

# THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY.

---

VOL. XX.

OCTOBER, 1916.

No. 4.

---

## SENECA AND NERO.

### II.

In 62, Burrus died, and Seneca knew that the newer and coarser favorites (*Tac. Ann.*, 14, 52) were incessantly intriguing against him, charging particularly against him the enormous wealth he had amassed, the magnificence of his parks and villas, and that he disapproved of Nero's appearing in musical monologs and in horse-racing. The emperor was old enough, they urged, to dispense with his preceptor. Seneca requested permission to retire from public affairs. The emperor accepted his resignation, but refused to take back to himself the wealth which he had bestowed upon him who had been foremost in his affections (*praecipuus caritate*).

But three years were left to the brilliant Corduban, years which he largely spent far from the madding crowd and from the insincerities of a courtier's life. More than half of Seneca's extant prose writings, inclusive of his enquiries into physical phenomena (*Quaestiones Naturales*), were composed by the retired minister of state in these three years. He resided often on his estate near Nomentum, not far from Rome, or on the Gulf of Naples.

He was now indeed an old man, and was bent on living what little span there might be largely in company with his better self, and cheered by the company of his second wife, Paulina, a lady sprung from the aristocracy of Rome. The greater and better part of these readings must deal with the thinker and moralist, and largely be made up from his own

## MISCELLANY.

TO THE NATION (December 17, 1914) we are indebted to the following:

### MARTIN LUTHER AND ENGLAND.

An extremely rare book, found in the Bodleian, but not in the British Museum, is "M. Luther's Sermon on the Keys and of Absolution on John xx. 21, 22, translated by R. Argentine. Ipswich. 1548." The name of the translator as here given is a pseudonym, the last word, "Argentine," meaning simply "of Strassburg," which in Latin is known as Argentina or Argentoratum. The problem is, then, to find an Englishman one of whose names begins with R, and who lived for some time at Strassburg. The last name that occurred to me was that of Friar Roy, Tyndale's helper and a translator of other Lutheran works into English. He lived long in Germany, and spent some time at Strassburg, but, as he disappears from sight in 1532, and as Thomas More relates that he fell a victim to the Portuguese inquisition in that year, the present translation could not have been by him unless it was a reprint of an earlier work now unknown. This is so improbable as to make further search desirable. I now think that the translator was Richard Hilles, an English Protestant clergyman, who spent several years at Strassburg with Bucer. By contemporary letters he can be traced there in 1546, and from December 8, 1547, to August 22, 1548. As he set out for England on this date, nothing is more likely than that he carried with him a version of Luther's sermon, to be printed immediately on his arrival. By his friends he is often referred to by his first name only, and there is nothing strange in his taking the initial R rather than H in finding a *nom de plume*.

In the very same year Walter Lynne, a London printer, himself translated, published, and dedicated to the Princess Elizabeth another of Luther's works, namely:—

A frutefull and godly Exposition and declaration of the kyngdom of Christ and of chrysten lybertye made upon the words of the Prophete Jeremye in the xviii chapter, with an exposycyon of the viii Psalme, intreating of the same mater by the famous clerke Doctor Martyn Luther, whereunto is annexed a Godly sermon of Doctor Urbanus Rhegius upon the ix Chappter of Mathews. . . . Translated out of the hyghe Almayne. Gwalter Lynne. London. 1548.

In the following year Lynne published another of Luther's writings under the title:—

A briefe collection of all such textes of the scripture as do declare the most blessed and happie estate of them that be with sycknes. . . . Whereunto are added two fruitfull and comfortable sermons made by the famous clarke doctor Martin Luther. . . . G. Lynne. 1549.

No more English versions of the Reformer's works were printed during the reign of Edward VI, and only one during the reign of Mary. This was from Luther's *Vom Greuel der Stillmesse*:

A sermon of the great blasphemy agynst God whych the Papystes do use reading this Antechrystian Canon in theyr Mass.

No date, place, or name of printer is given. The British Museum catalog places it in the year 1554, and the appropriateness of its subject to the reign of the Catholic queen is obvious. It may have been printed on the Continent, as was Tyndale's New Testament and many of his works. Even under the Protestant Edward, in 1550, an Oxford scholar, Francis Dryander, though of the Reformed faith, went to Basel to get books printed.

