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BALAAH.

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The history of Balaam, as recorded by Moses, Numb. 22—24, is beyond doubt one of the most interesting and instructive parts of the Old Testament. There are many things which commend it to the special study and meditation of the thoughtful and diligent Bible student. It is a singular and unique personage and character which in these chapters is portrayed to the reader of the good Book,—Balaam, the Seer,—and yet we see in this strange man the picture and type of many that have received from God great spiritual gifts and have occupied a high place in the Church of God, but, being blinded by the things of this world, have forgotten again their high calling and have rushed anew into the snares and clutches of Satan, into temporal and eternal ruin. But if the character and personage of Balaam are such as to arouse our special interest, his extraction, the remote time in which he lived, his sudden appearance in the history of Israel, and the part which he plays in it, also certainly engage our attention in no small degree. Balaam is a native of a heathen country, a contemporary of Moses and Joshua, and without having any previous intercourse with God's chosen people, he is suddenly confronted with the same, at a time when Israel had pitched its tents on the eastern boundaries of the promised land, ready to fight in the name of their God, their hearts swelled with the certain hope of victory and conquest. Called by a heathen king to

CORDATUS' CONTROVERSY WITH MELANCHTHON.

(Continued.)

Cordatus had declared that he would not appeal his case to Luther.¹⁾ Formally he did not do so, still he now communicated his trouble to Luther. Finding Melanchthon absent from the city, he called upon Luther the day after his private interview with Cruciger, September 19, early in the morning. If Cordatus had expected to see Luther startled by the informa-

1) THEOL. QUARTERLY, vol. XI, p. 204.

tion which he had come to submit, he was disappointed. Luther listened quietly to his visitor, and then remarked: "You are not the first to report these things to me: Michael Stifel²⁾ and Amsdorf³⁾ have touched upon these very matters in their correspondence with me. Here is a letter from Amsdorf." The letter was dated September 14 and must have reached Luther hardly more than a day before Cordatus' arrival at Wittenberg. Amsdorf states that he has received information from Wittenberg, notably from Aepinus,⁴⁾ which may soon be published to the citizens of the town, *viz.*, that contradictory doctrines (*pugnantia*) are being taught at the university. "Philip insists in strong and immoderate terms (*vehementer et supra modum*) that works are necessary in order to obtain everlasting life. However, on Sunday of the same week you have taught, with your accustomed reverence, the following concerning regeneration: A child in his mother's womb is not active at all (*nihil facit aut operatur*), but merely suffers being formed (*patitur tantum et formatur*), etc. These matters greatly disturb our people, and they certainly trouble me. Our opponents in this town are being stirred against us and cause me worry and trouble; for by means of this very occurrence they persuade people to abandon the Gospel and to return to their impious teaching. I need your counsel in this matter, and I ask it urgently (*peto et iterum peto*)." (C. R. 3, 162.)

From this communication it appears that the teaching which Cordatus had begun to controvert had gained far greater publicity than one might suppose from our previous account, and that Melanchthon was regarded as its chief exponent. Amsdorf does not mention Cruciger at all. It is likely that Melanchthon had endorsed Cruciger's lecture, of which he was

2) At that time most probably in charge of the parish of Holtzdorf, near Wittenberg. (R. E. 15, 89. C. R. 5, 6.)

3) It is doubtful whether Amsdorf at this time was at Magdeburg, Göslar, or engaged in reformatory work in the duchy of Grubenhagen. (R. E. 1, 290.)

4) Johann Hoch (*αἰπεινός*), since 1533 Doctor of Theology at the university of Wittenberg.

the real author,⁵⁾ in the interview with Cordatus July 24,⁶⁾ and that he had also in his lectures to the students — Amsdorf says: “in schola” — expressed himself to the same effect as Cruciger. Moreover, Amsdorf’s letter shows that a very wide scope was being given to the point in controversy, *viz.*, not only the relation of contrition to justification was being debated, but the relation of good works to salvation, this last term being understood in the sense of *vita aeterna*. We noticed this tendency first in Cordatus’ letter to Cruciger of September 17.⁷⁾ Evidence is lacking to show that prior to Amsdorf’s letter Luther had any knowledge of the affair. Nor do we know what he advised Cordatus at this interview.⁸⁾

The archives at Gotha contain copies of two notes which were evidently written by Melanchthon. Bretschneider assumes that they were addressed to Cruciger during the month of October from some place along the route of Melanchthon’s journey to the Palatinate. Melanchthon advises the addressee not to heed slanders and to refute sycophants by virtuous conduct rather than by words. He holds that such conduct is becoming a philosopher and calculated to prevent still greater divisions in the community. “A noble horse calmly passes barking dogs. Pericles was followed to his door by a loud-mouthed fellow who kept up his harangue even after Pericles

5) Ratzeberger relates that Melanchthon not unfrequently wrote the lectures which his colleagues delivered. “Denn es war Philippo keine Arbeit verdriesslich, und diente gerne jedermann.” (Ledderhose, *Melanchthon*, p. 127.)

6) THEOL. QUARTERLY, vol. XI, p. 203.

7) *Candide respondeo, me pessimis auribus et memoria fuisse, si tantum de contritione praelegisti. . . . Cum confitearis, te nostram contritionem vocavisse causam sine qua non, nonne hoc unum opus nostrum eandem causam dat loquendi adversus praelectionem tuam, qualem mihi dederunt omnia opera nostra, quemadmodum visus sum audivisse?* (THEOL. QUARTERLY, vol. XI, p. 207.)

