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## Foreword.

Another year of grace has dawned. In preparing for another round of service, the THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY is well aware that its course, including, as it does, unflinching opposition to unionism and doctrinal indifference in general, will not be more popular in the future than it has been in the past. A generation which has produced the Lausanne Conference and is developing much enthusiasm in praising it will not be kindly disposed toward severe critics of this gathering. But evidently a religious journal must have higher ideals than those indicated by the word popularity. It is a truism that the public is best served when it is given, not what it likes, but what it needs. Can it be adequately told in a few words to what extent the Christian world to-day needs the admonition to extricate itself from the net of unionism? Those who have eyes to see cannot fail to notice that the appalling ignorance in religious matters which we observe in the youth of our land and which has often been commented upon by editors and educators, is largely due to these efforts at bringing into alliance various church-bodies whose doctrines are not in agreement, the result being a wide-spread disregard of doctrinal distinctions and differences and, finally, of Christian doctrine in general. The Romanists with more or less merriment dwell on what they call the collapse of Protestantism, finding their justification for this bold term in the inability of the average young Protestant to give an intelligent account of the religion which he professes to hold. It is to be feared that there is a result of all this doctrinal indifference born of unionism which is more lamentable and dreadful than anything hitherto alluded to — the substitution of trust in one's own good deeds for faith in Jesus Christ. Where doctrinal matters are relegated to the background, study of what is essential in the Scriptures easily ceases; and where this sad state of affairs obtains, Christ and His salvation are readily dropped from view. May God grant His grace to the readers and editors of the THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY that they, without becoming bigoted or fanatical, may remain firm in their opposition to all endeavors which tend to bring about a communion of light with darkness!

## Why Was Luther Detained at Worms after His Hearing Before the Diet?

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### 6. That Critical Thursday.

While the scenes related in the last chapter were being enacted, Veuss was making report to the Estates regarding the conference with Luther during the forenoon. The communication of Peutingger, who claimed to have his information from Schurf, confirmed the Doctor Badensis in his opinion that Luther would finally submit to a verdict rendered on his case by the Estates. He gave the Estates a hopefully colored report, and on the strength of that report the Estates ordered that the conference with Luther be continued. Luther's safe-conduct was extended two more days,<sup>84)</sup> and the Archbishop of Treves sent word to Luther by Amsdorf that Veuss and Peutingger would meet Luther at his lodging the next day in the morning.

Thus the negotiations with Luther were taken up once more on Thursday, April 25, at six o'clock in the morning, at the hostel of the Knights of St. John.<sup>85)</sup> For this conference, Peutingger, whom Luther knew from his visit at Augsburg in 1518, was associated with the chancellor of Baden. Luther entered the conference accompanied by Schurf, Feilitsch, and Thun.<sup>86)</sup> Veuss and Peutingger demanded that Luther submit all controverted questions to the verdict of the Estates, without the reservation that the verdict must be in accordance with Scripture; for the latter, they said, was self-understood. The discussion on this point lasted three hours.<sup>87)</sup>

Luther himself acknowledged that he had never been drawn into a discussion that was conducted "in such a modest and kind-hearted fashion." His collocutors tried to make it plausible to him that he would yield no position that he had taken by declaring that all his treatises had been written for the edification of the Christian Church,<sup>88)</sup> and that, if the Estates should discover anything in these writings that did not serve the aforementioned purpose, he would retract it. Luther replied that he could not surrender the supreme authority of God's Word, nor could he accept as judges men who had condemned, burned, and rejected his writings before he had been given a hearing before the Diet. Veuss

84) RA, 607.

85) RA, 619.

86) EE, 64, 371 f.

87) Veuss, *Illgens Zeitschr.*, 21, 94. RA, 619.

88) Veuss, *l. c.*, p. 96.

spoke soothingly to him, assuring him that the members of the Diet, too, were Christians and could not harbor any other intention than to render a verdict in accordance with God's Word. Moreover, Veuss promised that he and Peutinger "would move that Luther's writings be committed only to unsuspected persons and all courtiers be excluded from this commission." Both Veuss and Peutinger spoke in laudatory terms about Luther's writings and said that by these writings the useless scholastic controversies had been pushed aside and genuine sparks of the evangelical doctrine had been brought to light. Particularly did they fully commend his opposition to the malpractises of the Roman See.<sup>89)</sup>

