Melanchthon. The document which he prepared was divided into three parts, and treated of Doctrines, External Essential Matters, and External Non-Essential Matters (Adiaphora). It declared, that in doctrinal matters they could not depart from the Augsburg Confession; that in external essential matters, such as the abolition of private masses, of the canon of the mass, of monastic vows, of the celibacy of the priesthood, of the invocation of the saints, and of all superstitious ceremonies, nothing could be yielded; but if the bishops would accept these two articles already laid down, arrangements might be made respecting the non-essential matters, such as the power of the bishops, ordination, reading, singing, holidays and others like them. This document was sent to Nuremberg and then brought to Schmalkald, where, after a thorough discussion, it was approved and signed by the theologians, Melanchthon also prepared another opinion in which he condemned the erroneous doctrines of the mystics, Sebastian Franck and Caspar Schwenkfeldt. This was signed by the theologians; and then the convention adjourned.

Melanchthon's mind at this time was greatly troubled over the affairs of Philip of Hesse. Toward the end of November, 1539, Martin Bucer had come to Wittenberg to seek advice for that ruler in a matter of conscience. This prince, who was possessed of many excellent traits, had, for various reasons, become alienated from his wife, and desired, in order to avoid greater evil, to marry a second wife with the consent of the first. Luther and Melanchthon gave him a secret confessor's advice, endeavored to dissuade him, for his own and the Gospel's sake, from such a course, and exhorted him that, if he insisted on taking such a step, he should keep it a profound secret. On March 3, 1540, the landgrave was secretly married to Margaret von der Saale at the castle of Rothenburg on the Fulda. Melanchthon, who was attending the convention at Schmalkald, was persuaded, by some pretext, to come to Rothenburg, and was an unwilling witness of the ceremony. He was, of course, greatly chagrined and hurt by this trick of the prince. But that did not mend matters. The fact of the marriage was soon

noised abroad – the bride's mother herself divulged it, – and a great stir arose. The landgrave wrote that, in case of emergency, he would make public the advice of Luther and Melanchthon. The Hessian theologians at a meeting with those of Saxony advised that the marriage be published. But Luther took them so severely to task, "that the water ran down their cheeks." For a time the landgrave was silent under the scandal caused by his action. But when he saw that public opinion condemned him more and more, he published, through Bucer, an anonymous pamphlet in defense of his marriage. As this pamphlet was in a measure an apology for bigamy, Luther became highly incensed, and could only with great difficulty be prevented from openly refuting it. Melanchthon drew up a sharp criticism of it, which he sent to the elector, and which in turn that ruler forwarded to the landgrave.

In the beginning of June, Melanchthon started for the religious convention which had been appointed for Speyer, but which, on account of a contagious disease prevailing in that city, had been transferred to Hagenau. When he had gone as far as Weimar, the worriment and anxiety occasioned by the threatened publication of this and Luther's advice to the landgrave, cast him upon a bed of sickness. He saw that such a publication would not only put him and Luther in a very bad light, but was calculated to injure the cause of the Gospel. He communicated his troubles to Luther and received a letter of consolation in reply. But he broke down at any rate; and his strength failed so rapidly that death seemed imminent.

◊ Melanchthon's Illness.

The elector hurriedly sent to inform Luther of Melanchthon's critical condition. Luther rode night and day to reach the bedside of his friend. When he arrived, Melanchthon lay in the jaws of death. His eyes were dim, his reason was gone, he recognized no one, and he could no longer eat or drink. Luther was greatly moved by what he saw, and exclaimed, "How has

the devil maltreated this instrument!" He turned to the window and prayed earnestly. "Then," Luther declared, "God was obliged to yield to me. I cast my burden before His door and assailed His ears with all His promises to hear prayer which I could call to mind from the Scriptures; so that He was compelled to hear me, if I was to believe His promises." Luther then took Melanchthon by the hand and said, "Be of good cheer. You shall not die. Although God would have reason enough to take away life, yet He desires not the death of the sinner, but that the sinner turn from his way and live. He takes pleasure in life, not in death. If God received into grace again the very greatest sinners who ever lived on earth, Adam and Eve, He will not cast you out, my Philip, nor permit you to perish in sin and sorrow. Therefore do not yield to a spirit of despondency; do not become a murderer of yourself; but trust in the Lord, who is able to kill and make alive again, to wound and bind up, to smite and heal."

To the great joy of all, Melanchthon now began to breathe again. But he did not speak for some time. At last he turned his face toward Luther, and besought his friend not to detain him, as he was upon a good journey. He said that he desired to depart, and that nothing better could happen. But Luther replied, "By no means, Philip. You must still further serve the Lord." Luther then brought something to eat, and, in a joking way, threatened to excommunicate Philip, if he refused to partake of nourishment. Melanchthon thereupon ate sparingly. Gradually he regained strength and recovered. There seems to be no doubt that but for Luther's arrival and prayer, Melanchthon would have died.

17. The Religious Colloquy At Worms. The Diet At Ratisbon. 1540-1541.

THE CONVENTION which was to have been held in Hagenau did not take place. The Roman Catholics proposed treating of those articles only on which no agreement had been reached at Augsburg. But as the Lutherans "could not recollect that any agreement in disputed matters had been reached at that diet," the proposed convention, or conference, was not held. Arrangements were thereupon made for the holding of a religious colloquy at Worms, on October 28, 1540.

Accordingly, October 7th, the elector called his theologians together to deliberate upon the course to be pursued at Worms. Ten days later Melanchthon, in company with Cruciger, departed toward that city. He was joined on the way by several other theologians. At Gotha they halted and prepared a protest against having the pope or his representative as the judge in the approaching discussion. This was to be presented, if necessary, after they had arrived in Worms.

◊ Cardinal Granvella.

Owing to the delay of the imperial commissioner Granvella, the colloquy was not opened until after the middle of November. Even then much time was lost in deciding how the discussion should be conducted. The fact is, the Roman Catholics did not really desire a full discussion, but a speedy settlement of matters by the production of a set of articles which both sides could subscribe. For this purpose Eck prepared articles on Original Sin and Justification, and boasted that better ones could not have been procured, if they had been brought from India. But even the Roman

Catholics were not pleased with them, and the commissioners of Brandenburg, the Palatinate, and Jülich refused to sign. The Protestants of course could not consent to any formula which implied that the difference was only one of words. Finally it was agreed that Melanchthon and Eck should debate the disputed questions in the presence of the other delegates. The debate began on January 14, 1541. The articles of the Augsburg Confession were taken as the basis of the discussion. Eck began. He immediately objected, that the Augsburg Confession which was handed to him was altered in many places. Unfortunately he spoke the truth. The work to which he referred was a copy of the Altered Augsburg Confession which Melanchthon had published in 1540. While it seems to be established that Melanchthon did not intentionally seek to change the teaching but only the wording of the Augsburg Confession, it was certainly an arbitrary and inexcusable act on his part to take any liberties whatever with the official Confession of the Lutheran Church. In reply to Eck's objection, Melanchthon explained that the alterations which he had made did not affect the substance but only the form of the Confession, and were intended to make it milder and clearer. Eck was by no means willing to concede this contention, especially in the changes made in the tenth article, which treated of the Lord's Supper. But waiving, for the present, the discussion of that point, he proceeded to the matter in hand. Omitting the first article because both sides agreed on it, the second article, treating of Original Sin, was taken up. On this they disputed for four days, Eck maintaining that Original Sin is not really sin. An old account states that Melanchthon's speech contrasted with Eck's like the song of the nightingale with the croak of the raven. Eck proved very conciliatory, however, and proposed a form of agreement which did not conflict with the Augsburg Confession. But because of its brevity, it was not signed by the Protestants. They declared that they would rest their case on Melanchthon's oral statements.

The disputants were about to proceed to the article of Justification when, on January 18th, an imperial rescript was announced, adjourning the discussion until the diet at Ratisbon. Nobody was really disappointed by this termination of affairs. For it was apparent that all efforts at a compromise must fail in the end, unless the pope would renounce the papacy. Melanchthon was blamed for his firmness on this occasion, as he had been for his leniency on others. But he realized, by this time, that even

if an agreement on doctrines could be reached, none would be possible when it came to the consideration of the abuses.

Hardly had Melanchthon returned to Wittenberg, when preparations had to be made for the approaching diet at Ratisbon. Neither he nor Luther nor the elector looked for any satisfactory result of the religious discussion to be held at the diet. But out of respect to the emperor, the elector decided to send a respectable delegation. Luther desired to keep Melanchthon at Wittenberg. He knew how heavily the trials and annoyances of such public discussions bore upon his friend. But the elector could not spare him. At the same time, however, he adopted measures to shield his theologian against private onslaught by the enemy. He directed that Melanchthon should lodge in the same house with the Saxon counselors, and commanded his equerry not to permit any one to speak to the theologian except in the presence of the others. Perhaps, in his anxiety to maintain the pure doctrine of the Gospel, the elector* took these precautionary measures as much to protect the evangelical cause against any possible yielding of Melanchthon, as to protect Melanchthon against the annoyances of the Roman Catholics. The elector also felt some uneasiness about the conduct of the Landgrave Philip of Hesse. It was noticed that since the scandal occasioned by his bigamy, that prince had begun to ingratiate himself with the emperor. The elector therefore gave his counselors strict orders to abide by the resolutions of the evangelical States at the Convention of Schmalkald.

On March 14th, Melanchthon departed with Cruciger for Ratisbon. Two days later he was joined by the other delegates at Altenburg. When the Bavarian frontier was reached, the carriage in which Melanchthon rode was upset, and his hand badly sprained. For a long time afterward he was unable to write, and dictated his letters to Cruciger. On the fifth of April the diet was opened by the emperor in person. Many of the Protestants desired a simple continuation of the discussion which had been begun at Worms. But the emperor had a way of his own to bring about peace and harmony. Three persons were to be appointed from each side to discuss the questions in dispute and to endeavor to effect a compromise. These were then to consult with the papal nuncio Contarini. It was decided by the Protestants to let the emperor try his plan. Pflug, Eck and Groper from the Roman Catholic side, and Melanchthon, Bucer and Pistorius from the Protestant, were appointed as the disputants. The Count Palatine and Granvella were to act as moderators; others to attend as hearers.

Before the discussion was opened, the emperor summoned the disputants into his presence, shook hands with them cordially, and exhorted them to act without fear or passion and to seek only the glory of God. It looked as if the emperor was really desirous of a reconciliation. It is doubtful whether the Roman Catholic delegates cherished the same feelings. The order of discussion which they proposed seemed expressly designed to stop the debate at as early a stage as possible. They proposed to treat first of the Lord's Supper, the power of the Church and the pope, private masses, monastic vows, the celibacy of the priesthood, and one kind in the Sacrament, and only after these had been finished, take up those of justification, faith and good works.

But the emperor had a plan mapped out for them. When, on April 27th, the discussion was about to be opened, he laid before them a book for examination, correction and adoption. This book, which possessed no title, was afterwards known as the Ratisbon Book or Ratisbon Interim. It was an attempt to reconcile the difference between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants, Melanchthon was already familiar with it. As early as January 4th, it had been sent to Luther by Joachim II. of Brandenburg. Its author is unknown. Melanchthon thought it was written by Groper with the assistance of Volcruck, an imperial counselor, and sent by them to Philip of Hesse and Joachim of Brandenburg for examination. The book consisted of twenty-three articles of the nature of a compromise. It was calculated to satisfy neither party. But as the emperor attached so much importance to it, it was made the basis of the discussion. A number of articles were passed over without much difficulty. When they came to the one on justification, it was found to be extremely unsatisfactory. At length, after much discussion, a new formula was agreed upon, which did not conflict with the Augsburg Confession, but which left much to wish for in the way of explanation and elucidation.

The Saxon counselors in their report to the elector spoke very highly of Melanchthon's firmness. But the elector feared that this peace-loving man would yield too much; and he could hardly be prevented by Luther from going to Ratisbon himself. He insisted, however, on sending Amsdorf to keep a lookout and to report on what was being done. But this time the elector's fears were groundless. Melanchthon conducted himself in the diet of Ratisbon with a steadfastness that was highly commendable. He declared before Granvella himself that he would rather die than yield anything

against his conscience and the truth. No doubt Melanchthon acted just as conscientiously at Augsburg. But the reasons which influenced his conduct then no longer influenced him now. He now saw the purposes of his enemies and the hopelessness of a compromise on an evangelical basis; and he therefore no longer felt called upon to make the utmost possible concessions.

As regards the article agreed to, the elector was distrustful of it, fearing that it would obscure the doctrine of justification by faith alone. He wrote to his counselors that he could by no means consent to it. Luther begged him not to write a severe letter to Melanchthon, lest he should add to the trials and distresses which that sensitive nature already endured.

The next subject taken up for discussion was the Church. The Ratisbon Book maintained that there must be a power in the Church which has the right to interpret the Bible, and that private individuals do not have that right. A heated discussion took place upon this article. In the course of it Granvella called on Melanchthon to read the article in question more carefully. Melanchthon replied that he had read it often, that he had done so at Wittenberg already, but that he could by no means approve of it. " For," he said, “if this power were conceded to councils of the Church, then many errors of former councils would have to be approved and posterity be fearfully burdened.”

The debate on the Lord’s Supper lasted eight days. The Roman Catholics presented a formula in which the doctrine of transubstantiation and the practice of elevating the host were upheld. In opposition to this, Melanchthon set up a formula in which he maintained that “Christ’s body is present only when the sacrament is administered, and that Christ is present, not for the sake of the bread, but for the sake of man.” Melanchthon defended his formula very energetically. Eck, partly from excitement, partly perhaps from over-indulgence in drink, became ill. During the debate on this article Eck propounded a subtle sophism to which Melanchthon replied after some thought: “I will give you my reply tomorrow.” “Oh,” said Eck, “there is no honor in that. You must answer me at once.” To this Melanchthon replied; “My good Doctor, I am not seeking my own honor in this matter, but the truth. I say, therefore, you shall, God willing, have my reply tomorrow.” This little dialogue shows the vast difference which existed between the spirit and character of these two men.

A violent discussion took place upon the doctrine of auricular confession. The articles which Melanchthon set up in opposition to it so irritated Granvella, that he employed some harsh expressions toward Melanchthon. The champion of the Lutherans felt constrained, therefore, at the opening of the next day's discussion, to declare that, if it was intended that he should not freely express his opinions, he would remain away entirely. The imperial envoy then begged pardon for his conduct, and the discussion was resumed. The subject of Church government and the power of the bishops was taken up. It became evident that the Roman Catholics were determined to maintain that the primacy of the pope and episcopal succession were necessary for a true Church. Melanchthon became impatient when he perceived this, and resolutely opposed the whole article. He prepared counter articles on this subject as well as on the succeeding ones, of the Invocation of the Saints, the Mass, One Kind in the Sacrament, Celibacy and Monastic life.

In taking so firm a stand, Melanchthon acquitted himself nobly. But it soon appeared that he was blamed by the emperor as the one man who, by his obstinacy, rendered the negotiations fruitless. He was also accused of having secret instructions from Luther, and of sustaining suspicious relations with the French ambassador. But in a letter to the emperor he defended himself against these accusations so unjustly made.

On May 16th the discussion of the Ratisbon Book was brought to a close, and on the 31st of the same month the Protestants presented to the emperor a summary of the declarations which they had made. Kine articles of the Ratisbon Book were specified as being of such a nature, that they could under no considerations be accepted. These articles treated of the Church, the Lord's Supper, Enumeration of Particular Sins in Confession, Satisfaction, the Unity of the Church and Ordination, the Saints, the Mass, Private Masses, and Celibacy.

The emperor, of course, was not pleased with, this result of the discussion. He wanted the Ratisbon Book adopted. He therefore sent it to the princes of the realm, and commanded them to make a copy of it, give it further careful consideration, and then report to him their opinion. He also sent a delegation to Luther, asking the reformer to approve of the book, or at least to tolerate it for the present. But the delegation did not effect its purpose.

Melanchthon spoke very clearly and decidedly about the Ratisbon Book in an address which he made to the States. He declared that he could not accept and would not tinker any more at the articles which had been rejected at the discussion; and that he still had many objections to make even against those articles which were regarded as agreed upon. The Roman Catholics themselves were not much better pleased with the book. Eck called it insipid. Later on it was rejected by a convention of bishops.

During the session of the diet, Melanchthon prepared, at the emperor's request, a plan for the reformation of the Church. He insisted in it upon the maintenance of sound doctrine, thorough catechetical instruction, the introduction of worthy rites and ceremonies, the installation of competent pastors, and the abolition of celibacy. He was willing to allow the bishops to retain their offices; but they were to be required to make strict visitations, and to institute consistories for the examination of candidates for the ministry. The universities and schools were to be improved, and the salaries of the professors increased. The elector was by no means pleased with that part of this plan which proposed permitting the bishops to retain their temporal and spiritual power. He feared they would abuse their power to the detriment of the truth.

At last, on July 29th, the diet came to an end. The decision of the religious difficulties was postponed until a council be held, or in case none should be held, postponed until the next diet. In the meantime the religious Peace of Nuremberg was to be observed.