8) The supposition of Ledderhose (p. 127: “Luther seems to have exerted himself in the direction to suppress the strife”) is not warranted. Luther, no doubt, sought to mitigate the rigor of Cordatus’ contention, but he was far from suppressing his testimony, as subsequent events show.

had passed into the house. The hour being late, Pericles sent his servant with a lantern to light the fellow home." Melanchthon cites his own conduct on similar occasions as an example, and states that he is not sorry for having practiced such magnanimity, although at the elector's court his actions had been interpreted as being caused by timidity. (C. R. 3, 178 f.) We repeat that the course here recommended may be proper for a literary person, but not for a public teacher of the Church whose orthodoxy is being questioned. However, we shall see that Melanchthon soon after acted contrary to his own advice.

The slanderers and sycophants which he had in mind were Cordatus and his friends. Cordatus was indeed busy pushing the issue with Melanchthon. After his interview with Luther he conferred with Bugenhagen on October 22, and wrote letters bearing on his controversy to Luther and other parties at Wittenberg. It does not appear that any new point was made. (C. R. 3, 162.) Melanchthon must have felt that his position at Wittenberg was becoming precarious; for he found it incumbent upon himself, on All Saints' Day, to address a letter — Bretschneider thinks from Nuremberg — jointly to Luther, Bugenhagen, Jonas, and Crueiger, to this effect: "I hear that Cordatus has raised a deplorable issue (*tragoediam excitasse*) concerning certain remarks of mine in which I am said to have delivered false teaching in regard to the doctrine of works. I am agitated over this report, and although other cares sufficiently worry and exercise me at present, I have thought that I must meet this charge at once. I have never desired to teach, nor have I taught, particularly as regards the matter now in controversy, anything but what you teach in common. But when I first noticed that the thesis: We are justified by faith alone, was understood by many, especially abroad, to mean: We are justified by our new life (*novitate illa*), or by infused gifts of grace, it was necessary for me in the Apology to speak out more distinctly and to explain this matter by placing it under the head of gratuitous imputation (*transferrem rem ad imputationem gratuitam*). At this point, you know, there

arise questions such as these: If we are accepted only by God's mercy, for what end or reason is our new obedience necessary? My writings on this subject are extant. Nor would I attempt to escape your verdict, not even Amsdorf's. I never aimed at anything else than at setting forth your teaching in the most appropriate terms, for I know that many entertain improper notions concerning these weighty matters. Besides, young men must have a suitable way made for them in which they may teach these matters, and occasionally they must be supplied with logical formulas (*verbis dialecticis*). Nor do I deny that I love to bestow all possible praise on good works, but I have never heaped false praise on them. I state distinctly that they are not the price or equivalent (*nec pretium nec meritum*) of eternal life. And I am not so uninformed as not to know the meaning of *causa sine qua non*. Accordingly, I beseech you to believe that my public deliverances were made with good intention and with no mind to differ from you. I have never wished to separate my view from yours, but if I am aggravated by suspicions and slanders of certain people, and must fear that your affections are being alienated from me, I shall much prefer to [leave you and] go almost anywhere. I know that certain people have talked about me outrageously; I readily forgive them. I wished to lodge this complaint with you rather than with others, because I should dislike being the author of discord among us. I love and cherish each one of you from my heart, and I wish the whole community well. It would be useless for me to declaim upon this matter, if my zealous labors (hardly worth mentioning!) in every kind of business would not bear me witness. I trust, however, that you have sufficiently discerned my heart. I have never run away from friendly admonition and confab. Every one has his peculiar gift. I arrogate nothing to myself, and I have not desired to publish something novel. I only collected your teachings and wished to express them in as simple terms as I was able." (C. R. 3, 179 ff.) The remainder of the letter refers to the election of a teacher (*de paedagogii collatione*); Melancthon

wishes to be exonerated from certain charges in this connection, and cites Cruciger as his witness.

On the heels of the messenger who bore this letter, only four days later, November 5, Melanchthon himself arrived at Wittenberg and at once addressed the following letter to Cordatus: "A friendly relation, which has indeed been pleasant to me, has existed between us, and I have many witnesses in this city and elsewhere to prove that I have always thought and spoken lovingly and honorably about you. Accordingly, I am the more grieved because I am compelled to employ the present style of writing to you. I hear that you are writing letters in all directions (*spargere epistolas*), in which you inveigh against me outrageously and with hostile intent, and yet I am not fully informed about the cause of your hatred and what it is that you censure. Possibly something that I have written has given you offense. My reason for compiling the *Loci* (Melanchthon's *Dogmatik*) was indeed none other than this, because I considered it useful for many reasons that our young men should have the gist of our important teaching placed before them in comprehensive form and in good order. I did not wish to become the head of a new sect. I compiled what, in my judgment, is being taught in our churches, and used the utmost care to give proper expression to these teachings. I hold that a careful effort of this kind is necessary for our church and not unworthy [the effort of] an honorable person. Now, I have expressed some points with less vigor, others in less offensive terms. Either the method which I pursued demanded this, or it was caused by my weakness; for each of us has his peculiar gift. I am not adapted to engage in violent affairs (*ad negotia illa*). But if there was anything you did not like, or if there were even erroneous statements in my writings,—for what is easier for man than to slip,—how much more civilly would you have acted if you had warned or even expostulated with me personally! I gladly compare my views with others, as many persons know; and these matters in which we are engaged are great and difficult, and it would be profitable if we were to

engage, as often as possible, in an amiable and careful discussion of them. I have often stated about you in particular that I prize your opinion above that of many others, and that I wished I could enjoy your conversation frequently. Accordingly, you would have done me a favor if you had first written to me in case you had been displeased with something. Some points, I hear, you wrest in altogether unbecoming fashion, owing to your suspicions. Then, again, you angrily lunge at me with your pen (*stringis adversus me stylum*), and set up a horrible hue and cry against me; you also urge my removal from this place. Regarding this exhibition I shall only say this: I should be ashamed of the literary studies in which I am engaged, if I were not to consider that a person involved in public strife in a commonwealth is exposed to all sorts of dangers, hatred, exile, death, especially one who occupies a position such as I do. While I revolve these matters in my mind, they stir me less, when I hear that it is you who is writing against me. I could wish for the sake of our commonwealth that we would join our endeavors in guarding concord among us. We have enemies enough to whom this crossing of swords among us affords delight. If you think that there are matters deserving censure in my teaching, let us, as behooves friends, discuss them privately. The cause which we champion is not ours but Christ's, whose glory I certainly wish to serve. Farewell! (C. R. 3, 181 f.)