At last they had softened Luther to such a degree that he begged them to put themselves in his place and tell him honestly what they would do if they were in his place.<sup>90)</sup> Veuss declared that "in a like case he would commit his writings to his Imperial Majesty and the Estates." Luther declared that rather than accept the Emperor as arbitrator, he would forfeit his safe-conduct. Here Thun spoke up: "That is surely a sufficient and courageous offer!" He began to chide the two and would not listen to any further proceedings. But Doctor Philip (Feilitsch) remained.<sup>91)</sup> Veuss had received the impression that, after all, his proposal had not been altogether displeasing to Luther. In fact, Luther asked for time to consider it. It was nine o'clock; after dinner Luther promised to state his decision. In the mean time he wished to consult his friends. Peutinger and Veuss agreed to come in person to the hostel of the Knights of St. John to receive Luther's answer.<sup>92)</sup>

For Luther there had now come the most critical moments in the great week which he spent at Worms. We have no information whether he consulted Spalatin, or whether he knelt in silent prayer in his closet, or whether he conferred with his God in the garden of the Knights of St. John, which extended to the city wall. But more momentous hours than these German history has not recorded. The agony of striving to reach a decision weighed heavily upon

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89) Veuss, *l. c.*, p. 95.

90) Luther to Albrecht of Mansfeld. EE, 53, 73.

91) EE, 64, 371 f.

92) In Veuss, p. 96, Veuss and Peutinger proceed to the archbishop, to whom they make report and from there back to Luther. Since Luther, in the mean time, was having a consultation with his friends, the second act in this conference, too, takes place in Luther's lodging, where Veuss finds the presence of the Saxon courtiers and of the servants annoying.

the monk. For the first time a way had been shown him that he could choose with honor to himself, while as to his own chosen path even a friend like Peutinger warned him that it would lead him straightway into the abyss. All around him Luther beheld venerable mementoes of Germany's past: in the city where at a former time Henry IV had in a fatal hour taken up his fight with Rome he was asked to decide the question whether his nation was again to pass under the old yoke of servitude which he had half taken from its shoulders already. Dagobert's dome looked down upon him; yonder the green waves of the sunlit Rhine were surging past him, singing their changeless melody which it had chanted to the Roman Caesars and the German Henrys. On the other side Krimhild's Garden of Roses spread its glories in the spring sun. All the spirits of the past crowded about him while he was holding counsel with himself. Were the Italians again to triumph? Must another witness against them abjure his faith as John of Wesalia had done in this very city of Worms? Or must he at least yield a little, as yonder in Suabia John Reuchlin had done? The mild and persuasive spirit of a friend like Peutinger and of an honorable gentleman like Veuss had confused Luther's mind. Moreover, he knew that also Elector Frederick and Brueck would be pleased to see him retract some things. But if he began to yield, where would his recession end? And on the other hand, if he did not retract everything, what would his recantation be worth? Could he put his trust in the Emperor and the Diet? "Put not your trust in princes nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help";<sup>93)</sup> "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man," —<sup>94)</sup> with these words of Scripture he had taken leave of Greiffenklau,<sup>95)</sup> and that was the answer which Peutinger and Veuss received when they called on Luther "after dinner, at one o'clock." Modestly, but firmly Luther explained to the two gentlemen that he could submit only to a decision rendered on the basis of clear texts of Scripture. Veuss was annoyed that this conversation, too, was not undisturbed. "Quite a number of persons from the knighthood and learned men came in." The Saxon noblemen became just as irritated against the two jurists as they had been against Cochlaeus the day before. Peutinger and Veuss were asked: "Being laymen and, moreover, married, how dared they presume to act in a matter that concerned

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93) Ps. 146, 3.

94) Jer. 17, 5.

95) Cochl., *Comm.*, 40. Luther's own account in letter to Albrecht of Mansfeld. EE, 53, 74.

only doctors of Holy Writ?"<sup>96</sup>) But Luther took the side of the commissioners, who were, moreover, his guests. He said: "God's Word has a clear and simple meaning and can easily be read and understood by everybody. The tyrants at Constance were all doctors, and it was just they who erred." Interferences of this kind on the part of the Saxon knights created an impression among the other party to which Cochlaeus and Muenzer at a later date gave a literary and Greiffenklau, in a conversation with Luther, a personal expression, *viz.*, that Luther was under the domination of the Saxon courtiers and that his actions were prompted by fear of their vengeance. "If you had yielded at Worms, you would have been stabbed by the nobility," Muenzer wrote to Luther at a later time.