18. The Bishopric Of Naumberg. The Reformation At Cologne. A Year Of Suffering For Melanchthon. 1541-1544.

WHILE MELANCHTHON was attending the colloquy at Worms, the Bishop of Naumberg-Zeitz died, and the cathedral chapter elected Julius von Pflug as his successor. The people of this district were largely evangelical in sentiment, and the elector therefore deposed the newly-elected Romish bishop. This Lutheran prince was determined, if possible, to put an end to the temporal power of the bishops; and he threatened that, unless the chapter would nullify its action and elect some one else, he would occupy the castle at Zeitz with his troops, and appoint one of his generals to administer the affairs of the bishopric. But the chapter refused to do so. The elector then turned to the theologians of Wittenberg for their opinion of his rights and authority in the case. Melanchthon drew up a paper in which he adjudged to the elector the power to appoint some one to the office, but entreated him to appoint a sensible, modest and peace-loving man. The elector accordingly appointed Nicholas von Amsdorf Luther ordained him to the office. Melanchthon came to assist in the organization of the churches and schools. The action of the elector, though condemned at the time, was nevertheless necessary; and Roman Catholic princes were soon found imitating his example and depriving the bishops of their temporal power.

Not long afterwards the Reformation was introduced in Cologne. The electoral archbishop of that city, Herman, Count von Wied, had become convinced that the Augsburg Confession was thoroughly scriptural, and he headed the movement himself. As early as 1536 he had instituted some reforms. In 1539 he invited Melanchthon to come to his assistance, and sent him a second and third invitation in 1542 and 1543. But Melanchthon

hesitated to go. When the landgrave urged him to accept the invitation, he replied, that he feared the authorities would not, in spite of the wishes of the archbishop, permit a thorough reformation; and that, besides, for such a work as this, a man was needed who could preach. Perhaps the real reason for this unwillingness was the fact that Bucer was already on the ground, and that Melanchthon feared it might come to a discussion of some doctrines between them which, for various reasons, he did not care at present to discuss. But finally, when, in April 1543, his friend Peter Medman came to Wittenberg for the second time and besought him to come, Melanchthon decided to go. The elector granted him leave of absence for six or seven weeks, presented him with one hundred gold florins, and sent this troopers as an escort.

In company with Justus Jonas, Jr., and Jerome Schreiber, Melanchthon set out on his journey, and arrived on May 4th at the residence of the archbishop in Bonn. The religious ignorance which he beheld among the inhabitants of that city astonished him. He wrote to his friends that it would be hard to discover anywhere in Germany another city in which such barbarous and heathenish superstitions prevailed. He found that the archbishop and Bucer were in favor of instituting a thorough reformation; but that they were opposed by Groper and particularly by the cathedral chapter of Cologne. He immediately read the plan of reformation as far as it had been prepared, and set to work upon the articles of the Trinity, Creation, Original Sin, Justification by Faith, the Church, and Repentance, which were assigned to him. The articles on Baptism and the Lord's Supper were to be written by Bucer.

When the work was completed, it was examined by the archbishop, and adopted by the chamber of deputies. The cathedral chapter was requested not to oppose the plans for reformation. But only a few weeks after Melanchthon's arrival, there appeared in the name of the university and the clergy of the district, a scurrilous pamphlet from the pen of a Carmelite monk named Bellig. It was so vile and scandalous, that some of the opposition themselves insisted on a change in its title, and disclaimed all connection with it. Melanchthon replied with a pamphlet in which he repelled all the charges made against him, and exhibited the prevailing abuses of the Romish Church in a strong light.

On July 28th, Melanchthon departed from Bonn. On his way he stopped at Frankfort-on-the-Main and assisted in settling a dispute which raged

there concerning some ceremonies connected with the Lord's Supper. Thence he proceeded to Weimar, because he was wanted at court. And finally on August 15th, amid the loud rejoicings of many of the students and professors who came out to meet him, he re-entered Wittenberg. He cherished great hopes of the Reformation in Cologne. But his hopes were not realized. The cathedral chapter brought before the emperor and the pope an accusation against the aged archbishop, and had him deposed. Then the work of the Reformation, so auspiciously begun, immediately languished. The relations between Melanchthon and Luther at this time were far from satisfactory. The root of the trouble lay in Melanchthon's change of view with regard to the Lord's Supper. From the time of his first conference with Bucer at Cassel, he had departed more and more from Luther's position, until at this time, 1544, he was more in accord with Bucer than with the great reformer. Melanchthon's treatment of the Augsburg Confession has been alluded to in the preceding chapter. As early as 1533 and 1535 he had published editions of the Confession in which he had made slight alterations. But in 1540 he published an edition in which the changes that he made were considerably greater. These alterations affected particularly the tenth article, which treats of the Lord's Supper. This last-named edition, known as the Altered Augsburg Confession or the Variata, was the one which he had taken with him to the colloquy at Worms and for which Eck had taken him to task. Although Melanchthon claimed at that time, and no doubt sincerely thought, that the alterations affected only the words and not the substance of the Confession, this was not strictly true. No doubt the changes made did not conflict with Melanchthon's own interpretation of the original reading. But at the same time the wording of the tenth article was so altered that the Reformed as well as the Lutherans could read their doctrine of the Lord's Supper into it. He desired to make it easy for the Reformed to unite with the Lutherans. But he made a great mistake in tampering with the official Confession of the Church. He seems to have thought that because he had written the Augsburg Confession, he might change it, if he chose. But after it had been received and signed by the evangelical princes and states, it was no longer his private property. No man thenceforth had a right to change a syllable in it.

Luther was grieved and perhaps irritated by Melanchthon's change of view; but out of regard for the feelings and consideration for the distinguished services of his friend, he did not publicly attack him. He was

particularly provoked by the treatment of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, which he found in the Cologne book. The article on that subject had been formulated by Bucer, but had been approved by Melanchthon. Luther found fault not so much with what the article said as with what it omitted to say. He looked in vain, he said, for a positive statement of the real presence. In his indignation he took up the matter in the pulpit and attacked Bucer. He did not allude to Melanchthon; yet all felt that the man who had assisted in the preparation of the objectionable book was, to some extent at least, included in the attack. The relations between the two great champions of the Reformation became greatly strained. Their intercourse ceased. Melanchthon's mind was harassed by the dread of an open rupture. He heard that Luther was preparing: a new book on the Lord's Supper and would shortly put it in print. He was sure that when it appeared he would find himself openly assailed.

But, to his great relief, he found, when Luther's "Short Confession Concerning the Lord's Supper" was published, that, although it contained a fierce attack upon the Zwinglians, there was in it no passage which he could construe as an attack upon himself. Soon afterwards the relations between him and Luther became easier. In a letter to Myconius, under date of October 10th, Melanchthon wrote that he had held a conversation with Luther. In the course of it he had stated that he always believed in a union of Christ with the bread and wine, and held that, when the bread and wine are taken, Christ is received by the communicant. He added in his letter, that he thought Luther was satisfied with this explanation, but that if he was not, Melanchthon would have to think of leaving Wittenberg. As the latter took no steps looking toward a removal from that city, it is fair to presume that Luther was satisfied, or that, at least, he resolved to bear with his colleague and friend. Indeed, early in November, when Chancellor Brueck, in behalf of the landgrave, asked Melanchthon whether there was any trouble between him and Luther, he received the reply that there was "none of any consequence," and a few days later the chancellor wrote to the elector: "I cannot learn anything from Philip but that he and Luther are good friends."

◊ Fr. Myconius.

But in the spring of the following year, 1545, it was again rumored that Luther was preparing a reply to Bullinger's attack upon the "Short Confession," and would refer to Melanchthon by name. the rumor reached the ears of the elector and tilled him with concern. He commanded his chancellor to speak with Luther upon the subject and endeavor to dissuade him from such a purpose. It is not known what answer Luther made. This

much is plain, however: Luther did not in his pamphlet make any attack upon Melanchthon, and it is doubtful whether he ever intended to do so.

To these public troubles and trials of Melanchthon, were added domestic griefs and cares. In the year 1536 his favorite daughter, Anna, had been married to the poet Sabinus, a man who possessed considerable talent, but who proved to be wholly unworthy of her. He was licentious, extravagant and cruel. The trials of this daughter tilled Melanchthon's heart with grief. Her reckless husband even proposed seeking a divorce, and was prevented from doing so only by the death of Anna in 1547. To make matters still worse, Melanchthon's son Philip, who at this time was a student of law, became secretly engaged at the age of nineteen to a young lady at Leipzig. Greatly to this father's relief, however, the young man listened to advice, realized his total inability to support a wife, and did not marry until the year 1550; and then it was not the maiden at Leipzig, but a widow at Torgau, to whom he was wedded. Melanchthon's mind was greatly troubled also by the misfortune of his intimate friend, Jerome Baumgärtner of Nuremberg. While returning from the Diet of Speyer, Baumgärtner had been taken captive by the robber-baron, Albert von Rosenberg. For fully a year he was held prisoner, and during all this time Melanchthon was filled with anxiety for his welfare.

Taking into consideration the many public and private trials and troubles which weighed upon his mind and heart, it is not to be wondered at that the year 1544 is spoken of as "Melanchthon's year of sorrow."

19. The Diet At Worms. 1545. The Diet At Ratisbon. 1546. Luther's Death.

THE AFFAIRS of the empire after the Diet at Ratisbon in 1541 did not permit the emperor to think of suppressing the Lutherans by force. His brother Ferdinand was kept busy in Hungary by the Turks, his fleets were defeated in the Mediterranean by the pirates, and to crown all he became involved in 1542 in another war with France. He was, therefore, greatly in need of the aid of the Protestant princes. At the Diet of Speyer in 1544 they consented to lend their assistance, but only on condition that they received a guarantee of permanent peace and equal rights with the Roman Catholics. The emperor had no choice but to yield. He appointed a new diet to be held before long in Worms, where the religious difficulties were to be finally adjusted. Plans for a reformation of the Church should be prepared by learned and peaceable men, and be presented and considered at the diet. The emperor himself would bring one; the princes might do the same.

With the aid of the Lutheran troops furnished for him, Charles V. soon defeated the French and concluded the treaty of Crespy. He could now turn his attention to the religious affairs of his realm. Matters did not, however, take on a promising appearance for the Protestants. For in November, 1544, the pope proclaimed that a council should be held in Trent in the following March; and it became evident that the religious questions were to be adjusted at this council and not at the diet. Nevertheless the elector called on Melanchthon to prepare a plan of reformation which might be submitted at Worms. The writing which he drew up is known as the Wittenberg Reformation. This was sent to the elector by the theologians, with the declaration, that it contained the views by which they "intended to abide to the last." The doctrines which this paper contained were based on the Augsburg Confession. But, in the matter of Church government, it

expressed a willingness to concede to the prelates their temporal and spiritual prerogatives, and the right of ordination, visitation, and excommunication, provided they used their offices in the service of the Gospel.

The proposition of Bucer that, at the coming diet, the evangelical states should complain to the emperor against the pope, and endeavor to have the pope formally repudiated as the regular ecclesiastical power, was rejected by the theologians. It was likely, they said, that the emperor would not listen to such a proposal; and in any case, they would, by so doing, acknowledge the emperor as judge in spiritual matters.

The Wittenberg Reformation prepared by Melanchthon was not, however, presented at Worms. When the diet convened, early in 1545, it was found that the emperor's chief concern was to prevail upon the Protestants to send delegates to the Council of Trent. The Protestants refused to do this. Though the emperor spoke fair words, denied all intention of using violence, and appointed another diet to be held at Ratisbon the next year for the discussion of the religious issues, it was plain that he was only seeking to gain time, and was secretly preparing for war. In December of 1545, the same month in which the Council of Trent was opened, the Protestants met in Frankfort, in order to prepare for defense by renewing the Schmalkald League. Unfortunately, the purpose of their meeting was not fully accomplished. They agreed, however, to accept the religious discussion at Ratisbon and to protest against the Council of Trent. Melanchthon drew up for this latter purpose a paper, in which he clearly specified the grievances of the Protestants against the pope.

In the approaching discussion at Ratisbon, Melanchthon was, as usual, to take a leading part. But Luther wished to spare him the ordeal, and interceded for him. Luther knew that nothing would be accomplished at any rate, and that it would be a useless tax upon the nerves and health of Melanchthon. George Major and Laurentius Zoch were thereupon appointed for the purpose. Melanchthon's advice, however, was wanted, and lie was summoned to the elector at Torgau. He gave it as this opinion that Malvenda, the Spanish theologian who accompanied the emperor, would surely object to the" doctrine of justification by faith, and that the quickest way to put an end to the whole discussion, which was certain to he fruitless in any case, would he to take up this doctrine first.

It has been claimed by some that Luther desired to keep Melanchthon away from Ratisbon, because he doubted the orthodoxy of his views on the Lord's Supper. But Luther was not the man to fear to say what he thought. If such had been the reason, he would plainly have told Chancellor Brueck, and not have sought to invent any pretexts. The reason which Luther gave was surely sound enough. The ceaseless round of fruitless colloquies, discussions, disputations, and the vain attempts at accommodation or compromise, in which the mild-tempered Melanchthon, who enjoyed nothing so much as the privacy of the study, had been engaged for the last fifteen years, were enough to move the heart of a stranger and much more that of his noble-minded friend, to sympathize with him, and to desire that he might at last he spared the useless infliction.

The basis of the contention, that Luther did not want Melanchthon at Ratisbon, is sought in the fact, that when Major was about to depart for the diet, he paid a visit to Luther and found these words upon his door. "Our professors must be examined on the Lord's Supper." Astonished by beholding this, Major inquired why these words were posted there. He received the reply, that the words were meant literally, and that when he returned from Ratisbon he must expect to be examined. When Major protested that he believed the true doctrine, and explained his views at some length, Lather gave him to understand that the notice was intended to emphasize the necessity of plain and repeated public expression of the doctrine, in order that it might be known just where each one stood. "Whoever" said Luther, "regards his doctrine, faith, and confession as true, cannot stand in the same stable with heretics, nor always speak smooth words to the devil and his knaves. A teacher who is silent about errors is worse than an open fanatic. He either lies under one cover with the enemies, or he is a doubter and weather-vane who is waiting to see how matters will end, and to note whether Christ or the devil will conquer; or he is altogether in a condition of uncertainty himself, and is unworthy to be called a disciple, much less a teacher." Still it cannot fairly be deduced from this, that a doubt of Melanchthon's orthodoxy on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper was the reason why Luther desired to keep Melanchthon away from Ratisbon. The fact is, the two great champions of the Reformation were at this time on good terms with one another. The old-time friendship and kindly feeling were largely restored. Philip frequently came as of old and

dined at Dr. Martin's table, and twice they journeyed in each other's company to Mansfeldt.

It is pleasant to think that these two men of God, who for a time seemed about to be wholly estranged and to engage in fierce theological warfare, resumed, in these last months of Luther's life, their former pleasant relations; that the dangers which threatened completely to alienate their hearts from each other passed away, and the mutual love and esteem which had marked their earlier years re-asserted themselves. They were soon to be separated by death. The time was at hand, when the heroic form of Luther would disappear from the field of combat, and the peace-loving Melanchthon be left to continue, without the support of his resolute friend, the battle for spiritual and intellectual freedom. They beheld one another alive for the last time on January 28, 1546. On that day Luther, with his three sons, departed for Eisleben, in order to assist in settling the dispute which existed between the Counts of Mansfeldt.

The two reformers parted as good friends, and a number of letters passed between them. Had Melanchthon been well enough, he would no doubt have gone along to Mansfeldt, as he had done twice before. But his ill-health kept him at home. On February 18th, Luther died at Eisleben after only a day's illness. On the very day of his death, Melanchthon, all unconscious of the sad event, wrote a letter which he intended to send to his friend. "To the venerable Dr. Martin Luther," he says, "distinguished by learning, virtue and wisdom, the restorer of the pure doctrine of the Gospel, my dearest Father I thank you for writing to me so often and kindly. And I pray God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to bring you all safely home again." On the next day he received from Jonas the tidings of Luther's death. Great was his grief and sorrow. At nine o'clock he was to lecture to the students upon the Epistle to the Romans. But his heart was too full; he could not.

◊ Death of Luther.

Instead of lecturing, he gave to the students an account of the sad tidings which he had received; described, as far as he had learned it, the manner of Luther's death; and concluded with the words: "Alas! the chariot of Israel, which ruled the Church in this last age of the world, is gone. For the doctrine of remission of sins and faith in the Son of God was not discovered by human sagacity, hut was brought to light by God through This man, whom we ourselves have seen raised up by God. Therefore let us love the memory of this man and the doctrine which he proclaimed; and let us he more modest, and consider the great calamities and vast changes which will follow his decease. O Son of God and Immanuel, who wast crucified for us and didst rise again! We beseech Thee, rule, defend and preserve Thy Church. Amen."

About noon on February 22nd, Luther's body was brought to Wittenberg. Amid the ringing of bells, and escorted by a vast multitude of people, it was conveyed to the Electoral Church, in which it was to be consigned to its last resting place. After Bugenhagen had preached the funeral sermon, Melanchthon also ascended the pulpit and delivered a Latin memorial address. He laid special emphasis upon the greatness of Luther as an instrument for good in God's hand. He mentioned in particular Luther's bringing to light the pure doctrine of the Gospel, his translation of the Holy Scriptures into German, and the debt which pious Christians owed to him. He defended Luther against the charge of excessive harshness and severity by quoting from Erasmus, that "God had given to the Church of these latter times a rough physician because of the severity of the disease." Those who knew Luther, he said, knew him to be amiable and kindhearted, and by no means insolent, obstinate, or quarrelsome. His severity did not proceed from a quarrelsome spirit, but from a zeal for the truth. The purity of Luther's life, he declared, was unquestioned. He sought the good of the whole Church and earnestly prayed for it. In great and dangerous emergencies he was brave and courageous; threats and impending dangers did not terrify him. Nothing could shake his trust and confidence in God. His understanding and foresight were such, that he could tell sooner and better than any others what ought to be done in difficult or doubtful cases. Luther's eloquence, he asserted, would bear comparison with that of the best orators who have ever lived. The calling away of a man so highly gifted, and of such sound learning. Christian experience, and great virtues, was cause for the deepest sorrow. They were, indeed, left like orphans; but

they should ever honor the memory, hold fast the doctrines, and imitate the virtues of this great and good man.