The next day Melancthon informs Dietrich at Nuremberg that he has returned to Wittenberg where new strife is awaiting him. "Cordatus has stirred up the town, the country round about, and even the court against me, because in explaining the controverted points in the doctrine of justification I have stated that new obedience is necessary to salvation. You know how carefully and critically (*quam diligenter et quam distincte*) I have tried to treat these matters." He adds, in Greek: "I chafe under the necessity laid upon a philosopher, to bear sycophancy without anger; but I shall endeavor to temper also this strife with that moderation which is becoming a genuine

philosopher." (C. R. 3, 185.) On November 16th he informs the same party: "I have not much to write regarding my own affairs. They have not called me to account yet; still, I do not know what is coming. I am not greatly afraid of any personal danger. What care and faithfulness I have employed in unraveling so many points in controversy that were not understood (*obscuris*) and intricate, you are best able to judge. Nor shall I flee from the verdict of wise men. But I am not willing that *Quadratus* (*i. e.*, *Cordatus*) should be appointed my judge." (C. R. 3, 187.) In a letter to his friend Camerarius, dated November 30, Melanchthon expresses an opinion as to the origin of his controversy with Cordatus: "The matter arises from no other cause than the hatred of humanistic studies (*odio literarum*), which my enemies (*isti*) think I am advocating with too much vehemence, because I am in the habit of urging our young men frequently to engage in these studies which are beloved by all (*hæc communia studia*). Letters have been sent everywhere, stating that I would not return, that I had departed because of a difference with Luther and the rest. I smile at these vain imaginings of people; but there are persons here whom these tales have impressed and who thus indicate sufficiently either their stupidity or the weakness of their will. No charge is being raised against me, except that I deign to bestow a little too much praise on good works. This happens to me when I expound controverted points in proper and apt terms and arrange them agreeably to our system (*ad Methodum revoco*); for there I express certain matters in less forbidding language than they; and that is certainly both correct and advantageous. However, after my return these tales have subsided, and I am applying the needed balm with my accustomed kindness. Among our men the old firmness is observable, both as regards the defense of doctrine and their good-will towards me. Accordingly, I am quite composed." (C. R. 3, 193.) On December 1st Melanchthon sends Dietrich some poetry *περὶ τῆς ἐκλείψεως* (on his defunct state?) and also a theological treatise. He remarks: "You observe

that I am adopting some homespun philosophy (quaedam communia φιλοσοφούμενα), so as not to run amuck upon Cordatus and critics of his ilk. But what a tyranny is this that dull and uneducated persons hinder the expounding of weighty and highly useful matters! However, more about this at another time." (C. R. 3, 194.) In a letter to Brenz of December 6th Melanchthon complains that he is being consumed by labors and cares, and that he is vexed with the sophistry of some ranting demagogues (θλίβομαι ὑπὸ δημηγόρων τινῶν σοφιστομαγούργτων). "But I spread a cloak over these ills and bravely despise them. For I would not stir up greater scandals by my impatience. I observe that many theologians are men such as the Athenian orators on whom the bon mot was coined: Let not a serpent devour a serpent lest it become a dragon." (C. R. 3, 202.)

Here we may pause awhile and consider in what way the correspondence so far submitted lights up the matter in controversy. It is a distinct gain and a step towards conciliation when Melanchthon removes from the expression *causa sine qua non* every idea of merit. Contrition precedes, justification follows, but justification is merely *post hoc*, not *propter hoc*. It is another gain towards a mutual understanding when Melanchthon rejects the Augustinian sense of justifying faith; faith is not an element in justification because it represents a virtue, a quality in man, producing the phenomena of the new spiritual life. Justification is not dependent upon the new obedience of the believer. For the statement that contrition (or good works) is necessary to justification, Melanchthon would now substitute the statement that "new obedience is necessary to salvation." But it is not in accordance with the facts when Melanchthon informs his friend Dietrich that he *has made* (*dixi*) this statement, and that Cordatus had attacked him on account of it. The fact is that Melanchthon *is making* this statement *now*, after being attacked. What Cordatus had attacked was chiefly this sentence: "*Nostra contritio et noster conatus sunt causae justificationis sine quibus non.*" This sen-

tence had been penned by Melanchthon, as Cruciger had acknowledged September 18. Melanchthon is not representing Cordatus fairly. And it is more than questionable whether the new phraseology which Melanchthon adopts removes the stumbling-block to Cordatus and Amsdorf. He states that he has made the statement regarding the relation of new obedience to salvation "*in explaining the controverted points in the doctrine of JUSTIFICATION.*" In that connection the statement in question would be not only superfluous but disturbing. There is nothing in the statement that "explains" anything in regard to justification. If the statement is made with that intent, it is misleading. Evidently Melanchthon is still under the spell of his "Methodus;" he labors to show the *logic* of justification—a hopeless task!—His animus toward Cordatus is deplorable. A sickly peevishness vitiates all his philosophical resolves and renders his assumed magnanimity ludicrous. He plainly shows that he is very much hurt personally, in spite of his protestations to the contrary. He is trying to find motives for Cordatus' action which do not exist. He forgets that Cordatus had conferred with him immediately after Cruciger's lecture, and that Cordatus was not supposed to know anything about Melanchthon's connection with Cruciger's lecture until Cruciger had told him. The charge that Cordatus is trying to bring about his removal from the university because of his humanistic leanings is most ungracious and unbrotherly, when we remember what steps Melanchthon had taken prior to this to remove himself. He had nobody but himself and his injudicious conduct to blame, if people were gossiping about his impending removal from Wittenberg. Altogether, Melanchthon shows up a very poor philosopher in this affair.

