des guten Rates, den Jethro Mose gab: „Jethro fähret frei heraus und lehrt Mosen, der da gar voll des Heiligen Geistes war, wie er regieren möge, da doch das Gegenspiel geschehen sollte und Moses den Heiden lehren, wie er regieren müßte. Aber es geschieht darum, anzuzeigen, wie Gott das Weltreich in die Vernunft gefasset habe; und da hat er Witz genug gegeben, leibliche Sachen zu regieren. . . . Dieses alles ist der Vernunft Gabe und Geschenk, ihr von Gott mitgeteilt und verliehen. Davon darf man nicht die Heilige Schrift um Rat fragen, sondern Gott hat auch unter alle Heiden solche Gabe in die Rapuse geworfen. . . . Heiden sind viel weiser erfunden worden denn Christen, sie haben viel läuftiger, ausrichtiger, geschickter Weltsachen ordnen und zu ihrer Endschaft bringen können denn die Heiligen Gottes, wie denn Christus auch im Evangelium sagt: Die Kinder der Welt sind klüger denn die Kinder des Lichts in ihrer Art. Sie wissen besser äußere Sachen zu ordnen denn St. Paulus oder andere Heilige. Daher haben auch die Römer so herrliche Gesetze und Rechte gehabt, . . . daß sie alles gewußt und fein ordentlich getan, ohne Rat und Unterricht der Heiligen Schrift oder der Apostel, wie denn St. Paulus in der Epistel, die er ihnen geschrieben hat, diesfalls nichts gebeut oder vorschreibt; allein erinnert er sie, daß sie wohlgeordnetem und von Gott gebotenem Regimente Folge tun. . . . Als zu der Apostel Zeit gab er das römische Kaisertum. Wiewohl es ein gottloses Reich war und sich hart wider die Christen legte, doch regierten sie durch die Vernunft und wurden von jedermänniglich gefürchtet, hielten guten Frieden; es war zu ihrer Zeit allenthalben Frieden, die Welt stand gar offen. Dies war ein irdisch, vernünftig Reich." (St. L., III, 994 ff.)

G. Hübener

Erasmus on Luther

1524—1536

Luther's opposition to the Church of Rome was welcomed by many leaders in Church and State who had long chafed under the yoke of Popery. One of these leaders was the renowned Humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam. Yet Erasmus, like so many others, had not grasped the fundamental principles of Luther's Reformation. In the *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae,* that of justification by grace, through faith, without works, Erasmus remained a good Romanist. For many years he refused to take up his pen against Luther in spite of urgent requests and demands on the part of Rome. Finally he yielded.

Pressed from all sides, Erasmus could not resist the pressure. He asked the nuncio Aleander for a permit to read Luther's works. Aleander referred him to Paul Bombasius, who got the permit from Pope Clement.

Early in 1524 Erasmus sent drafts of the *Free Will* to the Pope and to King Henry, promising to finish it if His Majesty were pleased with the sample.

Conrad Mutianus to Erasmus welcomed the *Free Will* in February, 1524. He taught: "There is only one God and one Goddess, though there are as many names as deities — for example, Jupiter, Sol, Apollo, Moses, Christ, Luna, Ceres, Proserpina, Tellus, and Mary."

Audin says Luther held "understanding of the Scriptures was the greatest boon which man could receive from his Creator; a treasure which he did not believe had been given by Heaven to the philosopher" — Erasmus.

Luther lettered Erasmus on April 15, 1524: "Please remain now what you have always professed yourself desirous of being: a mere spectator of our tragedy." He wasn't qualified to meddle with theology.

Sadoleti, Peter Canisius, and many other Romanists said the same.

On June 3, 1524, Erasmus told Baron Hieroslaus Laski, ambassador of the King of Poland: "Luther is a learned man; his teachings are beyond my power to judge; he certainly taught much well and attacked abuses strongly; I approve most his commentaries on the Psalms and the *Tessaradecas,* approved even by those that condemned the rest."

Celio Caliagnini's *On the Free Will* against Luther so delighted Erasmus that he wished to have it printed.

To Zwingli on August 31, 1524: Luther erred in denying free will and in teaching justification by faith only.

Erasmus had assured King Henry not one printer in all Basel would dare print a single word against Luther; but the work was printed by Froben in September, 1524. It speaks of Luther with marked respect. The gravest charge is a fondness for overstatement. Erasmus ends: "I approve of those who ascribe something to free will but rely most upon grace." God helps the man as a father supports the first steps of a young child; only, God does not do it all.