The mention of the Council of Constance suggested to Peutinger the thought whether a council would not, after all, be the correct way for composing this controversy. He said so, and his words took immediate effect. Luther himself declared that he was ready to acknowledge this tribunal, provided the holding of the council were not deferred very long and he were given a specified statement of the articles in which he was said to have erred. Peutinger accepted Luther's promise on the condition that Luther promise to observe obedient silence on the articles designated to him as heretical until the council would have rendered its decision. Luther agreed also to this condition, provided he were left free to lecture, write, and preach on all other points.

Meanwhile even the servants of the hostel had crowded into the room, and this caused Peutinger and Veuss to close the conference with the statement that they would communicate Luther's offer to the archbishop. Greiffenklau was highly elated over the message which his representatives brought him and wanted to hurry to the Emperor at once with the good news that Luther would submit to the decision of a council. However, he first sent for Luther, "desiring to speak with him personally; to terminate this business, if God would favor his effort."<sup>97</sup>) Accordingly, Luther once more appeared before the Archbishop of Treves at the hostel of the Teutonic Knights. Now, the misunderstanding that had entered the report of Peutinger and Veuss became apparent; for Luther, in the entire arrangement which he had entered into with these gentlemen, had meant, of course, that the council must render a decision in accordance with Scripture. Veuss complained bitterly

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96) Veuss, *l. c.*, p. 97.

97) Veuss, *l. c.*, p. 98.

that the *Acta Lutheri* did not cease to assail Dr. Peutinger and himself for having made a false report to their master. He argued that the conference with Luther had taken place in the presence of a multitude of persons, all of whom would testify that Luther had not stipulated such a condition. This was undoubtedly true; but the reason why Luther did not stipulate the point in question was, because he regarded that as a self-evident *conditio sine qua non*. And every Christian so regards it. How could Luther have submitted the Word of God to a vote of any number of prelates? The thought is preposterous. When the error had become apparent, Greiffenklau endeavored with all his might to change Luther's opinion. For a long time he was closeted with Luther alone, and Aleander crosses himself with pious horror in recording the proposals which the archbishop made to "the monster," leaving him to choose whichever suited him best. Either he was to submit to a joint court of the Emperor and the Pope, or he was to submit his cause to the Emperor alone, or the Emperor and the Estates were to defer a decision on his teaching, or he was to withdraw his controverted teachings at once and submit the decision regarding the rest to a council.<sup>98)</sup> Inasmuch as the Pope alone can render the decision, Aleander regarded any of these proposals as more abominable than the other.

While Greiffenklau was conferring with Luther, Spalatin was announced. The archbishop had him, too, conducted "into the room up-stairs," where he was with Luther, and asked Spalatin to excuse him for having refused to see him the day before. The archbishop stated that Spalatin had not been recognized.<sup>99)</sup> And now the archbishop simply asked Luther to propose a way himself for establishing peace. Luther knew of no better way than that which Gamaliel had proposed, *viz.*, to let the matter alone and see whether it be of God.<sup>100)</sup> Let the Emperor write the Pope to this effect; for if his work were not of God, Luther himself expressed the conviction that it would come to naught within three, yea, even within two years. Greiffenklau now asked Luther how he would act if from his writings those articles were excerpted on which the coming council was to render an opinion. Luther replied: "My gracious lord, if only they will not be those articles which were condemned by the Council of Constance!" The archbishop replied that he feared the articles would be precisely the same. There-

98) Report of April 27. Balan, 74, p. 197 f.

99) Spalatin, *Annal.*, p. 44.

100) Acts 5, 38.

upon Luther said: "Most gracious sir, in that case I cannot yield, no matter what God wills that shall become of me."