We turn again to the author of the controversy, Cordatus. Kolde (*Analecta Lutherana*, pp. 264 ff.) has supplemented the documents bearing on this strife which Bretschneider has submitted in the *Corpus Reformatorum* by a protocol of a conference between Cordatus and Luther on October 24, and by several letters of Cordatus to Luther. The protocol is written

by Cordatus himself. It is in Latin, but bears this inscription in German: "Ein fein christlich colloquium, das Doctor Lutherus vnnd Cordatus vnd andere gelarte vnter sich gehalten haben." It is part of a collection of documents which Cordatus submitted to the Rector of the university, when he formally preferred charges against Melanchthon about the middle of December (17), 1536. Cordatus says: "October 22 the Reverend Cordatus came to Wittenberg in the evening to hear the Reverend Doctor, our father, lecture. Early the next day at breakfast I⁹⁾ conferred with Dr. Pommer regarding this matter. October 24, after receiving a letter from him, he called on our father, Dr. M. Luther, about 9 o'clock in the morning, explained the whole affair to him in the order in which it had happened, and deposited the documents, that is, the letters that had passed to and fro, with him as dean of the theological faculty. It would be wonderful to relate how kindly the Doctor listened to him, how he read everything and put questions whenever he was in doubt what this or that statement meant. Cordatus also showed Dr. Martin Luther the notes which he had copied from the dictations both of Philip Melanchthon and of Dr. Creuziger on the Fifth Thesis on Timothy and on the Second Thesis on Colossians by Philip. When Dr. M. Luther saw them, he said: This is exactly the theology of Erasmus, and nothing could be more opposed to our teaching, even if Dr. Philip had afterward corrected these statements. He was not inclined to refer the remission of sins to our merit and work, even though they declare, in fact, that new obedience must follow reconciliation, and that it is an indispensable requirement (*causa sine qua non*) without which we cannot attain to everlasting life. He thus destroys all that we have said concerning Christ and has trodden under foot His blood, etc. This is what father Luther said in reply. 'But,' says he, 'my dear Cordatus, I see what they are about. Alas! why do they

9) This change from the impersonal to the personal form shows that Cordatus wrote this account, as he states at the end, very hurriedly (*omnia citissimo calamo scripta et descripta*).

not come to confer with and to show me if they have anything against me, rather than scatter these horrid teachings that are hostile to Christ broadcast among the people? Only recently, when Jacob and Philip Motz took their degree,¹⁰⁾ Dr. Cruciger aimed a blow at me (*perstringebat me*). *Ehr schluch auf den sack, vnnd meinet, der esel solt's nicht fulen oder mereken.* But I noticed it very well. Let them conspire as much as they please; I shall do what is necessary at the proper time. And this is what I shall do, my dear Cordatus: I shall first approach Dr. Philip and hear his side and what is his intention. I shall go to him alone, as Christ commands us to do. If he chooses to defend his teaching, well and good. I shall then have cause for action. Cruciger, however, will have to retract publicly what he dictated in public.' And Luther kept Dr. Cordatus with him for breakfast.

"While at the table, Luther spoke the following words to his servant Wolfgang:¹¹⁾ 'Wolf, what would you do if I should die suddenly? Would you remain with my wife?' Wolf replied: 'I do not know. Once you are dead, my father, I, too, could wish to be dead.' 'Ja,' said Luther, 'was meinstu, was werden wirdt, wen Ich vnnd thu todt sein?' And he heaved a sigh and grew silent, etc. After a little while he said: 'Es hat sich der heiliger geist noch etwas furbehalten, das ehr illis non revelavit (which He has not revealed to them). Not that we who believe in Christ lack anything, but that there are some things hidden from those who do not believe, things which they ought to believe. My followers do not know all things yet as they think they do. I shall be compelled—so help me God!—to do what a certain skilled gladiator did whose pupils were all in great honor and distinction because of their master and had become great and rich men themselves through him.

10) The university record shows that on October 10, Luther presiding as dean, Magister Jacob Schenk and Dr. Philip Motz took their degrees as licentiates of sacred theology. Cruciger conducted the proceedings. (See Seidemann, *Jacob Schenk*, pp. 11. 98.)

11) Wolfgang Sieberger. (See Koestlin II, 486.)

When the pupils became overbearing even towards him and would not yield to him, and one of them in particular, bolder than the rest, advanced against the master to engage in mortal combat with him, the aged master, after one or two encounters, while all eyes were upon him, expecting him to come off victorious, exclaimed at the last encounter: "What is this? Must I fight singly against so many?" The pupil, not aware that this was a ruse of the master, looked back and was forthwith dispatched by the master, etc. I fear,' said Dr. Mart. Luther, 'that I shall some time have to do the same to my fractious (partiales) Magisters and pupils, who have scarcely tasted what theology is and now undertake to teach in this place, right here in Wittenberg, in opposition to me, what they do not understand. I acknowledge that Dr. Philip possesses the knowledge of letters and philosophy, but nothing beyond that. Aber ich muss der philosophi einmal den Kopf hin weg hawen, dar sol mir got zu helfen. They want it thus.'" (*Analecta Luth.*, pp. 264 ff.)