There were not wanting at the time and later, people who said that Melanchthon did not really grieve over the death of Luther. They took it for granted that the estrangement of recent years had left a rankling sore in Melanchthon's heart. But to conclude thus is to do him great injustice. He had not, it is true, wholly escaped the vehemence and asperity of Luther. But he was naturally of a placable disposition. Besides, the pleasant intercourse which had been re-established between them during the last months of Luther's life had removed the sting from his recollection of the past. In former times he had often excused the vehemence of Luther as a fault of temperament and not of heart. In his funeral oration he likewise sought to shield his friend on this point. And it is not to be supposed, therefore, that, when all about him were plunged in deepest mourning by that great man's death, Melanchthon alone was unmoved at heart. It would be imputing to him a narrowness of spirit which he little possessed, to imagine that he permitted his own past grievances to cloud his sense of the loss which had befallen him and the whole Church. Few appreciated Luther's greatness and fundamental piety and goodness of heart as well as did this man, who had labored shoulder to shoulder with him tor so many years. In nearly all his letters of the time Melanchthon mourns over the great loss which the Church has sustained. On March 11th he wrote to Camerarius: "Since Luther is dead, it becomes all upright and pious people to speak well of so great a man, who has brought to light a portion, at least, of the heavenly truth." During the following summer, when Luther's works were being published, Melanchthon wrote an introduction to the second volume, giving an interesting account of the great reformer's character and work. As late as 1557 he celebrated Luther's birthday by the composition of an appropriate poem.

All these considerations, however, were ignored by his enemies, and they would have it that he was filled with bitterness against Luther. A great commotion was raised particularly by a letter written during the Interim to the Saxon Chancellor Carlowitz. In this letter Melanchthon spoke of Luther, as a man in whom "the love of strife was not small." He defended himself in a letter to Veit Dietrich, and explained that he had meant the words in a heroic sense, such as that in which they might be applied to a Pericles, a

Lysander or an Agesilaus. But his enemies insisted on putting a different interpretation upon his words, and attacked him bitterly on account of them.

20. The Schmalkald War. The Dissolution And Restoration Of The University. 1546-1547.

THE WAR whose coming Melanchthon had so long feared broke out shortly after Luther's death. The religious discussion at Ratisbon ended in a total failure to effect any agreement. It looked unpromising from the very start. The Spanish ecclesiastic Malvenda refused to follow the order of the Augsburg Confession. He presented nine theses of his own upon the doctrine of Justification. But they were of such a character that the Protestants could do nothing but absolutely reject them. The emperor himself seemed to be determined to lay all manner of difficulties in the way of discussion and agreement. He evidently meant to resort to arms. The Protestant theologians, therefore, at the command of the elector, withdrew from the mock-discussion. It was evident that, even if Melanchthon himself had been present, no other result could have followed under the circumstances.

A crisis was plainly at hand. The elector desired to know of the theologians what the Protestant princes might do in case they were attacked. Through Melanchthon they prepared an opinion, in which they declared, that as soon as it became clear that the emperor meant to attack them, the evangelical States would certainly have a right, not only to defend themselves, but to forestall any hostile movements.

When the Diet of Ratisbon was opened on June 5th, the Protestants demanded to know the reason of the warlike preparations which were being made in Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. The emperor replied that he "had hitherto exerted himself to maintain peace in Germany, and was even yet ready to show favor to the obedient; but that against those who refused to obey, he was prepared to proceed with his imperial power." Shortly after this, in the beginning of July, the pope published a treaty which he had

made with the emperor for the extermination of the heretics. Thereupon, the Protestants published a pamphlet, in which they accused the emperor of making war upon them at the instigation of Anti-Christ. The emperor retaliated by placing the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse under the imperial ban. Melanchthon published Luther's little book, *"A Warning to my Beloved Germans,"* and prefixed to it an introduction, in which he drew attention to the momentous issues before the people, and called upon all to aid in the preservation of the truth.

BATTLE OF MÜHLBERG.

◊ Battle of Mühlberg.

The Schmalkald War now began. Duke Maurice of Saxony, being promised the electoral dignity and the greater part of the lands of the present elector, John Frederick, turned traitor to the Protestant cause and went over to the emperor. Before Charles, however, had time to gather this troops, the Protestants stood on the hanks of the Danube with an army of thirty thousand men. If they had vigorously prosecuted the war at once, they might easily have been victorious. But they hesitated and delayed until the emperor had received powerful reinforcements. Then came the tidings that

Duke Maurice had overrun the territories of the elector, and John Frederick hastened back with his troops to expel the invader. He succeeded; but in the following spring he was himself defeated by an overwhelming force of the emperor at Mühlberg. He was taken captive and condemned to death. But the emperor did not venture to carry out this sentence. He therefore proposed to change the punishment into imprisonment for life, on condition that John Frederick should renounce his electoral dignity and territories in favor of his cousin Maurice. This was done. The landgrave of Hesse also was soon afterward treacherously taken prisoner at Halle. The progress of the war rendered necessary the dissolution of the university at Wittenberg. Its halls were closed on November 6th. Three days later Duke Maurice advanced upon the city. Old and young, in the midst of a violent snowstorm, fled in dismay. Melanchthon was obliged to look for a place of safety for himself and his family. He took refuge in the town of Zerbst. He formed a plan of gathering a school in Magdeburg; but, after spending a week in that city, he found it impracticable, and returned. With the exception of two short visits to Wittenberg, he spent this whole winter in Zerbst. He received numerous invitations to go elsewhere; but he had not given up the hope that the university would be restored, and he therefore declined them all.

The news of the catastrophe at Mühlber filled Melanchthon with grief and consternation. He looked forward with dread to the consequences which would result from it to the cause of the Gospel. Zerbst now no longer offered a safe retreat. He therefore took refuge in Magdeburg. Here he found Luther's widow, who begged him to take her under his protection. She was on her way to the King of Denmark, who had offered to her, as he also had to Melanchthon, an asylum. He accompanied her as far as Brunswick, where he advised her to remain, because the way through Lüneburg was not safe. He then turned his own steps to Nordhausen, where the mayor, Meienburg, was his friend. From here he intended to make a journey to his native place. But as he had just then received encouraging reports from Wittenberg, he dropped his plan and also declined a call to Tübingen. His heart was in Wittenberg, and he could not make up his mind to go elsewhere as long as there was any possibility of returning thither. On June 6th he learned that Maurice had been invested with the electoral dignity, and that the university would likely be restored. Two days later,

Cruciger sent notice to all the professors who were in exile to return to Wittenberg.

But now a delicate question arose, and had to be decided by Melanchthon. A portion of the Elector John Frederick's dominions had been left to his sons. The captive prince desired that a new institution should be founded in his sons' territory, at Jena. He sent a letter to Melanchthon, and entreated him not to remove out of that neighborhood without first letting him know. To this Melanchthon assented. In the month of July he learned for the first time of the new institution to he founded at Jena. He then went to the court at Weimar to learn further particulars. But when he found that none of the Wittenberg professors hut himself were to he called to Jena, he broke off the negotiations and returned to Nordhausen. He desired to live and labor in company with his former colleagues, and could not bear the thought of complete separation from them. Intending to discuss the matter with some friends, he started for Zerbst. When he had gone as far as Merseburg, he received letters from Cruciger and George von Anhalt, in which he was invited to come to Leipzig. The new elector, Maurice, was there and desired to speak with Melanchthon and the other theologians. When Melanchthon arrived, he was kindly received, presented with some valuable gifts, and asked to accept a professorship in Leipzig. But as his colleagues had already besought the restoration of the university at Wittenberg, he decided to cast his lot with them, and wait for a favorable answer to their request. For the same reason, also, he declined calls from Denmark, Frankfort-on-the-Oder, and Koenigsberg. The extent of his anxiety to return to Wittenberg may be judged from the fact, that during this time he was living at his own expense and drawing no salary, and that he did not know how long it would take till a decision in the matter would be reached in the electoral court at Dresden. Finally, however, about the middle of October, the university was restored, and sufficient funds were set apart for its support. He thereupon removed his family from Nordhausen, and found himself, to his great joy, once more at home in his old position.

The course which Melanchthon pursued in this matter was greatly censured at the time by friends of the unfortunate elector John Frederick. Nothing was said about the other professors when they resumed their old places, but Melanchthon was decried far and wide for so doing. He was accused of ingratitude and unfaithfulness to the captive prince. Many since then have supposed it would have been more honorable in him to have gone

to Jena. Whatever may be thought of his conduct, it must, in order to judge correctly, be borne in mind that Melanchthon was not attached to the court of that ruler, but was a professor in the university. However deeply he may have symjDathized with the captive prince, it was natural that his heart should turn to the city which had become endeared to him by so many tender associations, and the institution where the best years of his life had been spent. He was loudly accused of having expressly promised to assist the sons of the former elector in founding the new university. But he had only consented not to remove out of their territory without first letting them know. It may be well to let Melanchthon speak for himself, and Ave therefore give extracts from two of his letters explaining the reasons for his conduct.

To Aquilla he wrote, August 29th: "A melancholy mind, as Ennius says, always errs. Perhaps, in my sadness, I cherished too great a longing for my old friends with whom I labored in the same work so long. Perhaps I hoped too much when, in these unpropitious times, I regarded as possible the restoration of the university, the certainty of which is by no means apparent. But at all events, I have not striven for carnal pleasures or riches." Then in reply to certain other accusations, he continued: "When some say that the preachers at this place incline to other doctrines, they do great injustice to this Church, which has already endured so much. By God's grace the Gospel is preached in Wittenberg with great unanimity in the same manner as before the war."

On October 18th, he wrote to Strigel: "When we were encouraged to believe that the university would be restored, I dared lay nothing in the way of the project; for the university has certainly been of great advantage to a large part of Germany, and if it ceased to exist, then would not only the churches of the neighborhood be involved in great darkness, but our enemies would regard it as a triumph. I also perceived the difficulties with which the Thuringian court would have to contend, and I feared that the founding of a new university might draw still more odium upon the captive prince. If, while stationed at such an university, I had said or written anything against the decrees of the Council of Trent, the young princes would have become involved in new dangers. What is said concerning promises which I should have made, I do not understand; for they have my writing in hand, in which I spoke of these perils. Before the project of a new school was broached, I wrote that I would rather serve them than others;

and this I would even yet rather do, if they had a place in which I might be of use to them without danger of injuring them. To speak frankly, I was surprised that in these sorrowful times, even before the clouds of battle had rolled away, they should think of founding a new university."

After Melanchthon had resumed his lectures at Wittenberg, the university in that city regained its former exalted position as the chief Protestant university in the world; and Melanchthon himself easily ranked as the greatest living theologian.

21. The Augsburg Interim. The Leipzig Interim. Controversies. 1548-1550.

WHEN, on the 1st of September, 1547, another diet was held at Augsburg, it soon became apparent that the emperor had waged the late war not so much in the pope's interest, as in his own. His chief concern had been to establish his imperial authority and prestige. He now proposed to show that he was able, without any assistance from the pope, to restore peace and unity in the religious affairs of his realm. He demanded that the Protestants should submit to the decrees of the council, provided, that it should be re-transferred from Bologna to Trent, and should be conducted in an orderly Christian way. But as the deliberations of the council bade fair to consume a long period of time, he recommended to the States the appointment of a commission of competent and learned men, who should consult together on ways and means to restore religious unity, and compile a set of regulations for doctrine and practice which should he observed in the interim; that is, until the decrees of the council should be made and accepted.

The elector Maurice acquainted his theologians with this recommendation and desired their opinion. He also commanded them to keep themselves in readiness for a journey to Augsburg. Under date of January 22, 1548, the theologians wrote to him that they greatly distrusted this prospective "interim," and feared that it would work mischief In a separate opinion of his own, Melanchthon stated that he regarded consent to a continuation of the council as consent to accept its decrees, and that he could not thus burden his conscience. It is evident from this, that Melanchthon had determined to remain true to the evangelical cause in that trying period. He deserves all the more credit for so doing, because his delivery to the emperor had already been twice demanded. He felt, also, that in this crisis he dared not leave Wittenberg, and therefore repeatedly

declined invitations from the King of Denmark and Edward VI. of England to come to those countries.

Meanwhile, however, the plans of the emperor were being carried out. A book, suited to his purpose had been laid before him. It proposed to bring about an agreement between Protestants and Roman Catholics, and was to be adopted as the rule for guidance during the interim. Hence its name, "The Augsburg Interim." It is supposed that this book was given to the emperor by Joachim II. of Brandenburg. As far as its authorship is concerned, it is quite certain that John Agricola, of Berlin, had a share in it; for when he entered his carriage to proceed to the diet, he is said to have declared that he was going to Augsburg as the reformer of Germany. The emperor appointed Julius von Pflug and Michael Helding, together with Agricola, to give the book a proper form, so that it might be published at once, and serve as a temporary form of doctrine and discipline.

◊ Agricola.

Agricola could not get done boasting of what this Interim would accomplish. But Melanchthon viewed it quite differently, and thanked God

that he had nothing to do with it. Duke Maurice was far from being pleased with it. He commanded his theologians to proceed as far as Zwickau and there await developments. While they were on the way thither, word was sent by him to Melanchthon to remain at Altenburg, to which place the theologians had already come, and to prepare an opinion on the Interim; then he was to retire to Klosterzelle and remain there, because the emperor had made demand for his delivery or banishment. In the opinion which he prepared, Melanchthon said that the Interim resembled the Ratisbon book, though some articles were more sharply, and others more moderately worded; and that it contained many generalities which were odious and dangerous. After he had examined the Interim more carefully, he prepared a second opinion at Klosterzelle. He stated that he had given these matters further consideration, particularly the deceptive passages in the articles on Faith and Love. Their real teaching on these points he found to be, that faith is only a preparation for righteousness, and that faith is followed by love, which justifies man. This would imply that man is justified by his own works and virtues, and against this, he said, he must protest. In the same manner he attacked the teaching of the Interim on the Mass.

Thereupon the elector demanded a detailed and dispassionate criticism of every article. the theologians accordingly assembled at Melanchthon's residence in Klosterzelle, and after several day's work sent, on April 24th, a third opinion. They declared that, while they would consent to confirmation, extreme unction, the power of the bishops, private absolution without auricular confession, and several festivals and ceremonies, provided that work-righteousness and the invocation of the saints were left away; yet they were obliged to reject all the other articles, particularly those concerning justification, private masses, masses for souls, and the canons. A few days later, on April 28th, Melanchthon wrote to Chancellor Christopher von Carlowitz. This is the letter which gave such offence to many friends of Luther. The chancellor had written to Melanchthon to be more moderate, and the latter, therefore, in his reply gave the reasons, why the Interim was rejected by him. He says among other things: "The elector may determine as he pleases. If I cannot approve of all, I shall nevertheless not raise a disturbance, but either hold my peace, or go away, or put up with affairs as best I may. I formerly bore an almost dishonorable servitude, when Luther obeyed more the promptings of his own natural temperament in which there was no small love of strife, than he did those of his own

dignity or the public welfare. But when you say that I am not only expected to be quiet but to endorse the Interim, you must see yourself, as an intelligent man, that there is a vast difference in human temperaments, points of view and sentiments. I am naturally by no means fond of strife, and I love concord among men as much as any one. I did not begin these controversies which have unsettled the whole general order of things. I came when they had already been stirred up and were in the process of development; and I began with a sincere desire for the truth to investigate these matters, especially because many learned and prudent men had given them their approval. In those days, many who now at the diet of Augsburg accuse me as the cause of disunion made me so odious at court on account of my moderation, that my life was endangered. Since that time, for almost twenty years, many have called me 'frost and ice,' others have said I courted favor with the enemy. I even remember that some one accused me of seeking a cardinal's hat. Without paying heed to these unjust criticisms, I have sought, whenever I came to speak of the doctrines of the Church, to state as clearly as possible the essential points; and I cut off many unnecessary questions and avoided many subjects, in order not to stir up greater disunion. I cannot bear to think of having the Church disturbed by a change in her doctrines or by the banishment of her upright men." He then expressed his willingness to concede jurisdiction to the bishops, because "it is not to be expected that the courts of unlearned princes will, for any great length of time, exercise greater care in looking after the pure doctrine." He expressed himself willing to accept also the ceremonies prescribed, because "as a boy he had always watched with particular pleasure all the ceremonies of the Church," But so far as regards the Faith, he said he must abide by the criticisms which he had made of the Interim. He concluded: "If on this account I shall be regarded as a disturber of the peace, because I will not say yea to all that the book contains, I shall, with God's help, bear the consequences, whatever they may be, like many have done before who, in causes that were just but much less important than these, have preferred the truth to their own life."

This remarkable letter was meant to convince Carlowitz, that none but the weightiest reasons would have induced one who was so well known as a lover of peace to reject the Interim. Indeed, at this very time Melanchthon was in constant danger of banishment or imprisonment for the frank opinion concerning the Interim which he had sent to Augsburg. But he was

determined to abide by his opinion at whatever risk, and refused to seek safety by accepting any of the calls which came to him from England or elsewhere.