To Bishop John Fisher of Rochester on September 4, 1524: "How I triumph I know not; I certainly sustain a threefold contest: with those Roman pagans who are jealous of me; with certain theologians and monks who are turning every stone to destroy me; and with some rabid Lutherans who roar at me because I alone, they say, retard their triumph. . . . The Lutheran faction is increasing every day and now extends to Savoy, Lorraine, Spain, and even Milan. Burgundy, next door to us, is thrown into confusion."

Melanchthon wrote Erasmus on September 30, 1524: "Your moderation pleases us, though you have thrown on passages some grains of black salt. But Luther is so angry as to be able to get nothing out of it. Besides, he promises to show himself in his reply as moderate as you are. . . . I know his grateful feelings for you; it makes me hope he will answer you without delay. . . . Luther salutes you with respect."

Capito to Brueckner on October 14 called Erasmus's *Free Will* a "carnal book." He with Hedio, Bucer, and others to Luther on November 23 expressed contempt for this "slave of glory," who preferred "peace with Antichrist to war under Christ."

Bullinger to Stilz called the book "blasphemous."

To King Ferdinand of Hungary on November 20, 1524: "God grant that this drastic and bitter remedy, which, in consequence of Luther's apostasy, has stirred up all the world like a body which is sick in every part, may have a wholesome effect for the recovery of Christian morals."

Erasmus to Wimpheling on November 25: He was no gladiator in the arena, no leader in the fight.

To Melanchthon on December 10, 1524: "I hope mankind will be the better for the acrid medicines with which he has dosed them. Perhaps we needed a surgeon who would use knife and cautery. . . . His genius is vehement. We recognize in him that Achilles of men who knows not what it is to yield. . . . Success like Luther's might spoil the most modest of men."

To Duke George on December 12: "When Luther first spoke, the whole world applauded, and Your Highness among the rest. . . . Cardinals, even monks, encouraged him. He had taken up an excellent cause. . . . The Pope put out a bull, the emperor put out an edict, and there were prisons, fagots, and burnings. Yet all was in vain. What could a pigmy like Erasmus do against a champion who had beaten so many giants? . . . Perhaps I thought that such disorders required the surgeon and that God was using Luther as He used Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar. Luther could not have succeeded so signally if God had not been with him, especially when he had such a crew of admirers behind him. . . . Two poor creatures have been burned at Brussels, and the whole city has turned Lutheran. . . ."

He had not before obeyed his commands, "first, because I felt myself unfitted by my age and qualifications for this most perilous work; secondly, because I considered that Luther, whatever may be the worth of his doctrine, is a kind of necessary evil, in the present corrupt state of the Church, and I hoped that the effect of that bitter and violent remedy would be a return of good health to the body of the Christian people."

Vives told Erasmus he had found King Henry reading the *Free Will* in November, and he was greatly pleased.

Kaiser Karl congratulated Erasmus for having done more than Popes, kings, and universities to stem Protestantism. Pope Clement VII would have Erasmus in mind. The vast majority, however, were utterly disappointed. The mountain had labored and brought forth a ridiculous mouse.

Ambrosius Catharinus, who had attacked Luther, now scented Pelagianism in the *Free Will* and fiercely fell upon it.

The Prince of Carpi, who stood high at Rome, scored Erasmus. "You treat Luther too gently. He is a madman, an obstinate heretic! Your praise is indecorous, your mildness ridiculous."

Audin comments: "He impaired his work, already so feeble, by commonplace compliments to his opponents; his exordium is a hymn to Luther, which roused the indignation of the Sorbonne. . . . His peroration is a new canticle in honor of his rival. Erasmus ought not to have meddled with theology, which Luther understood much better than he. . . .

"Erasmus mistook himself. . . . In wishing to dispute with Luther, he ought carefully to have avoided doctrinal matters. . . .

"The noise which he had made in the world gradually ceased. His crown became tarnished: a monk dethroned him. . . . The star that at first appeared but as a luminous speck in the horizon of Saxony increased in splendor with constant rapidity, so that it died in sinking behind Basel without the world heeding it."

Lilly says: "If judged from a purely metaphysical point of view, it can hardly be said to merit such examination."

The monks called him a fox laying waste the Lord's vineyard, worse than Lucian, having done more harm to the faith than Luther himself.

Harnack calls the work "the crown of Erasmus's literary work; but it is an entirely secular, at bottom an irreligious treatise."

Erasmus wrote King Henry: "I expect stoning, and already some furious pamphlets have been flung at my head."