In the collection of documents which Kolde discovered this protocol is followed by a letter which Cordatus addressed to Luther about the end of October:—

"Grace and peace from God through Christ! When I had returned home, reverend father, I began, as a careless author will have to do, to revise with greater care (*diligentius distinguere*) the statements which I made to you personally, in rather many words, in regard to my action against the Reverend Cruciger; namely, in this way: what I said concerning Philip I said merely by way of suggestion; but my statements concerning Cruciger I have referred to you for judgment, all the more because after my first private conference and in a letter he readily admitted them, and because you are now dean of the theological faculty. Moreover, since it seems that Philip so far has not come to the light with this new-oracular deliverance of his (*cum hoc novo suo fatu*), but has put his own feathers on another bird, I have thought that the other gentleman should be attacked first, because he has been apprehended, and action

should be taken against him, if by this means the conflagration can be checked. And although I know that Philip not only wrote out Cruciger's notes for him, but has also made the same statements in his lectures, still I believe we ought to appease, rather than crush, his great intellect, unless he refuses to come to terms (*nisi recusaret redire*). For if the influence of many men in the world is often so formidable that condign punishment cannot always be exacted, why should we not in the Kingdom of Christ spare a great and prudent man for a while, especially when we may entertain a hope that he will become sane again at some other point? On this account I have, indeed, in my writings, placed all blame on Cruciger, and have even attributed to him many of the statements of Philip. However, when I began to fear Philip so far as the conclusion of this action is concerned, it seemed to me that I have placed the entire blame on him, and I am now surprised myself that this has happened.¹²⁾ I make these suggestions once more, most beloved father; however, you will be able to suggest a much better course than I, according to the divine wisdom which has been bestowed upon you as a true preacher of the Gospel. You will know what is to be done in this business. I have with much fear undertaken this fight with the person who professed himself Philip's pupil; how could I be so rash as to rouse his master against me without being afraid? Nevertheless, I know that in the meantime the truth of God remains far stronger than the most plausible argument of Philip. And though I tremble with fear, only be not thou afraid, who alone art a doctor of theology. Hence you are the only man who must not be afraid of any man in this and in similar causes; you must possess far greater confidence in preaching and defending the Gospel than Joshua possessed when he invaded the land of Canaan

12) The author is not certain of having hit the exact meaning of this obscure clause. The original reads: "*sed cum ad finem actionis inciperem timere philippum, visus sum, totam culpam rejicere in eum, quod nunc factum ipse quoque miror.*" See the remarks after the conclusion of the letter.

and was told: 'I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage,' etc. Verily, promises like these, and greater than these, will be fulfilled to thee, even if an angel from heaven should have proclaimed the truth of God with thee and should have backslided and turned traitor and not returned (*neque retulerit*); if this coming calamity will be greater than any in the past;¹³⁾ if our present supplication before God will be so much greater than any in the past, and the aid, too, which we obtain must be much greater, because He hath said: *da du mich in der noth anruffest, half ich dir auch, vnnd erhoeret dich, do dich das wetter vberfiel*; and if Satan sought to sift the apostles and brought it about that all fled and Christ was left alone, and one of them went into everlasting death, small wonder if we, too, are tried, and some fall away! However, none will fall away from us who are truly of us. Those whose speech is with enticing words of man's wisdom are not of us, unless they exercise proper caution; neither are those who at some future time will have to cause heresies among us that they which are approved may be made manifest, whom no one shall pluck out of the Father's hands. Farewell to you and your entire family! God grant you life through Christ! Amen.

"For my part, I could wish with all my heart that merited punishment were visited upon this man (*in illum*), so that the person who is the head and tail of his doctrine either would be willing to repent of his own accord, or by persevering in his teaching and defending the other would betray himself. For either outcome I should consider less difficult to attain than holding a conference on account of this affair with a man who is so full of argument (*ratione plenum*)," etc. (*Analecta Luth.*, pp. 268 ff.)

The style of these two documents of Cordatus is wretched and frequently leaves the reader guessing at the writer's meaning. Kolde has gathered from them only this that Cor-

13) For *perteritis* we read *praeteritis*.

datus was a conceited and quarrelsome person.¹⁴⁾ It is true, the first impression one receives from these documents is not favorable to Cordatus. He appears nervous, restless, vindictive. He is full of ominous forebodings and suspicions. And notwithstanding his aggressive spirit there is a strong grain of timidity in him: he trembles at the thought of having to face Melanchthon. He is conscious of his incapacity in a dialectic encounter. And so he seems on the point of repeating the ignoble action of Cruciger: as the latter had sought shelter behind the broad front of Melanchthon, so Cordatus covers himself with the stalwart Luther, and the battle seems destined to run into a duel between the great theologian and the great dialectician of the Reformation. Granted, however, that Cordatus does not loom up a great man and a great theologian in this controversy, still it must be acknowledged that the timely warning which he sounded against the introduction of a synergistic element into Lutheran theology has been of very great value. The controversy was indeed greater than the two original combatants, but it must be allowed, after all has been said, that Cordatus' scruples had a basis of fact to support them, even though he voiced them with some acerbity. We may even acknowledge a good deal of practical wisdom in the plan which he suggested to Luther for the settlement of the controversy. Greater than the question of the quality of man in Cordatus is the question whether his account of the conference he had with Luther is authentic and reliable. Most modern historians show such disgust at the protocol and the subsequent letters of Cordatus to Luther that they virtually cast out these documents from the mass of evidence bearing on the controversy. The protocol is, indeed, a startling document. Luther's remarks regarding Melanchthon and his philosophy, no doubt, were matter pleasant to hear to Cordatus, and it afforded him

14) "Eine Reihe Briefe von ihm aus der Zeit seines Streites mit den Zwickauern, die ihn schon damals als einen sehr hochmuetigen und haendelsuechtigen Mann erkennen lassen, im Zwickauer Ratsarchiv unter 'Pfaensachen wegen Laurentii Sorani, Predigers,'" etc. (*Analecta Luth.*, p. 264, footnote.)