This Interim pleased the Roman Catholics little better. They declared they would continue to do as they had done hitherto, but were satisfied to have the Protestants brought back to the old way. Referring to this declaration of the Roman Catholics, Melanchthon, in an opinion delivered on April 29th, the day after his return to Wittenberg, advised that the negotiations be broken off, because, even if a peace were effected, it would after all be like a compact between wolves and lambs.

This book of the Interim was read to the diet on May 15th. The Roman Catholics were left free in their action, but the Protestants were commanded to adhere to it until the decrees of the council were made public. But when the Interim was to be introduced in Protestant countries it met with strong opposition. Of the Protestant princes present at Augsburg, the Margrave Wolfgang and John von Kuestrin, together with the captive prince John Frederick, alone refused to sign it. But the evangelical clergy and the Free Cities violently opposed it. Strasburg for a long time resisted every threat. In Ulm the clergy were imprisoned. In Hesse, Ducal Saxony, Hamburg, Lübeck, Bremen and Lünburg, the Interim was unconditionally rejected. The city of Magdeburg was particularly distinguished for its resistance and for the attacks which were made from it upon the Interim. In Swabia and along the Rhine four hundred evangelical preachers were driven into exile, before the Roman Catholic liturgy could again be introduced.

The elector Maurice signed the Interim, but conditionally. He presented a protest, in which he declared to the diet that he could not consent to be held responsible for its introduction, inasmuch as it was made binding only on one party. Besides, he said, the Reformation had taken a strong hold upon his dominions. When he returned to his own territory, he did not attempt to force the Interim upon this people, but requested of his Wittenberg theologians an opinion which he might lay before the Saxon Chamber of Deputies. This opinion, written by Melanchthon and given to the elector June 16th, declared that, since the bishops would not consent to any accommodation, it would be better to leave the Church of Saxony alone, and not endeavor to introduce the Interim. The defects of the book and the reasons for rejecting it were then pointed out. The opinion was signed by Bugenhagen, Pfeffinger, Cruciger, Major, and Fröschel.

When the Chamber of Deputies assembled July 2nd, with Melanchthon, Cruciger and Major present, the subject of the Interim was taken up. It was decided to go through the book article by article, and then to request the emperor to excuse them from enforcing such portions of it as were unscriptural. Desiring more light upon the subject, the deputies requested another opinion which should treat particularly of the doctrines of Justification, Faith and Good Works. When this had been prepared, the theologians in turn suggested that a detailed statement of their doctrinal position be sent to the emperor. Melanchthon had already begun to work upon such a statement, when, before having proceeded very far, he saw that it would consume a great deal of time. He concluded that it would be better simply to ask the emperor to allow the Saxon Church to remain in its present condition. The deputies desired the elector to send such a request. But Maurice refused to do this, because he thought it would create a breach between him and the emperor; and he demanded that something, at least, be yielded in indifferent matters, and the final decision be postponed until the next meeting of the Chamber.

Melanchthon was pleased with the course which matters were taking thus far. It looked as if the Interim would be rejected in Saxony. His letters show how strong were his feelings upon this subject. Writing to the Margrave John of Brandenburg-Kuestrin, he says: “In the article of Justification there are certainly contained great errors. So also in other articles. With God’s help I, for my part, will not approve of this Interim. For this I have the best of reasons. I will commend my miserable life to God, even though I should be taken captive or exiled.”

Melanchthon was frequently asked for advice by people in other parts, who wanted to know what they should do with regard to the Interim. To those who were most endangered he replied that they should be prudent, yield in outward matters, and then they would have little to fear. While this was not exactly recommending the spirit of the martyrs for their imitation, yet, it should be said, he never advised any one to yield in matters of doctrine.

Before the next Chamber of Deputies assembled, Maurice called a conference at Pegau, to be held August 28th, between the two bishops of his realm, Pflug, of Naumburg, and Maltitz, of Meissen, and Melanchthon, George von Anhalt, Forster and Eber. The elector urged his theologians to yield in all matters that did not conflict with the Holy Scriptures. Although

a partial agreement on the subject of Justification was reached at this conference, nothing was accomplished after all, because the bishops declared that they could not consent to any change in the Interim. Melanchthon therefore departed from Pegau on August 25, tarried three days in Leipzig, and reached Wittenberg on the thirtieth of the month. To his sorrow he found his good friend Cruciger very ill with consumption, of which he died the following November.

At the next meeting of the Deputies, held at Torgau, October 18th, matters took a turn which was decidedly unsatisfactory to Melanchthon. On the very first day of the meeting, three electoral counselors and four knights arose and said that, if the country was not to be plunged into misery, the emperor must be obeyed as far as possible. They had therefore prepared a list of the articles which might, in their judgment, be accepted with a good conscience, and they would hand this list to the theologians for examination. This document contained the article of Justification as agreed upon at Pegau, together with others on the authority of the Church, Confirmation, Repentance, Extreme Unction, Ordination, the Mass, Vigils, Festivals, Processions and eating of Meats. The theologians objected, but little attention was paid to them. It was evident that Maurice was determined to maintain good relations with the emperor, even at the cost of re-instating many Romish errors.

When Melanchthon, on October 20th, left Torgau, he was deeply distressed by the course which affairs were taking. Nevertheless he permitted himself, shortly afterwards, to be induced to take part, greatly to his subsequent regret, in the preparation of the compromise known as the Leipzig Interim. On November 16th he attended a convention of theologians at Klosterzelle for the purpose of revising the liturgy which had been published in 1539 and approved by Luther, and of adapting it to the elector's purpose. Those gathered with him were Bugenhagen, Major, Camerarius and the Superintendents Lauterbach, of Pirna, and Weller, of Freiberg. While they were there assembled, the list of articles proposed at Torgau by the seven deputies was laid before them by the electoral counselors. The theologians were directed to examine and improve these articles, and to let the emperor see that there was no lack of willingness to obey, as far as was possible with a good conscience and consistent with the Word of God. The theologians replied that they had already signified their willingness to yield in all non-essential matters, such as festivals, hymns,

clerical robes, meats, etc., but that they could not consent to erroneous doctrines or idolatrous ceremonies. But the counselors insisted on retaining the articles presented at Torgau, and proceeded to place together, without the assistance of the theologians, all the subjects which in their judgment were *adiaphora* (indifferent matters).

◊ John Bugenhagen.

This document became known as the Recess of Celle. It was signed by the electors of Saxony and Brandenburg at Jüterbock, and laid before the Chamber of Deputies at the meeting opened in Leipzig on December 21st. It was adopted by the deputies, and then became known as the "Leipzig Interim." It proposed to retain the doctrinal articles of the Lutheran Church, but to re-introduce such Roman Catholic ceremonies as might be regarded as adiaphora and might be observed without conflicting with the Scriptures.

Since this Interim was afterwards the subject of much controversy we will give a short synopsis of its contents: The article of *Justification* was given in the form agreed upon at Pegau. It stated: "Although God does not justify men by the merit of the works which they perform, but out of grace, freely and without our merit, and the praise is not ours, but Christ's, through whose merit alone we are justified from our sins; nevertheless, God does not deal with men as with a block, but draws them in such a way that, if they have arrived at the age of discretion, their will co-operates with His. For no one receives the merit of Christ, unless his will and heart have been moved by prevenient grace, so that he trembles at God's wrath and is displeased with sin. It is beyond doubt, that in conversion there must be repentance and fear of God's wrath. As long as there remains a security which permits man to persist in willful sin, there is no conversion or forgiveness." *Of Good Works* it declared that "they are necessary because God commands them. They please God because the person who performs them believes in Christ's merit. They are necessary, because their absence would be an evidence that men are not spiritually awakened and have not experienced God's grace. Furthermore, because these virtues and good works please God, they obtain, according to God's plan, a temporal and spiritual reward in This life, and, by reason of God's promise, a further reward in eternal life."

Up to this point the articles had been drawn up by Melanchthon. The rest, composed by the electoral counselors, were in substance about as follows: AVhat the *Church* decrees in matters of faith is to be accepted, unless it conflicts with the Scriptures. The *Bishops* are to retain authority over the other clergy, but are to use their office, in accordance with God's command, for edification and not for destruction. *Baptism* is to be administered with exorcism. *Confirmation* is to be retained. *Repentance, Confession* and *Absolution* are to be rigidly enforced, and no one is to be admitted to the Lord's Supper without them. *Extreme Unction* may be

employed, but a superstitious use of it is to be avoided. Before *Ordination* the candidates are to be carefully examined by the bishops. *Marriage* is to be allowed to all classes according to God's institution. The *Mass* is to be celebrated with the ringing of bells, the use of lights, vessels, singing, robes and ceremonies. The *Public Services* are to be conducted largely in Latin. The pictures of *Saints* are to serve for remembrance, but not for worship. The *Canonical Hours* and other hymns may be introduced again. The *Festival* of Corpus Christi and those devoted to the Virgin Mary are to be observed. Abstention from *Meats* on Friday and Saturday and during the season of Lent may be enjoined as an outward ordinance. The *Clergy* are to dress differently from laymen.

The deputies took exception at first to the articles on ordination, confirmation, unction, the festival of Corpus Christi, and the mass. But when they were assured by the theologians that these articles, properly interpreted, were unobjectionable, the deputies consented to receive them with the rest.

Immediately after his return from Leipzig to Wittenberg, on January 6th, 1549, Melanchthon wrote to a friend: "The action at Leipzig affects no change in Church, because the contention concerning the mass and the canon is postponed for further consideration." But while he took such a favorable view of the matter, it must be said that the adoption of the Interim was a perilous step. It will be seen from the summary of its contents given above, that it proposed to reintroduce a great number of Romish ceremonies under the plea that they were indifferent matters. Those who favored it maintained, indeed, that the observance of these ceremonies would not injure the pure doctrine. But this was by no means certain. These ceremonies had already been abolished because of the errors of faith connected with them. They were now to be re-introduced at the dictation of the enemies of the truth and contrary to the convictions of the Protestants; and there was danger, when the door was opened to these Romish ceremonies, that the errors which for ages had been connected with them would gain admittance also. If so great a care was to be used in making the Protestant Church, in its outward form and dress, look like the Roman Catholic, would not sooner or later the spirit and life of the two Churches grow similar also? In order to introduce the Interim adopted at Leipzig, it was necessary to prepare a new liturgy for the churches. This task was entrusted to George von Anhalt, administrator of the bishopric of

Merseburg. He used as the basis of his work the liturgy of 1539, mentioned before. A number of conventions were held to deliberate upon the changes to be made, and for this purpose Melanchthon journeyed to Merseburg on March 8th, and to the meeting of deputies at Torgau on April 13th. An adherent of Flacius had accused the Saxon theologians of seeking to lead the people back to Romanism. Melanchthon, therefore, presented at this meeting a defense of himself and his colleagues. He said that they had yielded in what they considered indifferent things, in order to retain the necessary ones. This did not imply, he claimed, that they were leaning toward popery; "for the ceremonies whose introduction was conceded had existed in the early Church, and were necessary for a proper uniformity in practice. Nor was it just to accuse them of yielding through fear; for, even if fear had something to do with the matter, it was not fear for their own persons, but for the welfare of the people, their children, and society in general. They had sought by yielding in non-essential matters to preserve the essential articles of their faith. Luther himself had counseled some to yield in indifferent matters. Besides, they had not introduced any new ceremonies," he said, but "had simply modified, for the sake of order and uniformity, those which already existed, in order that the pure doctrine might be preserved and neighboring churches, like those of Silesia, which had complained of the former lack of uniformity, might begin to regard the Gospel with favor."

Melanchthon was soon assailed by many of the stricter adherents of Luther for his consent to the Interim. In January, 1549, the theologians of Berlin inquired of those at Wittenberg whether all the practices and customs of the Romish Church, such as the use of "holy water, salt, herbs, palms, consecration of unleavened bread, processions with flags and torches, unctions at baptisms," and the like, were to be regarded as adiaphora, or indifferent matters. They requested a fuller explanation of what was to be included under that term. The Wittenberg theologians replied that they did not include under it such customs as the consecration of oil and salt, and the like. They also stated in their reply their reason for the course which they had pursued. It was better, they said, "to endure a certain servitude in indifferent matters, than to leave the Church on account of them."

In April of the same year the pastors of Hamburg sent to Wittenberg a long letter, in which they condemned the principle laid down in the reply to the theologians of Berlin. They complained that the term adiaphora was

made too wide, and they asked the Wittenberg theologians to explain, in a public work, just what things were included under the term. To this Melanchthon replied that no fault was found with their frank letter; but he begged of them not to judge harshly those friends who had for twenty years fought and labored for the Gospel. He could assure them, he said, that the same Gospel was still preached at Wittenberg as at Hamburg. Among indifferent things, or adiaphora, the Wittenbergers did not include "magical consecrations, the adoration of images, the carrying about of consecrated bread" and similar customs. These they had publicly condemned by word and writing. As adiaphora they regarded those things which the ancient Church possessed, such as "festivals, public reading, confession and absolution before the Lord's Supper, examination before confirmation, ordination to the Gospel-ministry, etc."

Two men deserve special mention for their determined opposition to the Interim. These were Gabriel Zwilling of Torgau and his deacon, Michael Schultz. They refused to wear the white surplice, called those who wore it traitors and idolaters, and preferred to be deposed from their office rather than wear it.

The greatest opposition, however, was raised by Matthias Flacius the Illyrian, a young man of the age of twenty-nine. He wrote against the Interim, and sought to prevail upon Melanchthon, Eber, Major and Bugenhagen to reject it. When he failed in his efforts, and saw that the Interim was about to be introduced in Wittenberg, he left the city and removed to Magdeburg. There he found Amsdorf, who had been expelled from his bishopric, and a number of others who were bitterly opposed to the Interim. From this city, which they called the Chancery of God, they sent out, one after another, violent pamphlets against the Wittenberg theologians and particularly against Melanchthon. It was he whom they chiefly blamed for the introduction of the obnoxious compromise. They called the Wittenbergers Baalites, rascals. Epicures, Samaritans and other equally opprobrious names. They accused Melanchthon of being a traitor to the truth and the Church because, they said, it was his fault that false doctrines and false adiaphora regained a foothold.

Though Melanchthon erred in consenting to the Interim, he had been sincere and honest in his intentions, even though he permitted himself to be led too far. He thought that what he had consented to in the article on Justification did not conflict with the truth. When it was asserted that he

included under the adiaphora all the customs of the Roman Catholic Church, he was manifestly misrepresented. A number of them he did not by any means accept. In September, 1549, he wrote to Joachim Moller: “I have often advised that no more changes should be made now, because the people would exclaim that we are driving out the Gospel. But the court insists that we must yield to the emperor in some things, in order that he may not send his armies into our country and oppress the churches, as he has done in Swabia. I do not know whether the emperor will be satisfied with the reintroduction of a few indifferent ceremonies or not; the courtiers declare that he will; and they urge us not to expose our Fatherland and the Church to devastation on account of non-essential matters. We are, therefore, contending only for essentials and are seeking to preserve purity of doctrine and the form of the Lord’s Supper, so that the papal mass may not be re-introduced here as it has been in Swabia. I have never contended about holidays, the order of hymns, and similar matters. Such contention would be unbecoming to a modest servant of the Church in these sorrowful times. For a number of years I have wished that some of the ceremonies now proposed might be introduced, because a similarity in such matters would conduce to unity. Of course, moderation must be used; and for this reason, also, we have changed nothing in doctrines and essential matters. The source of all our present troubles and of those which still threaten the Church is the article of transubstantiation. This has given strength to the papal mass, concerning which we shall doubtless hear most severe commands from the emperor at the next diet. All the other questions in dispute have, as you are aware, been handled by me in such a way, that a pious and sincere man will have no further doubt upon them. But on the question of transubstantiation I have always been very brief, on account of the slanderous tongues of some in our own party.”

To the attacks which were made upon him by Flacius, Melanchthon did not for a long time reply. He feared it would only make matters worse. Flacius, however, became more and more violent. Finally, on October 1st, Melanchthon published a defense of his course. He denied that he had made any changes in doctrines, and maintained that his theological views still accorded with those laid down in his Loci Communes and the Augsburg Confession of 1530. He had, he said, advised the pastors of Franconia and other places not to leave the Church on account of non-essential matters; but he branded as a lie the assertion, that he had told those people they

should not leave the Church, even if all the old abuses were reinstated. He complained that Flacius had violated the sanctity of friendship by accusing him publicly of confidential and ofttimes jocular remarks, which had been made in the past.

It was now proposed by the Saxon court to publish a severe and comprehensive refutation of the charges made by Flacius and his allies. But, by Melanchthon's advice, this was not done. He thought it would only serve to embitter his enemies still more. But it is doubtful whether they would have been incited to more violent attacks than those which they made at any rate. Toward the end of 1540, Flacius published a series of letters written by Melanchthon during the Diet of Augsburg, and accompanied them with notes containing biting, satirical remarks. By this publication he hoped to show men what a contemptible and timid man Melanchthon really was, and how differently Luther would have acted, if he had been still alive.