Aleander claims that Greiffenklau himself communicated to him still other features of his conference with Luther. He reports that the archbishop had offered Luther a beautiful priory and a place at his table where he would not be hindered by his former benefactors to make his peace with Rome. With a similar offer of a beautiful abbey, Staupitz had been enticed to Salzburg, where he had been isolated and then forced to submit to the bull against Luther. Luther did not believe that the archbishop entertained any perfidious intentions when making him the offer. He was deeply moved by the archbishop's kindness and asked him to hear his confession in order that, under the seal of confession, he might lay open to him the condition of his conscience. It is strange indeed to be told that an archbishop heard the confession of a person who had been twice excommunicated; but even Christoph von Schwarzenberg reports a communication made to him the same day by Greiffenklau to this effect, "that Luther had privately and as a peculiar trust confided to him matters that must not be divulged or mentioned."<sup>101)</sup> Aleander tried very hard to learn the contents of Luther's confession. He reverted to his fixed notion that Luther had confessed to the archbishop who were the authors of his books. Of course, Aleander believed Erasmus to be the author. He represented to the archbishop what an illogical procedure it would be to keep a secret revealed in a confessional service, of a person who had attacked all the Sacraments of the Church and had destroyed confession. But the German prelate entertained more serious views of the Sacraments of his Church and refused the Romanist's request. Luther, too, is full of praise for the archbishop. In the letter to Albrecht of Mansfeld which he wrote on his return journey at Eisenach, he says: "His Princely Grace has made a good and more than gracious appearance in this matter; he would have been pleased to mend the affair."<sup>102)</sup> It is doubtful whether Greiffenklau fully deserved the confidence which Luther had placed in him. To Aleander the prelate excused himself for having shown kindness to Luther by saying that he would most certainly endanger his popularity were he to force Luther to recant the very least point. This statement agrees with the report of Veuss that as an experienced man of affairs the archbishop had endeavored to induce Luther to yield somewhat. Hence Greiffen-

101) RA, II, 874.

102) EE, 53, 74.

klau's mode of operation was similar to that of Cochlaeus, who boasted of the tears which he had wrung from Luther's soft heart. Nevertheless Luther in no way becomes lowered in our esteem for emerging as the dupe from his conferences with these priests.

At the close of his conference with the archbishop, Luther was completely exhausted and tired of all the useless wrangling in which he had to engage. He made use of the favorable opportunity urgently to request Greiffenklau to obtain his dismissal. He rehearsed the events of the last days: he had stood before the Diet and the Diet's Commission; he had had conferences with Eck and Cochlaeus and with Veuss and Peutingering; he had privately conferred with the *dechant* of Frankfort and the Archbishop of Treves. If matters that had been decided long ago were to remain decided, and he was asked to do nothing else than recant, what good would come from all these conferences? He was now tarrying at Worms ten days; he had exhausted his efforts to explain the reasons why he could not simply submit to the ruling of others; hence he asked to be permitted to depart. Greiffenklau saw the justice of Luther's request and said: "I will this moment ride to His Majesty and expedite this matter."<sup>103</sup>) He met with no difficulty, for Chievres and Gattinara had themselves reached the conclusion that it was time "the dog be sent back and the judgment against him be duly executed."<sup>104</sup>)

From the hostel of the Teutonic Knights, Luther, accompanied by Spalatin, walked to Hans von Minkovitz, who was still sick in bed with a malignant fever. With cordial words of solace he comforted the dying knight, who was preparing to join the great number of delegates to this Diet whom Worms detained forever, and at whose graves Luther is said to have remarked: "Blessed are those, for they are at rest!"<sup>105</sup>) At the parting he grasped the knight's hand and said, "I shall leave to-morrow." Spalatin relates: "When he said that, I plucked his gown and said, 'Doctor, you are a good man'<sup>106</sup>) for saying that you will leave to-morrow. Why, you have not been given your dismissal yet!' Then the good father said to me: 'You will see that I shall leave to-morrow.' And so he turned to his lodging. His companions, except Master

103) Spalatin, *Annal.*, 46.

104) BAL, p. 163.

105) *Beati, quia quiescunt*. Another version runs: "*Invideo, quia quiescunt*." I envy them, because they are at rest.

106) Meaning, a good-natured simpleton.

John Petzensteiner, had gone for a walk to look at Worms. Perhaps they, too, had a presentiment that their sojourn at Worms would not be long." They were not deceived in their anticipation; for the Emperor felt a powerful urging to remove the excommunicated friar from Worms.

The mild tone in which the last conferences had been conducted had been refreshing to Luther. He sums up the final result of these conferences by saying that he came out of them with considerable honor, while his adversaries wished that they might "have the beer back in the barrel where it was before." With great bitterness he remembers the proceedings in the conference with the commission of the Diet. He said that Duke George laughed every time he, Luther, appealed to the Scriptures, saying, "Have a care, my dear lords; in my own country I shall take good precautions." Luther complained that such wily tactics had been employed against him that Elector Frederick was forced to say, "I would not have believed that they would act thus." However, the Frankfort *dechant* Cochlaeus receives the worst mention in Spalatin's report: "Among all the adversaries no one showed himself more intolerant, jealous, and malicious than Doctor John Cochlaeus, or Schneck of Nuremberg, at present *dechant* at Our Ladies at Frankfort-on-the-Main. He had the boldness to suggest to Luther that he should surrender his safe-conduct in order that they might engage in a disputation."<sup>107</sup>) From the Wartburg Luther wrote to his congregation at Wittenberg: "I had hoped that bishops and doctors would try me [at Worms]; but their whole aim was to make me recant. God was gracious and brought it about that not all the princes and Estates consented to this scheme. Otherwise I should not have survived the shame I should have felt for the Germans for suffering the papal tyrants to fool and dupe them so grossly." But he also expressed surprise "because all his adversaries jointly were not bold enough to meet a poor beggar in conflict. . . . But they stay by themselves, among their partisans. There they frame resolutions; there they pass judgments; there they condemn without giving their opponent a hearing." Such were Luther's impressions of the grandees at Worms.<sup>108</sup>)