evident relish to embody them in his account of the conference. Did Luther make these remarks, or remarks to that effect? We have no doubt that he did. It is inconceivable that Cordatus should have invented them. They are too realistic and comport with the known resoluteness of Luther. The protocol, moreover, was submitted at the time the investigation commenced, and there is no hint anywhere in the proceedings that its truthfulness was assailed. Unless one wants to charge Cordatus outright with prevaricating, the protocol must be admitted as evidence. As such, what does it show? It shows that Luther himself had become fearful of the state of doctrine in his immediate neighborhood, and that Cordatus only confirmed impressions Luther had received before. The protocol is not a minute reproduction of the conversation between Luther and Cordatus. The conversation must have lasted several hours, and Luther, no doubt, said many other things which Cordatus did not deem it necessary to record. That part of the protocol which quotes Luther's language is probably garbled; however, without any evil intention: Cordatus wished to exhibit the fact that other and greater men than himself considered the times grave. But it would be a mistake to believe that these two men had sat down for an hour of gossip. Luther's surprise about the Erasmian tendency in the dictated notes from Melancthon's and Cruciger's lectures was not voiced, until he had listened carefully and critically to the account of Cordatus. "*Omnia legit, quæsit, etiam sicubi dubitabat quid hæc, quid illa sibi vellent,*" says the protocol. Luther endeavored to get at the actual facts. And after he had obtained them and compared them with facts of his own consciousness, he proposed for himself this course of action: "*primum conveniam D. Philippum et eius sententiam audiam, et quid velit.*" Luther believed it possible that a satisfactory explanation could be obtained from Melancthon which would remove the ground for Cordatus' complaint. Not until it should be shown that Melancthon was determined to defend the unsatisfactory statements in Cruciger's lecture, would there be cause for action

("quid agam habeo"). Melanchthon's letter of All Saints' Day¹⁵⁾ brought the desired explanation.

The protocol shows that Luther distinguished between Melanchthon's and Cruciger's share of the guilt involved, and the subsequent letter of Cordatus to Luther outlines with some minuteness how the blame for the promulgation of the offensive teaching in question is to be fastened. On first sight, Cordatus' suggestion to Luther seems unfair. He knew that Melanchthon was the real author of Cruciger's lecture. Cruciger himself had revealed this fact so humiliating to him. Yet Cordatus proposes that Melanchthon should be conciliated and Cruciger punished. Likely, Cordatus dreaded a personal encounter with the adroit Melanchthon. However, upon further reflection, the suggestion of Cordatus seems both fair and wise. Direct evidence of an incriminating character was at hand only against Cruciger. And Cruciger had not publicly retracted his misleading statements. Melanchthon, though he was known to have said the same things in his lectures (*eadem praelegere*) and to have inspired Cruciger (*Crucigero praescribere*), had not fully revealed his mind (*non extulerit in lucem*). It was proper, therefore, that in any *formal* action to be taken by the dean of the faculty he should be officially disregarded and be left to adjust his views on the controverted matter during the course of the proceedings. And it argues a kindly spirit in Cordatus that he wished to spare Melanchthon as much as could be done with decency and a good conscience. While opposing a peculiar view of Melanchthon, Cordatus freely acknowledged the eminent worth of the man to the Church. It is possible, too, that the strong words of Luther during his conference with Cordatus had made the latter fearful of a violent clash between the Doctor and the Magister, and the plan which he proposed was intended to mitigate the rigor of the impending action.

But while willing to deal gently with the person of his opponent, Cordatus was firm as regards the controverted matter. On November 3d he protests in a letter to Luther that someone,

15) See p. 146.

viz., Bugenhagen, had stated from the pulpit that some people were imagining that dissensions had broken out at the university, but the dissensions, the speaker had claimed, did not affect points of doctrine, — non ulla dissensio de rebus, sed tantum de verbis. This claim Cordatus is unwilling to grant. He holds that terms are notative; they signify something. Nothing can be named unless it has actual existence. Accordingly, he opposes the term *causa sine qua non* because of the meaning which it conveys. In conclusion he exhorts Luther to remain firm and to remember what would have been the consequence, if he had yielded in the sacramentarian controversy. He expresses the confident hope that the peace which they had enjoyed a short while ago would soon be restored. (*Analecta Luth.*, p. 270 f.)

After a lull in the proceedings of one month, during which Cordatus believed the faculty to be deliberating what action to take, we hear from him again. In a letter of December 6, which betrays some irritation, he writes to Luther:

"The more I am occupied with this matter by writing to you and conferring with you, the more I am vexed and agitated in mind and conscience. For this *causa sine qua non*, regarding which I have appealed to you and the college of theologians, seems to be treated indifferently (*stolida videtur silere*). Elsewhere, however, it is noisily discussed, even in the streets. Students are saying one to the other: Forsooth, justification cannot take place without me; for in order to be justified it is necessary that a person exist. And just as Peter would not have been justified, if there had been no Peter, so it is certain that a person is, in a manner, the cause of his justification, and these eloquent men who have never seen a single writing of Augustine quote Augustine's saying: *Qui creavit te sine te*, etc. Herein we may plainly see the work of Satan. For when did we ever hear these students of languages discuss the article of justification, although all these past years that article was purely taught? However, now that they have become disputants by the teaching of Philip and without a basis of fact (*per verba phi. et sine rebus*) they would be theologians, and that,