To another: "There is a certain divine at Constance who has my picture in his study for no other reason than that he may spit on it as he walks by it, and, on being questioned whence his hatred springs, replies that it was due to me that he had to endure this calamitous era."

Cochlaeus put the work of Erasmus into German. Erasmus was dissatisfied with the faulty translation. In several letters he blames the passionate, personal tone and his carelessness in statements of facts.

Luther, on November 1, 1524, wrote he was ashamed to answer

so unlearned a book of so learned a man. Urged by many, he at last, in December, 1525, wrote *On the Unfree Will.*

Seven Latin and two German editions were printed within a year. Luther was willing to have all his works perish except his Catechism and the *Unfree Will.*

Audin judges it is "like everything else proceeding from his pen, keen, violent, and occasionally coarse. Erasmus is represented in it as a Pyrrhonist, an Epicurean, a blasphemer, and even an atheist; he who at the very time made a vow to our Lady of Loreto and composed in praise of the Blessed Virgin hymns which the Archbishop of Besançon inserted in his liturgy. . . . He besought the Elector of Saxony to punish Luther's insolence; but his letter, which ten years previously Frederick would not have exchanged for a province, was unanswered. He thought to revenge himself for the silence of Duke John, who had succeeded to that prince, by writing to Luther himself, who also took no notice of his epistle. . . . He accordingly shut himself up in his cell . . . and labored for ten whole days in provoking his style, as one would a lion to make him roar; but all to no purpose. . . . In spite of all his efforts his work was a mere effort, without fancy, energy, or fluency. . . . A painfully produced volume — the *Hyperaspistes* of 1526 in two volumes." — Reason reveals truth as well as Scripture. — "Misfortune is sacred. . . . All the laurels which the world decreed to him, which he will not bear with him to the tomb, he would see transferred one by one to the head of his adversary."

Christopher Hollis declares the *Hyperaspistes* "can only be described as a piece of masterly mud-slinging."

It charmed Saint Sir Thomas More, a past master in that art.

A friend of Erasmus, James Montanus of Muenster, on January 9, 1525, wrote Pirkheimer that Erasmus could not possibly refute Luther.

Lilly says: "The sort of literary dictatorship which Erasmus once exercised through Europe had passed away."

Christopher Hollis: "Luther was a religious man, who believed in an untrue religion; Erasmus was an irreligious man. . . . Intellectually Erasmus was not the forerunner of Luther."

Prof. F. X. Kiefl judges: "Erasmus, with his concept of free, unspoiled human nature, was intrinsically much more foreign to the Church than Luther. He only combated it, however, with haughty skepticism; for which reason Luther with subtle psychology upbraided him for liking to speak of shortcomings and the misery of the Church of Christ in such a way that his readers could not help laughing instead of bringing his charges, with deep sighs, as beseemed before God."

Imbart de la Tour says: "One will look in vain in Erasmus's work for that which was the power of Luther, . . . the richness of soul and of accent found in Luther."

Erasmus defended himself against Albertus Pius, Prince of Carpi, on October 10, 1525: "Has Luther borrowed nothing from Augustine and St. Paul? You ask me why I did not speak out at once. Because I regarded Luther as a good man, raised up by Providence to correct the depravity of the age."

Erasmus witnessed the failure of Carlstadt's logical thought and wrote in 1525: "Luther is almost orthodox." (*Epist.*, p. 911.)

To J. Henckel, secretary to the Queen of Hungary, on March 7, 1526: "What the power, what the attraction, of the Evangel is the times show us plainly. In the name of the Evangel, and in that alone, we see the whole world roused from its lethargy and stripped of its past."

To John a Lasco on March 8, 1526, and to Francis Sylvius on March 13, 1526, Erasmus felt like the gladiators forced to fight with the tigers and the lions.

To the Dominican Faber: "You see how fiercely Luther strikes at me, moderate though I was. . . . Ten editions of his reply have been published already. The great men of the Church are afraid to touch him, and you want poor me to do it again, me who am too weak to make myself feared and too little of a saint in my life not to dread what may be said of me. . . . He yet expects me to thank him for his gentle handling."

In another letter he writes: "Indulgences, with which the monks so long fooled the world with the connivance of the theologians, are now exploded. . . . In England at this present time there is neither house nor tavern, I had almost said brothel, where the sacrifice is not offered and money paid for it."

To Bishop Michel of Langres on March 13, 1526: "In Luther I find to my surprise two different persons. One writes in such a way that he seems to breathe the apostolic spirit; the other makes use of such unbecoming invective as to appear to be altogether unmindful of it."