It was evident that Flacius and his friends could not be reduced to silence. In fact, it soon appeared that the controversy over the adiaphora was only the prelude to an attack upon all the modifications of doctrinal statements made in the Interim. In the beginning of the year 1550 Nicholas Gallus attacked the statement, that man is not to be regarded as a block in conversion. Melanchthon thereupon sent to Dr. Pfeffinger of Leipzig a number of theses for discussion, among which was one in which he defended the sentence assailed by Gallus. Hardly had these theses become public, when Flacius attacked them in two writings, and asserted that Melanchthon had said, that it was not worthwhile to dispute about the one little word "alone" in the doctrine of Justification by faith. This accusation, however, was false; for Melanchthon expressly declared in a letter to George von Anhalt, that he had never spoken nor written nor even thought of such a thing. We shall hear more of Flacius in a succeeding chapter.

22. The Osiandrian And Majoristic Controversies. The Religious Peace Of Augsburg 1550-1556.

ABOUT THIS TIME there arose a controversy over the object of Christ's descent into hell. AEpinus, Superintendent of Hamburg, maintained, in a commentary which he published on the sixteenth Psalm, that Christ's descent into hell was the last stage of his humiliation, and endeavored to prove this position from the Scriptures and the writings of Luther. The Wittenberg theologians, however, gave it as their opinion, that it represented Christ's victory over hell and the devil, and was one of the stages of his exaltation. This controversy stirred up considerable animosity, but it was soon overshadowed by the Osiandrian controversy which followed.

Andrew Osiander, or Hosenmann, or Hosen-Enderlein, had been pastor in Nuremberg. When the Interim was introduced, he resigned his position. He was then, in 1549, called to a professorship at Koenigsberg. He had scarcely been installed in his new position, when he raised a commotion by his erroneous explanation of the doctrine of justification. He maintained that we are justified by a constant infusion of Christ's righteousness into the believer. He confused *justification*, which is a judicial act declaring us righteous for Christ's sake, with *sanctification*, which refers to the believer's personal holiness and growth in grace. He denied that Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believers. He at once became the object of fierce attacks. His opponents persistently appealed to the authority of Melanchthon. This angered Osiander, and he said that he was tired of hearing the words, "Our preceptor Philip teaches differently."

The Duke of Prussia concluded that the controversy ought to be submitted to the German churches for decision. Both parties therefore drew

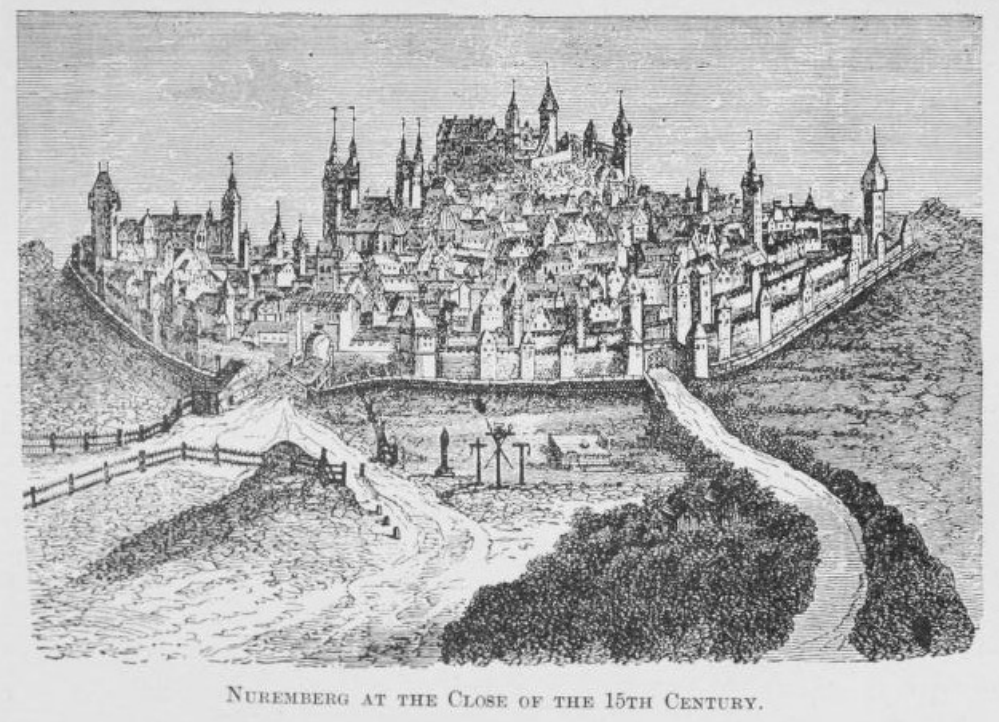
up a confession. That of Osiander was published. It was entitled, “The Confession concerning the only Mediator Jesus Christ and concerning Justification.” In this it was maintained that what was usually understood as justification was called by the Scriptures redemption, and was the common property of all; that in justification, man is not only declared righteous but made righteous, renewed and sanctified. Through faith in Christ and by virtue of the mystical union with Him, the essential righteousness of God is communicated to man. Therefore, Christ is not our righteousness according to his human but according to his divine nature.

Up to this time, Melanchthon had purposely refrained from taking any part in the controversy. He had paid no attention to the attacks which, in the course of the dispute, had been made upon him. In a friendly letter written as late as May 1, 1551, he had requested Osiander calmly to examine and answer certain theses which he enclosed. But when he was urged by the duke and the Koenigsberg theologians to publish an opinion on the confession of Osiander, he came out publicly in January, 1552, with the views which he had repeatedly expressed in private. His publication was entitled, “An Answer to Mr. Andrew Osiander concerning the Justification of Man.” In this pamphlet, greatly to the duke’s chagrin, he refuted Osiander’s position by many quotations from the Holy Scriptures. He said that God does indeed dwell in the converted man; but that it is equally true that after conversion we constantly need and receive the forgiveness of sins for Jesus’ sake. First, we must be justified by faith, through the merit of Jesus Christ; and only then does God truly dwell within us.

When Osiander read Melanchthon’s reply, he is said to have threatened to “bleed Melanchthon in such a way, that his blood would flow throughout all Germany.” He actually did publish a work which he entitled, “A Bleeding of Mr. Philip.” He issued another also, entitled, " A Refutation of the Unfounded and Worthless Answer of Philip Melanchthon." These works exceeded even those of Flacius in vituperation and slander. The second was aimed not only at Melanchthon, but at all the professors at Wittenberg. Instigated by Melanchthon, they refused, he said, to ordain any one or to confer the degree of Master or Doctor upon any one who did not first solemnly promise to teach in accordance with the three creeds of the early Church and the Augsburg Confession. To this Melanchthon replied that the promise referred to was, indeed, required, and had been required for the past twenty years. But it had been introduced by Luther, Bugenhagen and

Jonas, on account of the Anabaptists and other fanatics, and because it took the place of a lengthy recital of the candidate's faith.

In October, 1552, Osiander died. But in spite of the fact that his doctrine was condemned by nearly all the churches, the controversy continued to rage for many years. In Stettin his views were defended by Peter Artopäus. In the year 1555, Dr. Jacob Rungius was dispatched from that place to Wittenberg in order to obtain Melanchthon's opinion. When he arrived, he found Melanchthon on the point of going to Nuremberg to allay the dissensions which some Osiandrists there created. They journeyed together. On September 29th and 30th a disputation was held in Nuremberg. At its conclusion, a paper prepared by Melanchthon was read and approved. The title of it was, "That in Conversion Man is Justified before God by Faith, on account of the Obedience of the Mediator, and not on account of any Essential [infused] Righteousness." Two of the disputants refused to sign the paper, and resigned their offices.



NUREMBERG AT THE CLOSE OF THE 15TH CENTURY.

◊ Nuremberg at the close of the 15th Century.

Melanchthon had desired that Brenz should take part in the discussion. But Brenz replied that he could not come, and moreover would frankly state that he regarded Osiander's theses as simply "paradoxes, which might be interpreted for good or evil, just as men felt disposed toward the author." Melanchthon did not wish to enter upon a controversy with Brenz. Therefore, in the opinion which he sent to Koenigsberg, he did not mention Osiander's name, though he condemned his theses. When Rungius returned with this opinion, Artopäus recanted, but afterward he fell into his former errors. He was then deposed from his office. In March, 1556, he came to Wittenberg; and laid his confession of faith before Melanchthon. In reading it through, the latter found much which he could not approve. But out of pity for the man's age, and sympathy for his large family which was hi need of support, Melanchthon wrote to Stettin, asking the authorities there to temper justice with mercy and to provide Artopäus with some position elsewhere.

In February of the year 1550 a new pope, Julius III., assumed the triple crown. He owed his elevation to the emperor, and was consequently more inclined to be accommodating to that ruler than his predecessor had been. He transferred the council from Bologna to Trent. It was to be opened May 1, 1551. When the imperial diet met at Augsburg on July 26, 1550, the emperor commanded the States to send delegates to Trent. But the elector, through his representatives at Augsburg, replied, in accordance with an opinion furnished by Melanchthon, that unless the council began its deliberations with the very beginning of the present disputes, allowed the evangelical theologians a voice in its proceedings, and refrained from proposing the pope as its president or judge, he would have nothing to do with it.

Upon receiving a favorable answer from the emperor, the elector, in 1551, summoned Melanchthon, Bugenhagen and Camerarius to Dresden to consult with him about sending some one to Trent. It was decided that George von Anhalt, with several other theologians, should go. Melanchthon drew up a paper in which he laid down the course of action which he thought these delegates ought to pursue. He said that they ought first of all to insist upon taking on the religious disputes from the time of their first appearance, and then maintain the doctrines laid down in the Catechism, the Augsburg Confession, or the first Agenda of Electoral Brandenburg. Some,

however, thought it better not to send any confession at all to the council, but purposely to delay its proceedings until the emperor should die.

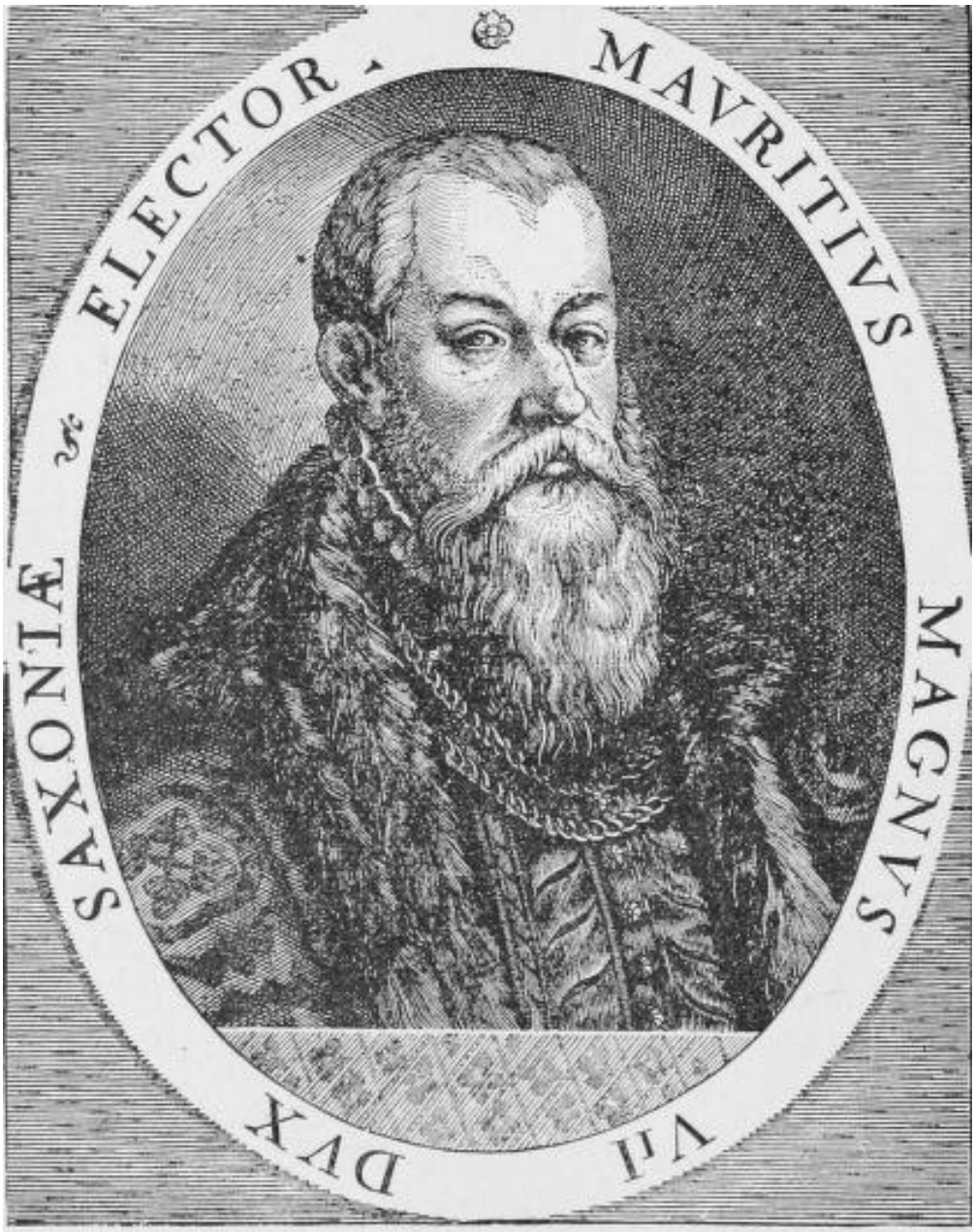
Shortly after this, it was decided that Melanchthon should draw up a new confession of faith for the council. He retired to Dessau, on May 5th, in order to carry on his work without interruption, and there wrote the Saxon Confession. Melanchthon called it a repetition of the Augsburg Confession. It was firm in tone, and defended the Lutheran doctrines as the only true and scriptural ones. It gave the undisputed articles in very brief form, but treated the disputed ones at greater length, and subjected to a sharp criticism the arguments which the papists had advanced against them. It was signed by the ambassador of the Margrave John, by a great number of Saxon pastors, and later by the deputies of Mansfeldt, Strasburg, Pomerania and Anspach.

The council was re-opened at Trent on May 1st, but was immediately postponed till the following September. For a long time nothing was said in Wittenberg about sending delegates. Suddenly, on December 13, 1551, Melanchthon and Major received a command from the elector to start for Trent and to be in Nuremberg by January 11. Melanchthon was much puzzled to know the meaning of this command. No instructions of any kind were sent him for his guidance, no provision was made for an escort or for traveling expenses. He therefore directed his steps toward Dresden to seek some enlightenment on the subject. But he could learn nothing there. He began to notice, however, that the elector was preparing for war. This troubled him. He feared Maurice was about to contract an alliance with the French. He then penned a letter to the elector, and expressed his scruples about the propriety of such a step. On January 6, 1552, he returned as far as Leipzig. Eight days later, in company with Sarcerius, Pacäus, and his son-in-law, Peucer, he journeyed as far as Nuremberg. He arrived on January 22nd. He now received a passport from the Saxon commissioner at Trent, but still no instructions. Two letters of inquiry which he wrote to the court remained unanswered. He began to suspect that there was something behind all this, and his suspicions were confirmed when he heard a rumor that Maurice was preparing to make war upon the emperor. Indeed, it soon became evident that the journey which Melanchthon had been commanded to make was not seriously meant to end in Trent at all. The elector was well satisfied to have Melanchthon remain at Nuremberg. The whole journey

was simply a ruse by which Maurice hoped to keep the emperor in ignorance of his real intentions.

Melanchthon was fond of Nuremberg and had many warm friends there. He was not at all displeased with the prospect of tarrying in that city, instead of proceeding to Trent and engaging in fruitless disputations. He concluded to wait for instructions. He passed his time very pleasantly, and delivered about thirty lectures in the gymnasium which he had helped to establish. Finally, on March 9, no instructions having yet arrived, he returned to Wittenberg.

In the meantime, important political events were taking place. The elector Maurice had been commanded by the emperor to subdue the city of Magdeburg, which stubbornly resisted the introduction of the Interim. Much anxiety was felt for its fate. The feeling against Maurice, who was already an object of aversion to the Protestants, became very bitter when he undertook the siege of this bulwark of sound Lutheranism. But now Maurice, who had previously betrayed the Protestant cause by going over to the emperor, concluded to mend matters by betraying the emperor. His relations with Charles V. were every day becoming more galling. He continued, indeed, the siege of Magdeburg, but made a secret treaty with a number of Protestant princes, and promised to abide by the Augsburg Confession and to risk his land and people for the sake of the Gospel and German liberty. When Magdeburg capitulated, Maurice suddenly turned his arms and those of his allies, William of Hesse and the Margrave John, against the emperor. Charles was then at Innsbruck, and barely had time to escape before Maurice entered the city. The day before his flight the emperor liberated John Frederick from his captivity. On August 2, 1552, the treaty of Passau was concluded. By its terms, religious liberty and equal civil rights at the next diet were guaranteed to the Protestants; those who had been banished were pardoned; and the landgrave Philip was released from captivity.



ELECTOR MAURICE OF SAXONY.

Elector Maurice of Saxony

The latter half of the year 1552 was spent by Melanchthon chiefly in Torgau, whither the university had been transferred because of the

prevalence of the plague at Wittenberg. On account of the Osiandrian controversy, which had broken out in a new form through Francis Stancarus, he delivered lectures upon the three persons of the Holy Trinity. Stancarus had been called to Koenigsberg with the hope that he would be able to put an end to the dissensions created by Osiander. But he made matters worse by goint to the opposite extreme and maintaining that Christ is our righteousness, not according to his divine, but according to his human nature only. Accused of heresy, he resigned his position. Early in 1552 he came to Wittenberg with a paper which he had prepared against Osiander. Receiving no encouragement here, he went to Frankfort-on-the-Oder, and from that city made attacks upon Melanchthon as well as upon his Koenigsberg opponents. He was soon involved in a violent controversy with Musculus.