An estimate of the influence of Luther's writings in England in the sixteenth century must note that they furnished the originals for the translation of the English Bible, for many hymns, and for the Thirty-nine Articles. It is a well-known fact that the first complete English Bible (1535) frankly stated on its title-page that it was "faithfully translated out of Douche and Latyn," the Dutch being, of course, Luther's German. Comparison of the texts amply bears out the fact that both Tyndale and Coverdale leaned very heavily on the Reformer. On the other hand, the assertion that Tyndale was at Wittenberg and knew Luther personally, though made by his contemporaries Edward Lee, Thomas More, and Cochlaeus, and repeated by Froude, Demaus, Momfret, Gairdner, and many others, is, in my judgment, certainly false. Not only is there no mention of this visit in the records of the University of Wittenberg, or in the voluminous correspondence of Luther, or Melancthon, or Jonas, or Bugenhagen, or any other resident of the city, not only is there no mention of ever seeing Luther in all Tyndale's writings, but we have

his own denial: "when he [More] saith Tyndale was confederate with Luther, that is not the truth."

Some time before 1539 (the date is given by a list of prohibited books drawn up in that year) Miles Coverdale published "Ghostly Psalms and Spiritual Songs, drawn out of the holy Scripture." Mr. Herford has already noticed that some of these hymns were also drawn from Luther. Having made a more thorough study of the subject, I have noted the following parallels:

<i>German: Erlangen Edition of Luther's Works, Vol. 56.</i>	<i>English: Remains of Miles Coverdale, 1846.</i>
Nun freut euch, p. 309.	Be glad now, p. 555.
Psalms xii, p. 311.	Do., p. 567.
Psalms xiv, p. 312.	Do., p. 581.
Psalms cxxx (shorter form), p. 313.	Do., p. 577.
Psalms lxxvii, p. 318.	Do., p. 580.
Lobgesang auf dem Osterfest, p. 319.	Easter Song, p. 563.
Ostergesang, p. 321.	Another Easter Song, p. 563.
Ten Commandments, p. 322.	Do., p. 544.
Another Ten Commandments, p. 324.	Do., p. 545.
Komm, Heiliger Geist, p. 330.	Come, Holy Spirit, p. 542.
Lobgesang Simeons, p. 331.	Nunc Dimittis, p. 566.
Glaube, p. 333.	Creed, p. 546.
Psalms cxxviii, p. 335.	Do., p. 573.
Psalms cxxiv, p. 336.	Do., p. 571.
Lobgesang, p. 337.	Of the Holy Ghost, p. 566.
Media vita, p. 338.	Media vita, p. 554.
Ein Feste Burg, p. 343.	Deus refugium, p. 569.

For the sake of comparison the first verse of the last-mentioned poem may be given:—

Our God is a defence and toure,  
 A good armour and good weapen,  
 He hath been ever our helpe and  
 succoure  
 In all the troubles that we have  
 been in.  
 Therefore wyl we never drede  
 For any wondrous dede  
 By water or by londe  
 In hilles or the see sonde  
 Our God hath them all in his  
 honde.

Ain feste burg ist unser Gott,  
 ain gutte wör un waffen,  
 Er hilfft uns frey aus aller not,  
 Die uns yetzt hat betroffen.  
 Der alt böse feynd,  
 Mitt ernst ers yetzt meint,  
 gross macht un vil list  
 sein grausam rüstung ist,  
 auff erd ist nicht seins gleichen.

Though the wording of the two is not very close, the identity of the meter, save in the rhyme of the last line, makes it certain that Coverdale used the famous German hymn.

It is not generally known, and would hardly be agreeable for the "Catholic" party in the Episcopal Church to learn, that Luther had a finger in the Thirty-nine Articles. Such, however, is the case. When Henry VIII's ambassadors, Foxe, Bishop of Hereford, and Nicholas Heath, visited Wittenberg in 1536, they brought back with

them a set of seventeen articles, drafted by Melancthon and approved by Luther, largely founded on the Augsburg Confession. Two years later, at a conference of the German ambassadors, Boineburg and Myconius, with English divines in London, these were digested into thirteen articles, which became the basis of the Forty-two Articles of Edward VI, and thus of the Thirty-nine Articles of Elizabeth. (Cf. G. Mentz: *Die Wittenberger Artikel von 1536*. Leipzig. 1905.)

Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

PRESERVED SMITH.