To Luther on April 11, 1526. Once he had been friendly to the Reformer: the wonderful success of Luther was then not unjustified. . . . Far from being aggressive to Luther, his books displayed an almost excessive moderation. To this calmness Luther responds by insults, which might well have come from a drunkard. . . . As for his love of glory he had obtained all the satisfaction he desires, seeing he is today a true tyrant: he has satellites, supporters, collaborators, translators, to his orders. Nothing is lacking save the diadem.

Alberto Pio, Prince of Carpi, to Erasmus, May 1, 1526, suspected all theology coming from the author of the *Praise of Folly,* "that infected soil whence sprang spontaneously such great trees bearing poisoned fruit." Erasmus does not criticize some Lutheran dogmas. Does he not thereby tacitly imply approval of those he refuses to condemn?

To Simon Pistorius in 1526: Vices which under the pretext of religion have crept into the Church and have so far prevailed that they have almost extinguished any spark of evangelical vigor.

To Gattinara on March 30, 1527: As for heresies, the ax and the fire could not end them.

The *Hyperaspistes* of Erasmus displeased Melanchthon, but Duke George on January 1, 1527, asked Erasmus to continue a labor so brilliantly begun.

He did; the second part came out in September.

To Duke George, September 2: "Luther amazes me. If the spirit which is in him be an evil one, no more fatal monster was ever born. . . . If a mixed one, how can two spirits so strong exist in the same person?"

To Pirkheimer on October 19: "I could agree with Arians and Pelagians if the Church approved what they taught."

To the Kaiser on September 2, 1527: He had drawn upon himself the hatred of the whole Lutheran party, and his life was not safe if the Kaiser refused his protection.

The Kaiser to Erasmus on December 13, 1527: "Thanks to you alone, Christianity has arrived at results to which the emperors, the Popes, the princes, and all the efforts of learned men have been unable to attain."

To Duke George on December 30, 1527: "It is hard to have recourse to amputation and cauterizing when the greater part of the system is impregnated with the malady. . . . I see nothing else now remains for us save prayer."

Clement VII: "The Holy See has never set the seal of its approbation on the spirit of Erasmus, but it has spared him in order that he might not separate himself from the Church and embrace the cause of Lutheranism to the detriment of our interests." He said this after looking into the *Antapologia* of a Spanish theologian to reenforce the attack of the Prince of Carpi on Erasmus.

To Simon Pistorius on February 5, 1528: "All Germany detests me."

To the Elector Hermann, Archbishop of Koeln, on March 18, 1528: The calamity in the world "day by day was becoming more intense, threatening to culminate in utter chaos and confusion, unless by some divine intervention, like a *deus ex machina,* suddenly appearing on the scene, bringing about some unexpected exit to this

stormy tragedy. . . . I have again and again urged the emperor to peace. He thus replies in his last letter: "There is no proper reason why any person should doubt that we have strenuously put forth all the efforts which were in our power to secure peace in each state, while as to what efforts we shall put forth in the future we prefer to show those by actions."

"These words do not savor very much of peace. . . . Certain persons have carried the Mass so far that it almost becomes with unlearned and sordid priests, or rather sacrificers, a source of profit and ground of confidence for evil-living men."

To Duke George of Saxony on March 24, 1528: "If the bishops and priests, nay, if we all turned with all our heart to the Lord, understanding that this is the hand of God, He would remove His anger from us, and His mercy would give a happy end to these disturbances."

To Christoph von Stadion, Bishop of Augsburg, on August 26, 1528: "Some theologians, in their hatred of Luther, condemn good and pious sayings which do not emanate from him at all, but from Christ and the apostles. Thus, owing to their malice and stupidity, many remain in the party adverse to the Church who would otherwise have forsaken it, and many join it who would otherwise have kept aloof." The invective employed is harming not Luther but the Church.

To an English bishop in August: "So many of these houses both of men and women are public brothels. . . . The malice of these creatures will breed a revolution worse than Luther's. . . . It would be better if there were no images at all and if prayer were addressed only to Christ. . . . The storm has come upon us by the will of God, who is plaguing us as He plagued the Egyptians. Let us confess our sins and pray for mercy."

In another letter he writes: "Luther has been pierced often enough, but he lives yet — lives in the minds of men to whom he is commended by the wickedness of the monks. . . . You have not finished Luther, and while Luther lives, you will hide like snails in your shells."