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107) FU, p. 72. In addition: Myconius, p. 36, chap. IX: "*Das boes, zornig Gockelmaennlein Joannes Cochlaeus . . . erbot sich immer, mit Luther aufs Feuer zu disputieren,*" etc.

108) VIII, 211 f.

### 7. The Departure from Worms.

Even before Luther obtained his dismissal, the rumor had spread through the city that the monk was departing. The *Landhofmeister*, Christoph von Schwarzenberg, who had to make reports about Luther and his cause to Duke Louis of Bavaria, was prompted by this rumor to call on Luther towards evening of April 25. Schwarzenberg's account yields no further item of information regarding Luther. From Greiffenklau the nobleman received a faithful and exhaustive account about the archbishop's last conference with Luther. Luther merely affirmed to Schwarzenberg that he would leave Worms the next morning. In fact, on the same evening Eck, the official from Treves, together with the Austrian chancellor Schneitpeck and the notary Transilvanus, appeared at Luther's lodging to explain to him that, inasmuch as he had "stiff-neckedly" declined all admonitions to amend his ways and be at peace with the Church, His Imperial Majesty, as the guardian of the Church, would now proceed against him. He was to have a safe-conduct for twenty-one days to enable him to return to the place whence he had started. This safe-conduct would be kept for him, but he would not be permitted to excite the people on his journey by writing or preaching.

While these matters were being communicated to Luther, his companions returned from their sightseeing tour through Worms. Luther conducted the imperial messengers to the room downstairs<sup>109)</sup> and then, taking leave of them, said with great humility and meekness: "As it has pleased the Lord, so it has come to pass. Blessed be the name of the Lord!" He asked the messengers to convey his thanks to the Emperor and the Diet for having heard him, for having kept his safe-conduct, and for assuring him that it would be kept also for his return journey. He declared that he had never aimed at anything else than a reformation of the Church. For the rest he intended to surrender his body and life to the Emperor, reserving for himself only the right freely to confess the Word of God and bear testimony to it alone. With this significant closing remark he declined obedience to the prohibition to preach; for he was convinced that the Word of God must not be bound. Both parties shook hands and parted.<sup>110)</sup> Transilvanus is said to have been deeply stirred by Luther's farewell remarks. The monk had made such an impression on the notary that he loved to repeat with great warmth of feeling his parting conversation.<sup>111)</sup>

109) Spalatin, *Annal.*, 47. 110) RA, 611. 111) Spalatin, *Annal.*, 48.

The happy end, then, had arrived — Luther “was through.” But for the Elector and his counselors the last days had been days of considerable worry. The Elector was more low-spirited than he had ever been known to be; he was making up his mind that he must lose Luther. On the day when the conferences with the archbishop at Treves commenced, the Elector wrote to his brother: “I imagine they will chase him away and exile him, and if any one shows that he is well disposed toward Doctor Martin, he is counted a heretic. May God overrule everything for the best! He will not forsake the cause of righteousness, to be sure. I shall, God willing, keep your Love further informed regarding his dismissal.”<sup>112)</sup> Duke John, in a letter of April 4, had once more requested his brother to take care of the friar and to request the other princes in his name to do likewise.<sup>113)</sup> Now that the Elector had to come to a decision regarding Luther, he yielded to the persuasion of his counselors to provide for Luther’s safety. The Emperor had declared that as soon as Luther would have returned to his domicile, he would, as guardian of the faith, take measures against him. The indefatigable Aleander was already preparing measures that were to prohibit Luther’s possible escape from Wittenberg to Bohemia. If Luther arrived at Wittenberg, the Elector would be compelled to surrender him to the Emperor or openly to espouse Luther’s cause. For this reason the monk’s return to his starting-point must be prevented. He must disappear *en route* to Wittenberg, thus putting the Elector in a position to be able to say that he had nothing to do with Luther’s cause. Frederick assured the college of electors on a later occasion that he could take every kind of oath that he was ignorant of Luther’s whereabouts, and no one has a right to discredit the old gentleman’s statement. Most likely the Elector left Brueck and all other patrons of Luther free to act toward securing Luther’s safety, while he himself declined all share of their knowledge. Such a mode of action was fully in accord with the habitual practise of the Elector.