far more learned theologians than others, though they lack both, the matter and the words, to express the same. They imagine that they must needs discuss this *causa sine qua non*, and are able to do so with greater propriety than anyone else before them. And they make a great boast of it, for this reason, no doubt, because they would rather strive to be accounted exceptionally learned men and youthful geniuses,¹⁶⁾ than go to school, learn, and believe. Accordingly, as regards my action, nothing seems to remain for me to do than to ask you for Christ's sake to inform me what the present status of my action is. I request you now to give me this information in the name of the faculty whose dean you are, and with whom I have now discussed this matter so often. I request and demand a just and proper conclusion; for since Cruciger made his admission I have made complaint to you not as a private person, but I have communicated through you with the entire college of theologians at Wittenberg who are at this time professing and teaching the article of justification with one accord; and I have done so not in secret, nor in a company of merry banqueters or witty jesters, but as in the presence of God and before all men. Moreover, if you do not deem it necessary to write me,—I mean what I say!—I shall surely pursue the course which I have adopted, and what I have done privately hitherto before all whom it concerned, I shall henceforth do in whatever manner and by whatever means, in order that the true faith may be preserved to us pure and unshaken. Nor shall I be deterred from this course, if you all were to tell me that I was not sufficient to attack this difference among you, much less to compose it. For, most assuredly, what you think and say about me is what I feel in my own heart. But I also know that once upon a time an ass spoke when a single person was starting on a journey to curse God's people, and no one else was present to call a halt to his endeavor. Aye, God, who

16) *nimirum quod pro nostra (substitute magistra?) talium hominum et iuvenilium ingeniorum pugnare maluit (malunt?), quam doceri, discere, aut credere.*

conducted me to that particular theological lecture, is governing my action and hence it progresses slowly. But I shall not rest and, if I can do nothing else, I shall, according to the measure of my faith, which I have by the Spirit of Christ, contradict each and every champion of this cause who reveals himself; and I shall not cease until Christ is publicly glorified as He was formerly by the preaching of faith, and this *causa sine qua non* is removed from the article of justification, I say, from the article of justification. Otherwise they may think about it what they wish, and talk about it as eloquently as they can. For this *causa* denies Christ, or at least renders salvation which is by Christ doubtful and of none effect. And thus the hearts of many shall be revealed at last, and it shall become manifest whether all Wittenbergers still hold this truth with one accord, without any philosophical, rhetorical, or sophistical limitations, *viz.*, that faith alone justifies, — a truth which you were known to confess at Augsburg¹⁷⁾ without that *causa sine qua non* and without any other limiting clause. And it shall become known whether that confession is still regarded as true by all of you. Likewise the *Loci*, which Erasmus seems to have written and which were published several times before this year by Dr. Philip, should be withdrawn. All this, and some other things besides, which I choose to pass over, will, without doubt, be revealed in consequence of this teaching of the *causa sine qua non*. It is a vicious cancer and words by which men, who are too secure in their faith, are turned to vain jangling and much questioning, and have slipped in their edification unto God which is by faith. In conclusion, I wish to add this with regard to Dr. Cruciger: I care not whether much or nothing is gained (*vel nimia sunt vel nulla*), I shall appear among all pious theologians and before Dr. Cruciger, and shall put up a new indictment, quite brief. For this cancer must not be suffered to eat further into the sound body of Christ. Farewell, my reverend father; and as to this goat's hair which I herewith offer to you and the other

17) For *angustae* we propose to read *Augustae*.

faithful theologians as a fruit of my faith, approve of it, or if the truth requires of you a different action, reprove it without delay, in order that judgment may be sent forth unto victory with the utmost assurance." (*Anal. Luth.*, p. 277 ff.)

In the Wolfenbuettel library, which contains a copy of the above letter, there is found another of the same date addressed to Melanchthon. The copyist has appended the remark that this letter was not delivered to Melanchthon. It refers, in the main, to the charge of Melanchthon that Cordatus had failed to apply brotherly admonition.

"The reason why I have not called on you, most learned Philip, during these past weeks, even when I had not been invited, is this: I was taken by surprise with the novelty of a message from which I learned with still greater certainty than before that you favor the teaching known as *causa sine qua non*. However, now that I know—for I believe I am not mistaken!—that you are also the author by whom this entire phrase has been inserted in the article of justification, I shall not come to see you privately, but if my weakness is to be pitted against your great knowledge, this will have to be done in the presence of all theologians who are sound in doctrine, or before our most illustrious prince. If you would know my reasons, hear them, not only with your accustomed modesty, but also with that Christian patience which bears with the infirmities of weak brethren. They are these, *viz.*: I can no longer bear your sneers in your treatises of matters of faith, nor the rigor which you adopt toward those whom you do not like much. Furthermore, if you think that I have disregarded the command of Christ that brethren should go and tell each other their faults, I answer that this has been done abundantly immediately after the lecture which I now attack. Yea, also in two letters of mine to Dr. Cruciger, which I know to have reached you sooner than I wished, and while I am writing this, what else am I doing, most beloved Philip, than talking privately with a brother, as Christ has commanded, and admonishing you—though my words may sound somewhat harshly—to speak, together with

us, as you have done these many years in so many lectures and publications, lest divisions arise to the injury of very many souls. Yea, this present discord will also breed wars and seditions, etc. Farewell, and be true to yourself (*accrede tibi ipsi*) and to the doctrine which you have learned from Dr. Luther, and continue therein; for by so doing you shall save yourself and those who hear you, etc."

After the signature there is appended this note, in German:

"I feel ashamed, seeing that necessity compels me for Christ's sake to take action against another, since no other ass will open his mouth, and as it seems, rise to contradict, if I can do nothing else, my dear friend (*meinen lieben Herrn Gevattern*) and the learned preceptor Phil. Melanchthon. However, what cannot He accomplish who doeth all things! Amen. Amen. His name is Jesus Christ." (C. R. III, 203 f.)