In order to restore peace, the elector of Brandenburg proposed the holding of a disputation in Berlin, and invited Bugenhagen and Melanchthon to attend it. Melanchthon replied that it was impossible for him to come, because he was then engaged in consulting with Sarcerius as to the pastors who should be appointed for Augsburg, now that the Interim was abolished. He said, also, that he did not approve of the elector's project. It would be better to send some sensible man to Wittenberg, and have a reply to Stancarus prepared. He added that he did not know exactly what the latter's position was; but if Stancarus maintained that Christ is the Mediator only according to his human nature, he was certainly in error. Christ is and remains the Mediator according to both natures. Mediation implies not only suffering in our stead, but also victory and intercession. The elector took Melanchthon's advice. l!To disputation was held. But Melanchthon prepared a full and thorough discussion of the subject, and published it in 1553 under the title, "An Answer to the Controversies of Stancarus."

Another departure from the true doctrine of justification was made by Matthias Lauterwald of Hungary. He denied that man is justified by faith alone, and maintained that grace is obtained by repentance and new obedience. Melanchthon was asked to prepare an opinion. He did so, and defended the formula, "We are justified by faith alone."

Toward the end of the year 1551, Nicholas von Amsdorf published a work in which he accused George Major of having caused much division and contention through the Leipzig Interim, and of having contributed much

to the subversion of the true doctrine of justification by his use of the sentence, "good works are necessary to salvation." Major replied that he would not quarrel over the word "alone," because he had always taught that man is justified by faith alone; hut that nevertheless he would continue to maintain, as he had in the past, the formula to which objection was made, because no one could be saved by evil works nor without good works. He defended his view from the pulpit. Violent attacks were made upon him from all sides, and he was compelled to resign his position as general superintendent at Mansfeldt. His opponents accused him of being a Pelagian and a papist.

Melanchthon took no active part in this controversy. He advised Major to drop the formula which gave such offense. Melanchthon had indeed used it himself, and had been attacked for so doing. But he had discontinued its use because it was liable to misconstruction, and because Luther disapproved of it. In the articles of Pegau he had again employed the expression for the sake of effecting a compromise. He had not meant, however, to conflict with the true Lutheran doctrine, nor to represent good works as the cause of justification, but to refer to the connection which exists between a justifying faith and a new life of obedience to God. It would have been well if Major had taken Melanchthon's advice. But instead of dropping the objectionable formula at once, he defended it until the year 1562, when, for the sake of peace, he recalled it, after much mischief had been done. Amsdorf, in his violent opposition to Major, went so far as to advance the proposition, that good works are injurious to salvation, and published a pamphlet intended to prove that this was taught by St. Paul and Luther.

When Melanchthon's opinion was asked by the elector, whether a synod might not be able to settle the difficulties, he replied that he feared that it would do no good, and that he was inclined to agree with Nazianzen, who declared that he had never yet seen a synod which did not raise greater dissensions than existed before. The elector, however, made some preparations for a conference of the theologians. But shortly after this he was mortally wounded in the battle of Sievershausen.

Augustus, the new elector, who succeeded his brother Maurice, was a friend of the Gospel. He thought highly of Melanchthon, and frequently sought his advice with reference to the universities, schools and churches. He willingly agreed to the suggestion of Duke Christopher of Würtemberg

to call a convention of theologians for the purpose of quieting these controversies and deciding upon the course to be pursued in the approaching diet at Augsburg. This convention was held at Naumberg. Melanchthon arrived there May 20th, 1554, with Forster and Camerarius. On the following day the Hessian delegates arrived, and on May 23rd, still others. It was agreed that at the diet they would abide by the Augsburg Confession, or the similar confession of Brenz, or the Saxon Confession. They also condemned the errors of Schwenkfeldt and Osiander, and the re-introduction of Romish customs which had been abolished. Contrary to Melanchthon's expectations, great harmony prevailed in the meeting. Its resolutions were signed by all the theologians present, and afterwards accepted by Duke Christopher, whose theologians had failed to be present at the meeting.

The diet was opened at Augsburg on February 5th, 1555. It had been appointed to be held half a year after the treaty of Passau. But it was delayed for more than two years. It was fortunate for the Protestants that this delay occurred. In the interval Charles the Fifth was so much harassed by political troubles, that he was ready now to consent to concessions to which he would not have listened, if the diet had been held at an earlier date. After lengthy negotiations, the Religious Peace of Augsburg was concluded. It guaranteed to the adherents of the Augsburg Confession equal rights with the Roman Catholics and the perfect enjoyment of religious liberty. But it stipulated that if any Roman Catholic prelate turned Protestant, he should not only lose his ecclesiastical position, but his temporal power and dominion as well. This reservation interfered in a large measure with the further spread of the Reformation.

23. The Crypto-Calvinistic Controversy. Negotiations With Flacius. 1556-1557.

AT LAST religious liberty had been secured. The Council of Trent might now resolve what it pleased, its decrees would not trouble the Protestants. Yet Melanchthon was far from giving way to rapture. He feared that the conflict with the Roman Catholics was not over; and he was filled with anxiety by the dissensions which existed among the Protestants. To his great distress the doctrine of the Lord's Supper was made the subject of a new controversy.

By the Wittenberg Concord of 1536, an agreement had been reached between the Lutherans and the cities of upper, or southern, Germany. But this agreement was more than once disturbed. In 1544 Luther had felt compelled to publish his final Confession of the Holy Sacrament against the Fanatics. This showed conclusively that a union with the Zwinglians was impossible. But many still hoped that a union might be effected with the Calvinists. Since the adoption of the Wittenberg Concord, it had been regarded as the true Protestant doctrine, that Christ is really present in the Lord's Supper. The manner of that presence was to be left an open question. But when John Calvin of Geneva openly maintained that the body and blood of Christ are not physically present at all under the bread and wine, and that Christ is received only spiritually by the believing communicant, a violent controversy followed.

While it cannot be said that Melanchthon regarded the Lutheran doctrine of the real presence as erroneous, he believed that Calvin's doctrine did no real violence to the Scriptures and might be tolerated. But the Lutherans did not all agree with Melanchthon. In 1552 Joachim Westphal of Hamburg published a pamphlet in which he openly assailed Calvin's doctrine, and asserted that it was secretly accepted by many Lutheran theologians. He

showed that the Reformed party from Zwingli to Calvin had given no less than twenty-eight different interpretations of the words of institution. In 1553 he issued a second publication entitled, “The True Faith concerning the Lord’s Supper, proved from the Words of the Apostle Paul and the Evangelists.” The zeal of the Lutherans against the Calvinists became thoroughly aroused. John von Lasco, who, with a band of French and Dutch Protestants, had been banished from England by Queen Mary, found it impossible to discover a place in Germany where his party might settle, because he had declared himself a Calvinist. In 1554 Calvin published a work in which he took the part of these exiles, and defended his doctrine. A violent controversy soon raged throughout Germany.

Melanchthon was accused by some of holding Calvin’s doctrine. But this charge cannot be substantiated. That he did not completely agree with Luther is equally certain. Out of regard for Melanchthon’s services, Luther had borne his change of views with a toleration, which, in a man of his character, was nothing short of remarkable. But Luther’s adherents were not inclined to be so tolerant. Exactly what Melanchthon believed, it is difficult to determine. The formulas which he drew up were meant to be such as all who acknowledged the real presence might be able to subscribe. He took no part in the controversy between the Lutherans and the Calvinists, though both parties endeavored to force him to express himself upon the subject. Gallus and Westphal published selections from his former works, by which they sought to prove that, at least during Luther’s lifetime, Melanchthon was on their side. Calvin endeavored to wring a statement from him by asserting, that he understood the Augsburg Confession in the same sense as its author, and could therefore readily subscribe to it. But Melanchthon could not be brought to make a public statement. In 1556 he wrote to the electoral counselor Mordeisen, who had urged him to express his views: " I know certainly that your court will not tolerate a defense of the truth in this article. I would prefer not to begin at all, rather than, having begun, to drop the matter again at your command, and thus do injury to the truth." From this it would appear, that his views were, to some extent at least, at variance with those of the strict Lutherans, and that he thought he would not be permitted by the elector to defend his position, if he advanced it openly. Perhaps it was not, however, the personal loss which he might suffer, if banished from Wittenberg, but rather the dread of controversy and the fear of adding to the existing distress of the Church, which deterred him from an

open avowal of his convictions. He was by nature averse to strife and contention; he saw its distracting effect upon the Church; he was getting old and was weary of the constant turmoil, and longed to die, so that he might escape "from the fury of the theologians."

The dissensions among the Protestants were all the more to be regretted, because another diet was to be held at Ratisbon in 1556, and another effort was to be made to bring about unity in religion. How could the Protestants, divided as they were, maintain their cause against the Roman Catholics? The holding of a convention to restore harmony was suggested by some of the princes; but they received little encouragement. Amsdorf, Aurifaber, Stoltz, and the other Lutheran theologians most actively engaged in the controversy, held a special convention at Weimar in January, 1556. They decided not to agree to a reconciliation, until the Wittenbergers unequivocally pledged themselves to maintain the Augsburg Confession and to repudiate Zwinglianism and synergism. Fortunately for the Protestant cause, the proposed diet was postponed till the following year. By that time the relations between the theologians of Weimar and Wittenberg had become somewhat easier.

To Melanchthon's surprise, his old antagonist Flacius made overtures of peace in the summer of 1556, and proposed a personal conference. Flacius prepared a few "mild propositions," as a basis of peace. He sent these propositions to Eber; but they were so harsh, particularly in the eleventh article, that Eber did not give them to Melanchthon. On July 13th, Flacius wrote to Hubert Languetus, who had long been an intimate friend of Melanchthon, requesting him to arrange a conference at Coswig, promising to be mild and peaceful in his behavior.

Melanchthon had at first been inclined to accept the advances of his antagonist, but he changed his mind and wrote to Languetus, that he had long desired a conference to consider the articles in dispute, but that it would be useless to hold a meeting with such unlearned, raging ranters as Stoltz, Gallus and Aurifaber. He would like to confer with Flacius, because they had been on terms of intimate friendship so long; but when he thought of the things which Flacius had accused him of saying, but which had never entered his mind, much less been spoken by him, he was compelled to fear the same insincerity on the part of Flacius now, and must therefore decline to meet him. IN^one of his friends were willing to be present at such an

interview, and he would not, after what had happened, care to meet him alone.

On receiving this reply Flacius politely expressed his regrets in a letter to Languetus. He also wrote to Melanchthon, and called his attention to the "leniency and consideration" which he had shown to Melanchthon hitherto. He asked Melanchthon to think of the letter which the latter had written to the Venetian ambassador Teupolus in 1530, and which Flacius had kindly refrained from publishing; of his relations to the adiaphora and the Leipzig Interim; of his indifference to the controversy with Major, and then to judge whether he had reason to complain of Flacius' treatment. To this Melanchthon replied on September 4th: "You direct attention to the consideration which you have shown me, because you did not publish the letter which I wrote to Teupolus. I never wrote a syllable to him. I simply paid him a visit by command of the elector, and spoke a number of tilings in defense of the Reformation. I cannot recall the words which I used. Others, who seem to have a better memory, have remembered some of them, added other things to them, and manufactured a letter with which Rorarius already reproached me, and of which I received a copy from the margrave. You may judge for yourself what merit is attached to your action, in not assailing me with such a piece of bungling. You have also published the Leipzig Interim with all manner of mutilations and additions. As regards the negotiations about that Interim, I strove vehemently, as everybody knows, against every change which was to be introduced through that Augsburg Sphinx, and I engaged in many a conflict with the courtiers, until finally the elector declared, that he did not ask for any change in doctrine or essential matters, but only the retention of a few indifferent customs, which the counselors called adiaphora. I knew very well that even unimportant changes would be distasteful to the people. But as the doctrines were jDreserved intact, I preferred that our people should endure this minor servitude, rather than leave the service of the Church on account of these things. This is what I did. Then you began to contend. I yielded and endeavored to avoid controversy. I acknowledge that I erred in this matter, and pray God to forgive me for not fleeing far from such treacherous deliberations. But those things of which you and Gallus falsely accuse me, I shall refute. As respects Major, I have always exhorted him to give up his offensive formula, and he promised me to do so. I myself do not use it, but teach, 'the new obedience is necessary because it is an inevitable law, that the creature should obey the

Creator.'" In conclusion he said that, if a reconciliation was to be effected, it would be best to have the propositions prepared by impartial judges. There must, he declared, be one confession in doctrine. And as he acknowledged that he erred with respect to the ceremonies, Flacius should not continue to bring false accusations against him.

Flacius was not satisfied with this declaration. He was evidently determined, either to humble Melanchthon by compelling him to make a public recantation, or to hold him up before all the world as a teacher of heresy. To accomplish his purpose, he relied upon the Superintendents Valentine Curtius of Lübeck, Paul von Eitzen of Hamburg, Joachim Mörlin of Brunswick, and Frederick Henning of Lüneburg, who offered to act as umpires. These met in Magdeburg January 17, 1557, and pledged themselves to adhere to the confession which had been published against the Interim, in 1550, under the title, "Confession, Instruction and Admonition of the Pastors and Preachers of the Christian Congregations of Magdeburg." While these men proceeded to Wittenberg with eight articles of agreement, Flacius with his friends Wigand, Judex, and Baumgärtner, remained in the neighboring town of Coswig, and exhorted the others not to spare the Wittenbergers nor to be daunted by the fact that Melanchthon had formerly been their teacher, but to probe to the bottom of the matter.

◊ Dr. Joachim Mörlin.

On January 21st, at six o'clock in the morning, Melanchthon opened the proceedings in his own house with an address, which, for the sake of caution, he had prepared in manuscript form. He accepted the superintendents as mediators, but told them that, in order to effect peace, it would be necessary to take up the whole body of Protestant doctrine; for otherwise Flacius would soon find a new excuse for starting a controversy.

Thereupon Mörlin presented the eight articles which had been prepared. They contained the following conditions of agreement:

1. Unity of doctrine shall be restored on the basis of the Augsburg Confession and the Schmalkald Articles.
2. All conflicting errors of the papists, Interimists, Anabaptists and sacramentarians shall be rejected.
3. All corruptions shall be eradicated from the doctrine of justification, particularly that of the necessity of good works for salvation.
4. The Saxon churches shall not depart from the confession which they published at the time of the last persecution.
5. No agreement shall be made with the papists concerning ceremonies, unless first an agreement in doctrine be reached.
6. In times of persecution a sincere confession shall be made, and no servitude in conflict with Christian liberty shall be admitted.
7. *"We also kindly entreat our teacher to testify in some public writing, that his views concerning indifferent matters and the necessity of good works for salvation harmonize with the confessions of our churches."*
8. If one of the parties be suspected of heresy, a declaration shall be required.

When Melanchthon had read these articles, he became very indignant, and broke off the negotiations. On the next day, however, he had become somewhat calmer. He then gave the following reply: "When, in the year 1541, I bade farewell at Ratisbon to my friend Jacob Sturm, and said that I did not believe I would ever see him again in this world, he jokingly replied, 'We shall come some time to crucify you.' His prophecy is now being fulfilled. After laboring so hard for many years, I am assailed on all sides, and dare not even lay claim to your sympathy. You pretend to be mediators, and yet you lay before me articles with which I am expected to strangle myself and my friends. You make it impossible for me to take a single step without peril. If I agree to your articles, many in our churches will have cause to complain of me; if I do not agree to them, you will still further excite your party against me. What should I do? I will agree to most of your articles, if you will remove from me the suspicion of having perverted the doctrine of justification, and will not unconditionally condemn the necessity of good works. But the seventh article I

unequivocally reject. Even if I yielded at the wrong time, I am convinced that my view of indifferent matters is correct."

When the mediators brought this reply to Flacius, he became greatly enraged, put the articles in a still more drastic form, and sent the mediators back, bidding them "lay the articles, with the additions, before the old teacher of errors, and tell him that, if he accepted the articles, Flacius would permit him to omit the public recantation." It is likely that the superintendents were by no means anxious to execute this unpleasant commission. But they returned with the articles. Melanchthon thanked them for their efforts in the interests of harmony, but rejected the renewed demands made of him, and declared that this answer was final.

In February John Albert of Mecklenburg endeavored to bring about a reconciliation. He sent Venetus of Rostock and Mylius, one of his counselors, with a new formula, in which all the controverted subjects were thoroughly treated, and all decided in favor of the Magdeburg theologians. Melanchthon listened to their proposals, but refused to enter into any new negotiations, and sent them away with a very short answer.

In April of this year Flacius received a call to Jena, where the gymnasium had been converted into a university. About the same time Melanchthon received a call to Heidelberg. This would have been a good opportunity to get farther away from the Flacians. At the request of the elector, however, he decided to remain at Wittenberg. But he was weary of the strife and contention which raged all about him. He wrote to Camerarius, that he would be best pleased, if he could end his days at some solitary place in Palestine, as Jerome did, but that he could not do so because he had a family to support.

24. The Religious Conference At Worms. 1557.

MELANCHTHON WAS TAINTED with some of the superstitions of his age. The prediction which had been made of him in his infancy by an astrologer, that he would be shipwrecked on the Baltic Sea, recurred to him in the summer of 1557, when the elector decided to pay a visit to his father-in-law, the king of Denmark, and desired Melanchthon to accompany him. Some controversies were raging in Denmark, which the elector hoped his theologian might be able to end. When Melanchthon heard of it, he feared that the prediction made in his infancy was about to be fulfilled.