To Juan Genesius Sepulveda Cordubensis on September 1, 1528: "Whatever of good there may be in Luther's teaching and exhortation we shall put in practise, not because it emanates from him but because it is true and agrees with Holy Scripture."

To J. Bishop on September 1, 1528, he owned that on several points the Lutheran doctrines were excellent and that he was ready to conform himself to them when they were in agreement with the Gospel.

To Fonseca, Archbishop of Toledo, on March 28, 1529: "It seems

henceforth allowable to insult one formerly regarded as the star of Germany."

To Louis Ber, president of St. Peter's College at Basel on April 1: "There may be arguments about the Real Presence, but I will never believe that Christ would have allowed His Church to remain so long in such an error (if error it be) as to worship a wafer for God. The Lutheran notion that any Christian may consecrate or absolve or ordain I think pure insanity."

To Aemilius ab Aemilio on May 29, 1529: "None speaks of Christ. . . . Paganism comes to life again; Pharisees fight against the Gospel."

To Bishop Cuthbert Tunstall on January 31, 1530: "I could find 600 passages in Augustine and quite as many in St. Paul which would now be called heretical. I am but a sheep; but a sheep may bleat when the Gospel is being destroyed."

To "the Melanchthon of Romanism," Bishop J. Sadoleti, the Papal Secretary, on March 7, 1530: "In the first place, they should have let alone Luther and his Theses about indulgences and not have poured oil upon the flame. Then it was a mistake to take action by means of monks, whom almost every one hates, and to have recourse to impotent bellowings among the people and to the burning of men and books. Lastly it would have been better to connive at, to put up with, these people, just as we put up with Gipsies and Jews."

To the Bishop of Hildesheim on March 15, 1530: "It is enough to believe that the real body and blood of our Lord are actually present."

To the Bishop of Wuerzburg on June 25, 1530: "Lutheranism had struck its roots too deeply, so deeply that no harsh methods could suppress it."

To Cardinal Thomas Campegi on August 10 or 18, 1530: "There is danger that this tumult may tend to the destruction of the whole Church. Especially when the people are persuaded that this business is authorized by the Pope himself and that the bishops and abbots are largely responsible."

To Egnatius on March 13, 1531: "I tried to keep out of the fray, but into the arena I had to go, though nothing was more abhorrent to my nature."

To Cardinal Augustine on April 12, 1531: "The Lutherans had some right to be angry with me."

In his *Concord of the Church* in July, 1533: "Let the Church suppress in her creed, in her worship, in her Christian life, everything savoring of superstition."

To John Choler on September 9: "I see that it will simply

come to pass that, if the Lutheran cause declines, such a tyranny of monks will arise as will make us wish for Luther again."

Paul III was the fourth Pope to implore Erasmus to come over and save the Church, on May 1, 1535. On August 1 he gave him a living of 600 florins at Deventer, the beginning of 3,000 ducats needed to support the red hat of a cardinal. Erasmus declined the hat — too old.

In his *Colloquies* Erasmus confessed he felt like praying, "Saint Socrates, pray for us!" At his death on July 12, 1536, he prayed, "O Mother of God, remember me!"

Secretary Lilly of the Catholic Union of Great Britain declares: "Erasmus always held, and never shrank from saying, that Luther had been hounded into revolt; that the Roman Curia had to thank their own blindness and blundering for converting 'a harmless necessary reformer into a needless and noxious rebel.' . . . The mind of Erasmus was, in the proper sense of the word, skeptical. In Erasmus we have the polished irony of the philosopher; in Luther the fiery denunciation of the prophet."

Gibbon judges: "Erasmus may be considered the father of rational theology."

Maurice Wilkinson asserts: "There were some splendid names in the party of conservative reform: Leo X himself, San Georgio, Cajetano, Erasmus, Sadolet, Warham, Fisher, Colet, and More. It seems strange that these could effect nothing visible at the time; it is but a striking instance of the powerlessness of intellect and worth in this world against popular passion and violence. . . . At this momentous period of the world's history it seems probable, however, that more than human activities intervened."