While these two letters reveal sufficiently the ardor of Cordatus, a letter of Melanchthon, written to his most intimate friend Camerarius about this time, may serve to show how Melanchthon felt. "You write that there are people who say that they have read letters from me written to my friends, in which I discuss dogmas defended by our theologians as if they were doubtful and uncertain, and you ask me to indicate to you those points chiefly which I consider to be such as could be relinquished or at least changed without danger of exposing oneself to prejudice. I do not wonder, my Joachim, that such tales trouble you, whose prudence and singular affection for me I have perceived from so many unmistakable evidences. I am certainly angry at people who publish letters which I wrote to them in simple confidence, or declare that I wrote things which I had not even thought of. After this I wish you would not permit such rumors to disturb you. For I hold our doctrine to be so sure, firm, and strong that no argument, no wisdom, no alliance of men could overthrow it. If violence should be employed, it could cause us suffering, but it could not crush the truth which our doctrine professes. If the faults of certain people are cited in this connection, that should not harm our

cause nor prove an obstacle to others. I shall say truthfully, however, that things have been done, indeed, as they have been done, but I shall not say that they were badly done. But as regards all those points which now seem to be justly reprehensible on our side or may be incorrectly handled hereafter, those should be regarded as the cause thereof and should bear the blame therefor who first befouled the holy Church most shamefully and then opposed those bitterly who wished to cleanse the Church. For the vices of our ecclesiastics and the prevailing diseases were such that, if a mistake was made in the medicine offered, this should excite no wonder. Besides, such contumacy and refractoriness has set in since that it has speedily turned aside all efforts at moderation and kindliness. Thus it has come that many things had to be done rashly. But more about this at another time; the outcome will reveal all."

We may close this chapter of the controversy by recording the last acts of Cordatus during this year. Cordatus had closed his agitated letter to Luther of December 6 with a postscript: "The reason why I have not called upon you again is because I wish to remain silent no longer, and I do not dare to say what I wish." Cordatus was beginning to chafe under the restraint which the seeming inactivity of Luther imposed on him. Hence we find him writing to Luther on December 16 as follows: "Inasmuch as I consider all the scheming which people at Wittenberg engage in without you, not to say against you, in matters of faith, I would have you know that I shall to-morrow transfer my appeal from you to the Rector, that is, I shall make public the action which had so far remained a private matter. And if the Venerable Rector, too, and the theologians who have hitherto remained sound in the doctrine which we all have learned from you, decline to pass judgment quickly on my written charge, and to take action against the offense of Dr. Cruciger and all his associates, and to put a proper stop to his teaching, I shall transfer the matter to the Elector for judgment, and shall state the grounds for my determined opposition in a conference of the theologians. Farewell, and rejoice that your great gifts are

being roused again for the war of the Lord. P.S. Return to me, reverend father, my written complaint; for I must needs have it by all means, in order that I may confer with Cruciger to-morrow and learn from him, first of all, whether he still intends to uphold his lecture." (C. R. 3, 206.) Cordatus carried out his resolution. He appeared before Jonas, the Rector of the University, on December 17, and preferred charges against Cruciger. Jonas took him aside and urged him long and vehemently to desist from his purpose, saying, amongst other things, that Cordatus, after kindling a little spark at Zwickau, now wished to start a conflagration at Wittenberg, and that he ought to apply himself to conducting the affairs of his little parish and not meddle in such public matters. But Cordatus did not yield. He addressed the following letter to Jonas on December 31:

"When you spoke to me in a very conciliating manner on December 17 and I answered you faithfully as the case before us required, there remained two thorns in my heart that irritate me, *viz.*, that I was guilty of having raised a charge against Philip, who is a great man in every respect, before having conferred with him according to the ordinance of Christ; and that Your Magnificence seemed altogether inclined to urge that I must recede from my charge. Furthermore, when at home I set out to write to Your Magnificence and to Dr. Philip, in order to satisfy you both as best I possibly could, I wrote, rewrote, corrected, and destroyed again what I had written so many times that I became sick in body and languid in mind, and unless I should have made an end of my effort, I should doubtless have contracted a serious illness. Accordingly, I request that Your Magnificence hear a few things which I state in summary form in behalf of the cause of Christ and my innocence.

"In the first place, I have to this day accused no one, not even Dr. Cruciger; for not by way of an accusation did this matter come before our Doctor. I am suggesting all things to my superiors, not accusing anyone of them.

"In the second place, I shall accord to Dr. Philip, who is a great man in every respect, all honor due him so far as he remains sound in the doctrine which we all have learned from our teacher Luther.

"In the third place, I have refused to desist from the action which I have instituted against Dr. Cruciger for the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, unless Your Magnificence and the sound doctors of the theology of Christ hear my charge and render a just verdict for or against me and those clauses which have been affixed to the article of justification.

"In the fourth place, if by instituting this action I have sinned against Dr. Cruciger and those who side with him, or if during the proceedings I have sinned against anyone else, merited punishment will be visited upon me by you to whom the case has been committed.

"In the fifth place, if, however, I am transacting business of our Lord and pertaining to the salvation chiefly of those who were listeners with me at that lecture which I assail, you must come to my aid and defend the truth of Christ by your public verdict, not regarding persons but the cause.

"In the sixth place, to use the words of Your Magnificence, that I must not singly kindle a fire after kindling a spark, I shall readily suspend action for a time, which you seemed to demand that I should. I promise now that I shall take no action in this matter before anyone except before Your Magnificence, before whose tribunal this matter, which so far was private, has now come; however, with this condition that I shall first confer once more with Dr. Cruciger whom I have approached so often in private before, as Christ has commanded, and learn from him whether he intends to recant his lecture or continue defending it.

"In the seventh place, if anyone thinks that I who am naturally a harsh person act and write harshly, I answer, that that is true, but that the Spirit of Christ has changed, not taken away, my natural disposition." (C. R. 3, 208 f.)

Here the case rests for more than three months. The Con-

vention of Smalcald, a serious illness of Luther, the absence of the leading theologians from the university, rendered a prosecution of the case impossible. Before we submit the concluding documents in this controversy, it will be necessary to review critically the last letters of Cordatus published in this issue.