He was much relieved when he learned that the elector had changed his mind and that, instead of accompanying that ruler, he was to go to Worms and take part in the religious colloquy to be held there. After receiving his instructions, he departed, accompanied by Peucer and a few other friends. When they arrived in Frankfort, August 26th, they learned that the Weimar delegates, Schnepf, Strigel, Stoessel, and the chancellor Monner, were busily engaged in agitating against the Wittenbergers. But Melanchthon continued his journey and arrived two days later in Worms. The theologians present were filled with joy at his coming. Those of Weimar alone did not rejoice.

Before the religious conference opened, Monner and his friends insisted upon specifically condemning, not only the doctrines of the Anabaptists, Schwenkfeldt, and Servetus, but all kinds of Zwinglianism, Major's formula of the necessity of good works, Osiander's doctrine of justification, and all those persons who had yielded during the Interim and had not acknowledged their error. These demands were made by Monner and Schnepf at a meeting of the Protestant theologians, held on September 5th. They declared that, if their demands were not accepted, they would have nothing to do with the approaching conference. But the most that the

Weimar delegates could accomplish was to have these demands recorded as an expression of their individual views.

On September 11th, the negotiations with the Roman Catholics commenced. In the opening sessions, the conditions of the debate were discussed with much warmth. The Roman Catholics maintained that the perpetual consensus of the Church was to be taken as the criterion; the Protestants, that the Holy Scriptures and the ancient confessional symbols were to be so taken. The discussion became still more violent when the doctrine of Original Sin was taken up. The Roman Catholics were by no means desirous to protract the conference. They wanted it broken up as speedily as possible. The wily Bishop Helding of Merseburg (Sidonius) raised the question, whether the Protestants who accepted the Augsburg Confession all agreed in the condemnation of the Zwinglians, Calvinists, Osiandrians, and the like. Melanchthon perceived what the bishop was aiming at, and replied that when the respective articles came up for consideration, an answer would be given to this question. The Weimar theologians wanted to hand in the articles of condemnation which they had prepared. But the others objected, and told them either to drop their intention or remain away from the conference entirely.

The Weimar theologians now claimed that they were excluded from the conference. They handed in a protest and departed from Worms. The other theologians were ready to continue the discussion. But the Roman Catholics declined to do so. They said that they did not know whether they would be treating with the true adherents of the Augsburg Confession or not. The presiding officer, Julius von Pflug, decided to adjourn the conference,and wait for instructions from King Ferdinand.

While these matters were in progress, there came a delegation from France to request the theologians to intercede with their respective rulers in behalf of a number of Protestants who were imprisoned in Paris on account of their faith. They were kindly received by Melanchthon, and through his exertions the princes were prevailed upon to send a letter of intercession to Henry II., King of France.

Melanchthon had little to do in Worms after the suspension of the conference. He therefore accepted an invitation from the Elector Otto Henry to come to Heidelberg and assist in the re-organization of the university. While staying in that city, he received a visit from his brother George and

his friend Camerarius. Great was his joy over these arrivals. But his joy was short-lived. Camerarius had brought sorrowful news.

Melanchthon's wife had died on October 11th. When he heard the sad tidings, he looked up toward heaven and said, "Farewell I shall soon follow thee." Walking with, his friend through the elector's gardens, he spoke of the dissensions which rent the Church, and the times which were so full of distress. But his thoughts recurred ever and anon to the loss which he had sustained. The beloved partner of his life was gone, and his sorrow could not be brushed aside. On October 31st, he wrote to Wittenberg: "Although I gather together all the consolations possible to soothe my grief, and recollect that my wife had arrived at an age when she could not expect to live many years more; that the attacks to which she was so long subject became increasingly painful; and that if I had died first she would have had to suffer still more; yet the love which I bore to her, and the thought of my grandchildren who have lost so much by her death, make me almost give way under my grief."

Melanchthon returned again to Worms and remained there the greater part of November. Finally, on November 18th, Ferdinand's instructions arrived. He demanded the recall of the Weimar delegates. The Roman Catholics insisted that they would not proceed until this had been done. But as the Protestants refused to do this, the conference was adjourned until the meeting of the next diet. The Protestants lodged complaint and protest against this adjournment, and in the beginning of December wended their way homeward.

Much bitterness of feeling was engendered by the outcome of this conference. The Weimar theologians laid the blame upon Melanchthon and his adherents, and said that these "holy pharisees" had excluded them from the negotiations and sent them home; Melanchthon's adherents laid the blame upon the Roman Catholics; while the Roman Catholics, delighted with the dissensions so apparent among the Lutherans, spared no pains to exhibit these divisions to all the world, and to prove that, after the Protestants had cut loose from Rome, no different result could have been expected.

Melanchthon had made an attempt to restore harmony between the Protestants. After he returned from Heidelberg to "Worms, he had been requested by several princes to endeavor to bring about a reconciliation. He drew up a formula for the purpose. In the article of justification he

emphasized the fact, that we are justified by faith alone. He opposed Osiander's doctrine, and with regard to Major's formula stated simply,"Good works are necessary," leaving away the objectionable part of the proposition, "unto salvation." Concerning the Lord's Supper he declared, that the real presence of Christ was not to be doubted. He rejected transubstantiation, local inclusion of the body and blood in the bread and wine, and Zwingliainism, which regarded the bread and wine simply as signs.

"xChrist is substantially present in such a manner, that, by the communication of his body and blood. He makes us members of his body and gives assurance that He applies to us his benefits, wishes to be efficacious in us, and desires to save and vivify our miserable being which has been planted in Him; as Hilary also declares, 'Eating and drinking these bring it to pass, that He is in us, and we in Him.'" This formula of agreement received the approval of all the theologians but those of Wittenberg. These made some objection to the article on justification where it treated of Osiander. When Melanchthon saw that a dispute was likely to follow upon this point, he withdrew his formula until the subject should come up in the regular order of discussion at the conference. But as this conference came to a sudden and unexpected end, nothing resulted from Melanchthon's form of agreement.

25. His Last Years And Death. 1558-1560.

THE DISSENSIONS in the Protestant Church were becoming greater and more formidable every day. But for this, the Reformation would have triumphed in many places where thus it failed. The Protestant princes were filled with dismay at the sight of the controversies which were so rife among the theologians, but they were powerless to restore harmony. There was no prospect that synods, even if called together, would be able to accomplish any good.

An effort was made, however, to bring about peace. In March, 1558, the electors of Germany met in Frankfort and conferred the imperial crown upon King Ferdinand. The three Protestant electors agreed at the same time, that the best way to restore harmony in the Church would be, to have all parties subscribe an agreement prepared for the purpose. The agreement which they had in mind was an "opinion" drawn up on the subject by Melanchthon, and known by the name of the Recess of Frankfort. No sooner was this opinion made public, than the stricter Lutherans began an attack upon it. Flacius called it the "Samaritan Interim." Amsdorf, at the request of Duke John Frederick, prepared a refutation. The Magdeburg theologians said that the princes wanted to make themselves the law-givers in matters of faith. It was even proposed to hold a synod for the purpose of condemning the action of the princes. This effort, therefore, which was intended to effect a reconciliation, served only to add fuel to the flames.

◊ Emperor Ferdinand I.

To make matters worse, the synergistic controversy was added to those which already existed. In 1550, Dr. Pfeffinger had published some propositions on the freedom of the will, and had been at once attacked by the strict Lutherans. But presently the matter was forgotten. Early in 1558, however, Amsdorf came out with his "Public Confession of the True Doctrine of the Gospel, and Confutation of the Fanatics of the Present Time." He declared that Pfeffinger had advanced the proposition, that the will of man conspired with the grace of God. Pfeffinger republished his propositions, and put forth a reply in which he claimed, that he had been misrepresented; that he had simply maintained that the human will cannot, indeed, incite itself to any good work and must be awakened by the Holy Spirit; but that the human will is not excluded in conversion and must do its share, because the Holy Ghost does not deal with men as with blocks and stones.

A violent controversy followed, in which many darts, ostensibly aimed at others, were meant to strike Melanchthon. For a long time, however, he did not reply. Finally, in 1559, the Dukes of Saxony published a "Confutation" in which all the heresies which had hitherto appeared in the Lutheran Church, including the last one of all, Synergism, were formally condemned. Synergism was represented in this work as the error of the adiaphorists, and the doctrines which were condemned were couched in the language of Melanchthon. To this he made reply. In March he sent his son-in-law Peucer to the elector at Dresden with a writing, in which he declared that the whole article in the "Confutation" referring to synergism was directed against him, hut that he must stand by his convictions. It is true, he said, that God through the Word sends the Holy Spirit into the heart and works in it, and that the prevenient grace of God is necessary for

conversion; but that conversion follows only when the human will co-operates with divine grace.

The elector sent this opinion to the landgrave, and the landgrave sent it to the younger John Frederick, with the remark, that the paper had his approval. John Frederick replied that he did not know of a single place in the Confutation in which Melanchthon's name was mentioned; hut that if Melanchthon had cried out, he must have been hit. At the landgrave's request, however, John Frederick consented to release Strigel, who had been imprisoned for his synergistic views, and to arrange for a colloquium between Flacius and Strigel. In the meeting which followed between these two, it happened that Flacius, the great champion of orthodoxy who had assailed Melanchthon so violently, made a misstep himself In the excitement of debate, he asserted that original sin is not an accident but the essence of human nature. He obstinately refused to retract his statement, and was therefore banished for his heresy. He died in great poverty in 1575.

In September, 1558, there were published thirty-one articles by the authorities of Bavaria for the use of the Inquisition in that State. In May of the following year, Melanchthon issued a "Reply to the Wicked Articles of the Bavarian Inquisition." This publication is valuable, because it appeared so shortly before his death and therefore presents the views which he held on many of the subjects involved in the controversies of the time. In this work he not only severely attacked the Roman Catholics, but expressed himself upon the controverted doctrines of the Lutheran Church. In his last will and testament he states that he wants this reply to be regarded as his confession. Concerning conversion, he claims that grace precedes, and the human will follows, as Chrysostom says: God draws, but only him who is willing. "At the same time I confess," he adds, "that in all the saints, God accomplishes most of the work in such a way, that the will remains a passive subject. Nevertheless, this rule is to be maintained: Faith cometh by hearing, it is nourished by meditation upon the promise, it is assailed by mistrust. Amid true sighings we may say, 'I believe. Lord, help thou mine unbelief.'"

Melanchthon now became involved also in a dispute which raged in the Palatinate concerning the Lord's Supper. A controversy arose there between the general superintendent Hesshus of Heidelberg and the deacon Klebitz. The latter held Calvinistic views. The elector of that State, Frederick III., deposed both of them from office, and sent to Melanchthon for advice. He

wanted to know, whether ge had acted properly, what was Melanchthon's opinion of the merits of the controversy, and how harmony might be restored. In his reply, Melanchthon approved the elector's course, and advised the employment of the apostle Paul's formula: "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" The apostle, he declared, "did not say that the nature of the bread is changed, as the papists maintain. lie did not say that the bread is the substantial body of Christ, as those of Bremen maintain. He did not say that the bread is the true body of Christ, as Hesshus does; but that it is a communion, that is to say, it is that by which a union with the body of Christ is effected, and which takes place during the use [of the sacrament] and by no means without cogitation, as for instance, if mice should eat the bread. Most fiercely do the papists, and others like them, quarrel over the question, whether it should be said that the body of Christ is, apart from its reception, contained in the form of bread or in the bread, and demand its adoration. Thus Morlinus of Brunswick has said: 'You must not say mum, mum, but must say what this is which the priest holds in his hand.' . . . . Christ is not present on account of the bread, but on account of man, as He said, 'Abide in me, and I in you.' Again, 'I am in my Father, and ye in me and I in you.' And in these two consolations He makes us his members, and testifies that He will make our bodies alive. Thus the ancients explain the Lord's Supper."

While it would seem from this, that Melanchthon's view of the Lord's Supper was as much in accord with Calvin's as Luther's, still this does not in itself prove that he sought to drive out Lutheranism and introduce Calvinism in the Palatinate. His aim for many years had been to prepare a formula which Lutherans and Calvinists both might accept. It is true, the elector of the Palatinate banished the Lutherans, and introduced the Reformed doctrines. But it would be unjust to Melanchthon to say that he advised or sought such a result.

The aged Brenz, who had hitherto been on very friendly terms with Melanchthon, was so aggrieved by the change effected in the Palatinate, that he assembled a synod in Stuttgart and had the doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's body received into the confessions of the Church of Würtemberg. As Melanchthon had but recently, in his reply to the articles of the Bavarian inquisition, expressed himself strongly against this doctrine, another controversy was added to those which already existed. The princes proposed the holding of a synod, but Melanchthon objected on the ground,

that synods have been the cause of great disorders, and that it was about as perilous to call one as to declare a war.

Melanchthon was much distressed by the troubles of his friend Hardenberg of Bremen. When Hesshus had been expelled from the Palatinate, he fled to Bremen, where the prevailing doctrine of the Lord's Supper agreed with his own. Hardenberg alone stood accused of Calvinism. Hesshus was offered a position, but he refused to accept, unless Hardenberg changed his views. He proposed a discussion with Hardenberg. Melanchthon wrote to the latter, and advised him not to accept the challenge. But when arrangements for the discussion were made nevertheless, Melanchthon resolved to go to Bremen to support his friend. The discussion, however, did not take place. Hardenberg at the last moment refused to take part in it. He was deposed from his office in February, 1561. Melanchthon did not live to see this. The death for which he had longed came at last, released him from his woes, and introduced him into a world where he might enjoy that peace which was denied him here. Many of his best friends had preceded him to the better world. Luther, Cruciger, Dietrich, Bucer, George von Anhalt, Sturm, Bugenhagen – these had all been called to their eternal reward, while he had been left weary and worn and sad to struggle on. His soul longed for peace; yet for thirty years he had been involved in continuous struggles and controversies, either with the Roman Catholics, or with the stricter wing of the Lutherans. Just a few weeks before he died, he wrote to his friend Baumgärtner of Nuremberg: "I am consumed by my longing for the heavenly Fatherland." After his death there was found on his desk a paper on which he had shortly before enumerated "the reasons why one ought to have the less dread of death." On the left he had written: "Thou shalt escape from sin; thou shalt be freed from care and from the fury of the theologians." On the right: "Thou shalt come into the light; thou shalt see God; thou shalt behold the Son of God: thou shalt learn those wonderful mysteries which in this world thou couldst not comprehend, why we are thus formed, what is the character of the union of the two natures." An old record declares, that he had for several years been looking for death, that "he had done as much as he could in this life, and would commit the rest to God. He comforted himself with the reflection, that his intentions had been sincere and upright, and his conscience did not accuse him of willful wrongs:. With this clear

conscience he expected to go into the presence of his Saviour Jesus Christ, with God's help, notwithstanding all that an ungrateful world might say."

He was indeed becoming worn out. And who that thinks of the enormous amount of labor which he performed, the many struggles which he endured, and the anxiety which so constantly preyed upon him, can wonder that it should be so? The marvel is that so frail and delicate a frame lasted as long as it did.

Toward the end of March, 1560, he journeyed to Leipzig to attend an examination of students. On April 4th, he returned to Wittenberg in the face of a bitter north wind. He suffered greatly from the cold, and said that he had not felt it so much through the whole winter. Four days later he was attacked by a fever, and felt a sense of oppression on his chest. He looked very ill, and his friends became alarmed. He endeavored to work, but found it necessary to stop frequently and rest. His son-in-law, the physician Caspar Peucer, supposed it was a new attack of gravel, and ordered a warm bath and poultices. Melanchthon was so weak that he could hardly totter to the washbowl, and remarked, " I shall go out like a feeble light." In spite of his weakness, he wanted to deliver his lectures as usual. Two friends accompanied him to the lecture-hall. But when they arrived there, they found that they were too early, and that very few students were present. He felt so ill that he decided to return home. At nine he went again to the university, but was unable to speak longer than a quarter of an hour.

A warm bath improved his condition a little. He partook of some food, and retired to rest for three hours. At supper time, he was somewhat better. Then for a few days it seemed as if he would recover. On April 10th he remarked, while revising his funeral oration on Duke Philip of Pomerania, who had died February 24th, "I am engaged in funeral matters now. This worthy prince was named Philip; perhaps I will be the next Philip, from among the common people, to follow him."

On Good Friday, April 12th, he delivered a festival meditation on Isaiah 53. He slept soundly that night and imagined, when he awoke, that he was singing, as he had done in his boyhood, "With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." On Saturday he wrote an Easter Meditation, carrying it to the printing office himself. Then he went to church and received the Lord's Supper. Later in the day he went to see what progress the printers were making, and this was the last time he was seen alive on the street. Toward night the fever again set in. His friend

Camerarius arrived to see him about four o'clock. He found Melanchthon at the foot of the stairway leading to his room, and assisted him to ascend. The next morning, which was Easter, Melanchthon was very weak. Still, he made preparations to deliver the Easter meditation which he had prepared the preceding day. He was not at all pleased when he learned, that announcement had been made that he would he unable to appear.