President Baudrillart of the Catholic Institute at Paris says of Erasmus: "Though a religious, he abandoned his convent and heaped sarcasm on his religious brethren; though a priest, he never said Mass and seldom assisted at it; the prayers of the breviary, fasting, abstinence, and the rules of penance he considered ridiculous and ignored them. He respected dogma only for form's sake. 'If one wish,' he wrote, 'to attain that peace, that concord, which is the ideal of our religion, one must speak as little as possible of the definitions of dogma and permit free and personal judgment to each upon many points.' Like certain of our contemporaries he proposes simply the revision of certain doctrines long taught by the Church. He interprets Holy Scripture in a manner that is almost rationalistic; he wishes the spiritual sense alone to be seen. Speaking of the history of Adam and Eve, he says: 'If you read all that having only regard for the surface, I cannot see that you do anything more useful for your soul than if you recite the history of the clay tablets of Prometheus and the

fire stolen from heaven to give life to the dust. Perhaps it is even more profitable to read the fables of paganism as allegories than to nourish oneself upon narratives from Holy Scripture whilst remaining bound to the letter!

"That which he extols under the name of Christian philosophy is in reality the wisdom of the ancients.

"The prodigious multiplicity of his accomplishments, his continuous and varied works, the copiousness of his views, the life and richness of his style, the vivacity and keenness of his wit, gave him an influence on his age which has many times been compared, with little exaggeration, to that of Voltaire of the eighteenth century.

"It was he who committed Humanism to absolute contempt for the Middle Ages, scholastic philosophy, and the influence of the Church. It has been said of his *Eulogy of Folly*, published first in 1509 and multiplied by seven editions in the space of a few months, that 'it is the prolog of the great theological tragedy of the sixteenth century.' "

Goethe greatly regretted the Reformation had not been led by men like Erasmus. Well, it *was* led by Erasmus, led for *years*, led *nowhere*. Time and again he whined, no one listens to me. It took Hercules Luther to turn the Tiber into the Vatican.

W. S. Lilly wonders whether Erasmus as a cardinal "might not have withheld Leo, constitutionally indisposed to violent courses, from the fatal policy which drove Luther unwillingly into rebellion. Certain it is, as Creighton has pointed out, that 'in all the list of men of learning who graced the papal court there is no one found to understand the issues raised by Leo and to suggest a basis for reconciliation.' "

Clayton declares: "The once popular epigram 'Erasmus laid the egg that Luther hatched' suggested that but for the revival of learning there would have been no Protestant reformation. An opinion hardly to be justified when the evidence is examined. Luther built on no foundation of Humanism. His revolt was no protest by a man of letters. The war he waged was far removed from the quarrel of literary men."

Professor Faulkner of the Methodist Drew Theological Seminary judges: "If the Reformers had all been Erasmians, we would never have had the Reformation (if I might so say). The Council of Trent proved that the Church of Rome was irreformable, that the scholastic theology, in which her monstrous abuses were rooted, was her ground and rock. That council was the amplest vindication of Luther and the complete discrediting of Erasmus *as a religious Reformer*. That Christ is not only Lord and Example (Erasmus) but chiefly Savior (Luther) and that the road to Him is by faith

alone, — it is that which has made the modern Christian world. And it is an absolutely true insight which sees in LUTHER THE RELIGIOUS REFORMER the promise of our modern civilization in all its redeeming and saving potencies, — in him rather than in ERASMUS THE SCHOLAR."

WM. DALLMANN

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What was Written on the Two Tables of the Covenant?

A Study of the Methods of Modern Criticism

In the year 1773 Goethe published a small pamphlet entitled *Was stund auf den Tafeln des Bundes?* After referring briefly to the establishment of the covenant narrated Ex. 24:1 ff., he continues: "Then the Lord said unto Moses, Come up unto Me into the mount and be there; and I will give thee tables of stone and a law and commandments which I have written. Moses ascends to the Lord and is given the specifications for the Tabernacle. Finally we are told, And when the Lord had made an end of communing with him, He gave him the tables. What was written on them no one finds out. The disorder with the calf occurs, and Moses breaks the tables before we can even surmise their contents." From Ex. 34:12–26 Goethe then draws the conclusion that the Ten Commandments, the Mosaic Decalog, was transmitted in a twofold tradition, the contents of the Decalog varying essentially in the two forms.

Goethe's opinion unfortunately did not die with him. It is continually being revived by modern radical critics and used by them as one of their stock arguments against the Mosaic authorship and historical reliability of the Pentateuch. In 1931 J. Powis Smith published his *Origin and History of Hebrew Law,* where we read on page 35 f.: "The laws in Exodus, chapter 34, originally seem to have formed a decalog of their own. It is commonly known as the 'Older Decalog.' This title implies that it is older than the Decalog of Exodus, chapter 20, and Deuteronomy, chapter 5. But . . . this opinion is open to serious question. . . . This 'Older Decalog' is variously constructed by different scholars; but all agree upon the first two and the last four commandments as having