The foregoing is in accord with the presentation which Spalatin had made of the plan for rescuing Luther. He relates: “Now, the aforementioned, my most gracious lord, Duke Frederick of Saxony, Elector, was rather pusillanimous. He surely loved Luther, and he really felt great sorrow for him. He did not like to act contrary to God’s Word, nor did he wish to bring the

112) April 24; FNU, 15; RA, II, 871.

113) RA, II, 870; Spalatin, *Annal.*, p. 50.

Emperor down on himself. He was casting about for some means to remove Doctor Martin for a while, hoping that his controversies might be quieted, and on the evening before Luther departed [April 25], he indicated in the presence of Philip von Feilitzsch, Frederick von Thun, both knights, myself, and indeed not many others, that he desired to see Luther removed. To gratify Duke Frederick, Luther was obediently complaisant to this plan, although he surely was always much more ready to go forward courageously." <sup>114)</sup> The place where he was to be concealed was not yet revealed to Luther, neither to the knights who had been present when the Elector opened his mind.<sup>115)</sup>

With such an uncertain future before him, Luther lay down to rest for the last time at Worms. Once more in the early morning hours of Friday, April 26, the hostel of the Knights of St. John witnessed a concourse of people. "Luther's superiors and friends" all came, every one of them, to take leave of the friar. The Saxon account states: "In the morning of his departure there was a wonderfully great concourse of many excellent people, who came to say good-by to him." <sup>116)</sup> One of those present testified that Luther "departed in cheerful spirits and without fear" <sup>117)</sup> and was followed by the blessings of his beloved Germans. Only Aleander sent curses after him. He wrote to Rome: "So the venerable villain departed yesterday, before noon, with two wagons, after he had with his own hand, in the presence of many persons, toasted many slices of bread and drunk many a glass of malmsey, which he loves exceedingly." Of course, Aleander would have much preferred to see Luther himself roasted — a sight which would have made him enjoy his own malmsey all the more. The *Acta* only state that, after blessing his friends, the good father had breakfasted on a little bowl of gruel. But that was too tame an incident to report to Rome, where more spicy gossip was demanded. And the malmsey story seemed so plausible after the pious benefactress at Frankfurt <sup>118)</sup> had furnished a basis for it. Poor lady! She had never dreamt of all the damage she would cause by her thoughtful and timely gift. From that day Aleander's dispatches, Cochlaeus's comments, and Muenzer's slanderous writings are filled with accounts of Luther's fondness for malmsey. A new epithet is coined

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114) Cyprian, p. 50.

115) Spalatin, *l. c.*; De Wette, I, 588.

116) RA, 611.

117) Krel to Schweikart von Grundelungen. RA, II, 885.

118) DTC, 182.

for Luther: "the Malmsian." If he had but drunk the thousandth part of all the wine these worthy reporters have made him drink, he could not possibly have stood without support at the Diet nor have attended those nerve-racking conferences after his hearing at the Diet, nor written any of the great books that came from his pen, nor engaged in the great work of building the Church, which engrossed his time and enlisted all his strength in the years after Worms.

The start for home was made at 10 o'clock. Since a cavalcade of twenty horsemen awaited Luther outside the Mainz Gate, Herald Storm considered it prudent to let Luther make the start alone. He followed him a few hours later. Aleander thinks that the horsemen had been sent by Sickingen; but it is more probable that they were the same friends of Luther who had met him at his entrance into Worms — Jonas and the Saxon noblemen. With this company Luther proceeded to Oppenheim, where Storm overtook him.

To cover up the ruse that had been devised to make Luther disappear, Spalatin had advised him to address a letter to the Emperor and the Electors<sup>119)</sup> after his departure from Worms. On the way from Worms, Luther began to write these letters. Myconius at least reports:<sup>120)</sup> "When he arrived at Weissenburg, which is situated in the Palatinate [Myconius means Weisenau, near Mayence], Luther wrote a statement of his doctrine and a brief confession and protestation, and sent it to the Diet."

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