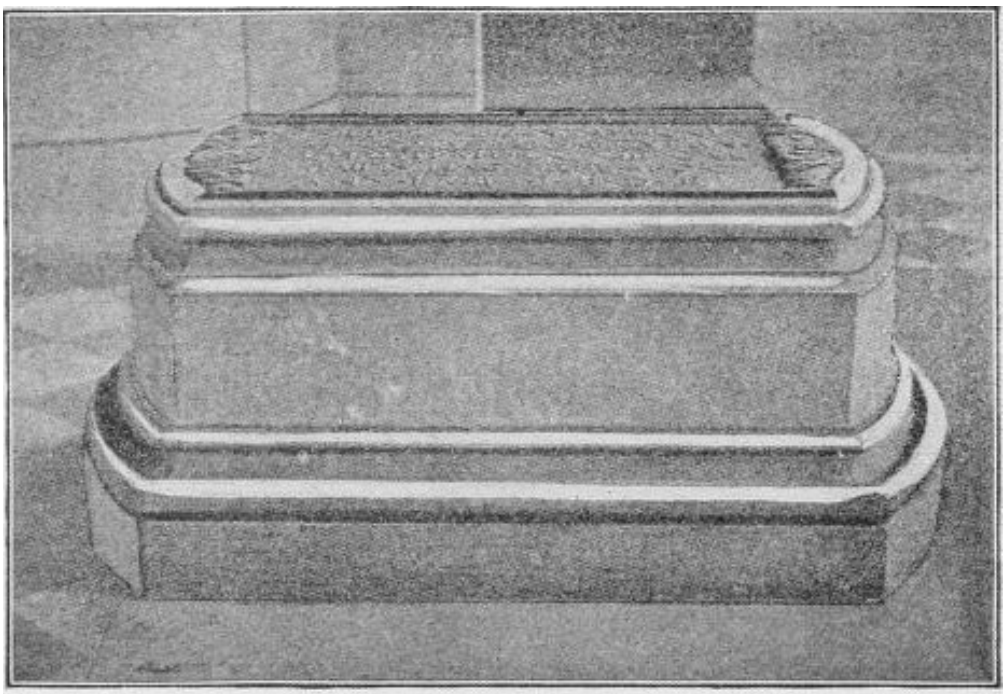
On Monday he conversed for a long time with his friend Camerarius. "My dear Joachim," he said, "we have now been good friends for nearly forty years. We have loved each other, and have never sought to take advantage of one another. We have been true schoolmasters and faithful friends, each in his place, and I trust that our labors have not been in vain, but have done much good. If it should be God's will that I shall now die, we will continue our friendship in the world to come."

As Melanchthon seemed to be feeling better, Camerarius bade him farewell on Tuesday, April 17th, and promised to return as soon as his engagements would permit him to do so. The last words which Melanchthon spoke to his friend were these: "The Son of God, who sits at the right hand of his heavenly Father and bestows gifts upon men, preserve you and yours and all of us. Give your wife my kind regards." As he rode away, Melanchthon went to a window and looked intently after him. When Camerarius again came to Wittenberg, Melanchthon was dead.

A new attack of the fever set in almost immediately. The sick man became weaker and weaker. He felt that his end was approaching fast. He asked for a copy of his will, which he had prepared at a previous period. When it could not be found, he began a new one, but was unable to complete it. On April 18th, he inquired of Peucer what hope there was of his recovery. Peucer reluctantly confessed that there was but little. Melanchthon replied: "Yes, I know my weakness, and am well aware what it means. I have committed the whole matter to God. I pray Him to deal mercifully with me." On the 19th his pulse became very weak. The professors and many of the students gathered anxiously around his bed. Portions of the Holy Scripture were read to him. He said that the words which were particularly dear to him were these: "As many as received Him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." The troubles which afflicted the Church occupied his thoughts a great deal. He conversed much about them. He prayed long and earnestly by himself. The by-standers knelt and prayed with him.

The end was at hand. Dr. Peucer asked him whether he desired anything. Melanchthon replied, "Nothing but heaven. Let me rest and pray. My end is near." At seven o'clock in the evening of April 19, 1560, he gently fell asleep in the Lord. He reached the age of sixty-three years.

Great was the mourning in Wittenberg and far beyond it, when his death became known. The funeral was held on April 21st. In a double coffin of pewter and wood, he was carried by the professors to the parish church. A long funeral procession followed. Paul Eber delivered a sermon on 1 Thess. 4. Then the funeral proceeded to the Electoral Church, where his body was deposited in its last resting place, beside the body of Luther. A metal plate marks his tomb; and to the left of the altar, on the wall, is a tablet which, in the words of his friend Camerarius, tells of the merit and worth of this great reformer, eminent teacher, and truly remarkable man of God.



MELANCHTHON'S TOMB.

◊ Melanchthon's Tomb.

26. His Character And Services.

THE HOSTILITY which existed toward Melanchthon during the last years of his life continued after his death. His valuable services in the cause of the Reformation were forgotten by all but his immediate followers; while his concessions to the Roman Catholics, his unionizing efforts, and his divergence from strict orthodoxy, were remembered against him. Early in the seventeenth century the feeling against him was still so strong that, in a public discussion at Wittenberg, the Lutheran theologian Leonhard Hutter became so enraged when Melanchthon was quoted as an authority, that he violently tore down and trampled under foot a picture of Melanchthon which hung on the wall. For nearly two hundred years after his death there were few who ventured to lift their voices in his favor, to point out the distinguished services which he rendered to the cause of the truth, or to accord to him the honor to which he was justly entitled. Then a reaction set in, and public opinion, like the pendulum, swung from one extreme to the other. He was now exalted even above Luther, and represented as the chief reformer of the sixteenth century.

Melanchthon had an important place to fill in the Reformation, but it was not as chief reformer. The Reformation would have proved a failure, if its direction had depended principally upon him. He lacked the heroic, resolute and steadfast character which was requisite in one who should begin and carry out, in the face of an opposing world, so mighty a spiritual revolution. But while he lacked the qualities necessary to make him an independent reformer, he possessed in an eminent degree the very talents which were needed to make him an invaluable assistant to Luther. A wise and beneficent Providence decreed that these two, the one warlike, aggressive, bold, the other peaceful, cautious, apprehensive, should labor side by side for the same great cause; and that, linked together by the same devotion to God and the truth, they should supplement one another’s work by the very diversity of their talents and temperaments.

The brilliant intellectual gifts of Melanchthon elicited the unqualified admiration of Luther, Erasmus, and in fact of all his contemporaries. Endowed by nature with an extraordinary memory, and possessed of unwearied industry in the pursuit of knowledge, he became in almost every branch of learning the peer and frequently the superior of those who made these branches a special study. Equally remarkable was the readiness with which he employed his extensive acquirements. Examples, analogies, quotations, seemed to be at his finger's ends. His was not, however, a creative mind. His mental habit was dialectic and discursive. His strength lay not in ability to create a great and comprehensive system of doctrines, but in the power to develop, expand, clear up, define, and defend evangelical truth. The old comparison, that Luther found the deep-lying veins of ore and brought the precious metal to light, while Melanchthon coined it and set it to circulating, contains much of truth. The doctrines which Luther drew from the Holy Scriptures, Melanchthon elaborated, put in pleasing form, and disseminated. It was particularly through his efforts that the Gospel found acceptance among the princes, nobility and learned men of the day. He was gifted with rare powers of lucid expression, and wrote a beautiful style. On this account he became the scribe of the Reformation. He not only wrote those two greatest confessions of Protestantism, The Augsburg Confession and The Apology, but whenever the Wittenberg theologians were called upon for an opinion, it was almost invariably Melanchthon upon whom the task of preparing it devolved.

Spiritually Melanchthon was marked by a deep, sincere piety. His personal life was pure; and in all his public activity he was guided by a desire to promote the kingdom of God. He wrote to Camerarius, that his own spiritual improvement was the chief reason why he devoted himself to the study of theology. He was profoundly conscious of his dependence on God. At the beginning of every task he prayed: " Lord, help, and be merciful unto us." In times of emergency and danger he comforted himself with the passage, "In Him we live and move and have our being." When he entered his lecture room, it was with the thought that this was the temple in which he was to glorify God. He aimed to elevate and improve this hearers, morally and spiritually. He lacked, indeed, Luther's sublime confidence in God's care for the Church; but it was because he feared that he might omit something which God, in His plans for the good of the Church, desired to have him do.

In disposition Melanchthon was mild and conciliating. The public documents and opinions prepared by him are characterized no less by extreme moderation, than by clearness in the presentation of the truth. This fact secured for the Gospel a favorable hearing from many who felt themselves repelled by the brusque and vehement manner of Luther. But his moderation was carried to excess. In the earlier stages of the Reformation it served, indeed, a useful purpose. It helped to keep that movement within proper and legitimate bounds, and won to the cause of the truth many who would not otherwise have been gained. But in later years it involved the Reformation in serious difficulties. For fear that he might say too much, he often omitted to say what needed to be said; for dread lest others might not be able to subscribe his formulas, he made them too wide and ambiguous; for apprehension lest he should insist on what was not after all essential, he surrendered what dared not safely be yielded, and thus jeopardized the Church.

This conduct was in a large measure due to his temperament. He was by nature averse to extremes. But he was greatly influenced also by his conscientiousness. In the public negotiations in which he took so prominent a part, he was almost overwhelmed by a sense of the responsibility which rested upon him. He would gladly have escaped from these negotiations. He would much rather have remained in his study and lecture-room. But Luther was under the imperial ban and dared not appear publicly outside of the elector of Saxony's dominions. Melanchthon found himself, therefore, contrary to his own inclinations, obliged to become the representative of the Lutherans in diets and colloquies. No man could have endeavored more scrupulously than he to fulfill the difficult task imposed upon him. It is true, he over-estimated the value of peace, feared too much the probable consequences of war, and made concessions which he never should have made. But he made these concessions because he believed, that a ruinous war would follow if he did not do so, and that the responsibility for it would rest upon him. His fears were not for his own person, but for the Gospel and the general welfare. Anxiety to save the truth from suppression marred his judgment as to what might be conceded with impunity; but he never surrendered anything which appeared to him essential to the Church. That he yielded in the Leipzig Interim, he himself confessed was an error. He thought that a minor servitude would be better than a disruption of the churches, and that an outward conformity to Roman Catholic usages and

ceremonies would not interfere with the true doctrine, if the meaning of those usages were properly explained to the people. He should have taken an uncompromising stand for the truth, and entrusted the consequences to God. Yet he doubtless endeavored to fulfill what he regarded as his duty in those trying times.

With all his goodness of heart and sincerity of purpose, it is undeniable that, by his vacillating conduct and ambiguous phraseology, Melanchthon unintentionally gave occasion for many of the distractions which rent the Church after Luther's death. He meant to do what lay in his power to allay controversy and restore peace. But the very means which he used served only to make matters worse. The alterations which he so frequently made in his own works and the public confessions of the Church, whether for the sake of refining his style or of bringing about a union of Lutherans and Reformed, together with the uncertainty which existed with regard to his private views on some of the most important doctrines of the Church, involved the Lutheran Reformation in difficulties which filled its enemies with delight, but its friends with grief and dismay. In the controversies which raged for twenty years after his death, many whose teaching he would by no means have sanctioned took shelter behind his name, because his writings could be interpreted in a double sense and construed as approving of error. He was attacked in his last years with unnecessary bitterness and rancor; but he himself had given occasion for the attacks by the diversity of the statements and the ambiguity of the formulas which he had published, and which the strict Lutherans in their zeal for the truth felt obliged to assail. Had he taken a firm stand, instead of changing his writings whenever a delusive hope of an agreement with the Roman Catholics or of a union with the Reformed presented itself, he would have saved himself and the Church much trouble and vexation.

Melanchthon owed this spiritual enlightenment to Luther. In this respect he shares in the debt which, under God, we all owe to the intrepid monk of Wittenberg. Without Luther "he might have become or remained a second Erasmus," with the same elegant culture and aesthetic taste, though a deeper piety and profounder earnestness of purpose. But having come within the circle of Luther's influence, he zealously espoused the cause of the truth and lent his powerful aid to its dissemination. For a long time his doctrinal views coincided fully with those of Luther. But during the latter years of Luther's life, owing to Melanchthon's extreme reverence for the authority

of the Church Fathers and the ethical standpoint from which he viewed theology, a divergence of teaching seemed imminent. The influence of Luther's strong personality prevented such a crisis as long as he lived; but it came after Luther's death.

The ethical standpoint from which Melanchthon surveyed theology exerted a strong influence upon his views. While he recognized the doctrine of justification by faith as the heart and core of the Gospel, he desired to insist upon the necessity of good works, and employed on that subject the formula to which so much objection was raised, "Good works are necessary to salvation." While he believed in the real presence in the Lord's Supper, he emphasized, in his treatment of the Sacrament, the effect which the use of it has upon the communicant, rather than the manner of Christ's presence. In the matter of conversion, he was anxious to lay stress upon human responsibility for remaining in an unconverted state. But instead of basing This responsibility upon the ability of man to resist God's grace after the Holy Spirit has given him power to accept it, he affirmed, contrary to his own earlier teaching, that man has the "ability to apply himself to grace," that is, has power of his own accord to embrace the proffered salvation.

Because of the difficulties which became prominent in the later years of Melanchthon's life, it has been argued that Luther made a mistake in the year 1540, when by his prayer he rescued Melanchthon from the jaws of death in which he apparently lay; that God had then proposed, for Melanchthon's own good and that of the Church, to remove him from this world; but that He was prevented from carrying out His gracious design by Luther's vehement insistence on the absolute fulfillment of God's promise to hear our prayers. Whether Luther erred or not, this much is certain: if Melanchthon had then died, his fame would have remained comparatively free from the blot which his vacillating conduct made upon it, and the Church have been spared the necessity of openly antagonizing so gifted and distinguished a servant of the Gospel.

Still, Melanchthon's weaknesses and faults ought not to blind us to his virtues. The greatest of God's servants have not been without their failings. Lament as we will Melanchthon's shortcomings, we must yet honor him for his merits. Nearly every branch of study owes something to his mind and pen. The cause of education feels his impress to this day. Some of the very text-books which he wrote were in use for almost two hundred years. It was

he who firmly established the study of the classics as the foundation of a truly liberal culture. The correctness of his judgment in this respect is attested by the fact, that the study of the classics still remains to a large extent the basis of higher education. In the organization of new and the improvement of existing schools, in the reorganization of many universities, and in the instruction which he imparted as professor at Wittenberg, he rendered invaluable services. He did much to promote the recognition of the close relation between Church and school, and the necessity of the one for the prosperity of the other. He made learning the handmaid of religion. He dedicated his own brilliant talents to the service of the truth as it is in Jesus, and labored to instill a like spirit into others. He gave to the world, in his Loci Communes, the first Protestant system of doctrine – an exhibition of the truth so able and clear, that Luther declared it worthy of canonicity and immortality. He wrote The Augsburg Confession and The Apology, which, for plain, powerful, dispassionate presentation of the truth, have no equal in the world. He prepared commentaries and explanations of nearly all the books of the Bible, and delivered lectures upon the teachings of the Scriptures at a time when the evangelical seed which he sowed could not but bear a rich and bountiful harvest.

Aside from his excessive moderation and too great love of peace, the character of Melanchthon is one of the most lovely and amiable which history affords. Possessed of vast learning which he dedicated tot the service of God; conscientious to an extraordinary degree; unallured from the path of duty by the prospect of wealth or emolument; humble in spite of his great attainments; kind-hearted, obliging and benevolent; sincere and willing to impute the same sincerity to others; pious in heart and pure in life – there are few natures which appeal more strongly to those who understand him, than the gentle, mild, and peace-loving Melanchthon. May he ever be held in grateful remembrance.

Copyright Notice

This book was published 2019 by The Lutheran Library Publishing Ministry LutheranLibrary.org. Some (hopefully unobtrusive) updates to spelling, punctuation, and paragraph divisions have been made. Unabridged.

Originally published 1897 by Pilger Publishing House, Reading, PA. and New York.

Cover image - Portrait of Philip Melanchthon, Lucas Cranach the Elder, 1537.

Image on imprint page is *Still Life With Bible* by Vincent Van Gogh.

145 – v5

ISBN: TBD (paperback)

How Can You Find Peace With God?

The most important thing to grasp is that no one is made right with God by the good things he or she might do. Justification is by faith only, and that faith resting on what Jesus Christ did. It is by believing and trusting in His one-time *substitutionary* death for your sins.

Read your Bible steadily. God works His power in human beings through His Word. Where the Word is, God the Holy Spirit is always present.

Suggested Reading: New Testament Conversions by Pastor George Gerberding

Benediction

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 1:24-25)

More Than 100 Good Christian Books For You To Download And Enjoy

The Book of Concord. Edited by Henry Eyster Jacobs and Charles Krauth.

Henry Eyster Jacobs. *Summary of the Christian Faith*

Theodore Schmauk. *The Confessional Principle and The Confessions of The Lutheran Church As Embodying The Evangelical Confession of The Christian Church*

George Gerberding. *Life and Letters of William Passavant*

Joseph Stump. *Life of Philip Melanchthon*

John Morris. *Life Reminiscences of An Old Lutheran Minister*

Matthias Loy. *The Doctrine of Justification*

Matthias Loy. *The Story of My Life*

William Dau. *Luther Examined and Reexamined*

Simon Peter Long. *The Great Gospel*

George Schodde *et al*. *Walther and the Predestination Controversy. The Error of Modern Missouri*

John Sander. *Devotional Readings from Luther's Works*

A full catalog of all 100+ downloadable titles is available at LutheranLibrary.org .