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## LUTHER'S BREAK WITH ROME.

Leipzig, 1519. The storm which had been brooding over Europe, the clouds thickest over the Vatican at Rome, had pre-saged its coming by mutterings growing ever louder, and finally intermittent flashes of lightning and sudden vehement gusts of wind and rain followed, the harbingers of the breaking storm. Luther's Ninety-five Theses had flashed across the astonished heavens; then, in quick succession, two bolts of lightning which disturbed the Vatican — Cajetan and Miltitz's failure to return to Rome with the evidence of Luther's recantation in their possession. But still the Pope did not realize the magnitude of the danger which threatened the hierarchy. Tetzl had failed, Cajetan had failed, Miltitz had failed, but the man was left who was sure to crush this upstart of a monk and make an end of him — Dr. Eck. Rome looked for an abrupt ending of the disturbances which had been raised by the Wittenberg monk; in 1519 the storm broke in all its fury. 1519 is the great year in the life of Luther, it is the turning-point of his eventful career. Up to Leipzig Luther still had a vestige of faith left in the Pope; after Leipzig we see how the bond between Luther and the Church of Rome had been severed beyond any power to knit it together again. At Leipzig Luther did what no man before him had dared to do — he denied the right of the Pope to call himself the Vicar of Christ, the infallible head of the Church. He dared to express the opinion that church-councils were liable to err, as well as their head, the Pope. He dared to say, "The Scriptures stand above the church-fathers." He

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## BOOK REVIEW.

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*LUTHER'S CORRESPONDENCE AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY LETTERS.* Translated and edited by *Preserved Smith, Ph. D.*, and *Charles M. Jacobs, D. D.* Vol. II, 1521—1530. Philadelphia, Pa. The Lutheran Publication Society. 568 pp.

Five years have passed since the first volume of this collection of letters of Luther in English made its appearance. (See review in THEOL. QUART. for October, 1914.) To students of Luther and his theology that volume has proved indispensable. But immeasurably more valuable is the present volume, which covers what is perhaps the busiest, at any rate the most formative, period in the life of the Reformer. This will be understood at once when we glance at the two terminal years for this volume: we are, in the first letter, introduced to Luther at the Wartburg (May 12), and we take leave of him as he is about to start for Castle Coburg, while his companions go on to Augsburg. The iconoclastic disturbances at Wittenberg, the restoration of a pure form of worship in the Reformer's home town, the Peasant War, his marriage, the Marburg Colloquy, etc., fall within this period. We can understand that the greatest difficulty of the editors has been what not to publish; for there were extant for this period 1,150 letters of Luther. An equal number was available from the correspondence of Melanchthon and Erasmus, and not a few from other personages who were prominent in that period. The readers of the THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY will remember that this collection of Dr. Smith is not confined to letters of Luther only, but embodies important letters and documents relating to Luther. It thus becomes a source-book for the study of phases and episodes of the German Reformation. This volume carries the collection forward from No. 478 (Luther's letter to Melanchthon) to No. 875 (Jonas's letter to Lang, of April 9, 1530). It contains 234 letters from Luther's own hand. The quality of the translator's and editor's work can be judged from the following:—

### 700. Luther to Henry VIII, King of England.

Enders, V, 229.

Wittenberg, September 1, 1525.

The most recent account of the relations of Luther and Henry VIII is given in the *English Historical Review*, 1910, 656 ff. Cf. also Smith, 192 ff., 457 ff., and H. Grisar: *Luther* (1911), II, 374 ff.

In addition to the notices given by Enders on the editions of this letter, I may note the following: 1. The letter, with Henry's answer, beginning, *Quas tu literas, Luthere*, exists in MS. in the Fitzwilliam Museum,

Cambridge, England, No. 175. (See Appendix.) 2. An English translation of this letter and Henry's answer was made at once (1526) and published under the title: *A copy of the letters wherein the most redoubted Henry VIII made answer unto a letter of Martin Luther, . . . and also a copy of Luther's letter*. Noticed and in part reprinted by Ames and Herbert: *Typographical Antiquities* (1785), I, 297. In the English translation of Henry's answer (not in the Latin original) the king says he received this letter of Luther on March 20, 1526.

Grace and peace in Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen. Indeed, most serene and illustrious King, I ought greatly to fear to address your Majesty in a letter, as I am fully aware that your Majesty is deeply offended at my pamphlet,<sup>1)</sup> which I published foolishly and precipitately, not of my own motion, but at the best of certain men who are not your Majesty's friends. But, daily seeing your royal clemency, I take hope and courage; I will not believe that a mortal can cherish immortal hatred. I have learned on credible authority that the book<sup>2)</sup> published over your Majesty's name was not written by your Majesty, but by crafty men who abused your name, especially by that monster detested of God and man, that pest of your kingdom, the Cardinal of York.<sup>3)</sup> They did not see the danger of humiliating their king. . . .

What impels me to write, abject as I am, is that your Majesty has begun to favor the evangelical cause,<sup>4)</sup> and to feel disgust at the abandoned men who oppose us. This news was a true gospel, *i. e.*, tidings of great joy, to my heart. Wherefore in this letter I cast myself with the utmost possible humility at your Majesty's feet, and pray and beseech you, by the love and cross and glory of Christ, to deign to leave off your anger, and forgive me for what I have done to injure your Majesty, as Christ commands us in His prayer to forgive each other.

If your serene Majesty wishes me to recant publicly and write in honor of your Majesty, will you graciously signify your wish to me, and

1) *Contra Henricum regem Angliæ*, 1522. Weimar, X2, pp. 175 ff.

2) *The Assertion of the Seven Sacraments*. Reprinted with introduction and translation by Father L. O'Donovan, 1908.

3) The allusion is to Thomas Wolsey, who at this time was Cardinal Archbishop of York. Henry took it so in his answer. In his former pamphlet, Luther expressed the opinion that Edward Lee (who was Archbishop of York 1531—1544) was the real author of the work, but it is not possible that he was thinking of him now. The fact is that the spirit of the book was Henry's, but he received very great help from Fisher, More, and other scholars whom Wolsey caused to assemble for that express purpose. Cf. *English Historical Review*, p. 659; Roper's *Life of More in Utopia*, ed. G. Samson (1910), p. 247; Bridgett's *Life of More*, p. 221; Wolsey's letter to Henry VIII in O'Donovan, *op. cit.*, p. 54; Pastor-Kerr, *op. cit.*, VIII, 442.

4) This was not so. Luther had probably heard a statement to that effect from Christian II of Denmark. Enders, V, 203, n. 3.

I shall not delay, but shall do so most willingly. Although I am a man of naught compared to your Majesty, yet we may hope that great good may come to the evangelical cause, and to God's glory if opportunity is given me of writing the King of England on this subject.

Meanwhile, may the Lord increase your Majesty as He has begun, and make you favor and obey the Gospel with all your soul, and may He not let your royal ears and mind be filled with the pestilent songs of those sirens who do nothing but call Luther a heretic. Let your Majesty think for yourself: how much evil can I possibly teach who teach nothing but faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who suffered and rose for our salvation, as the Gospels and Apostolic Epistles testify? This is the head and foundation of my doctrine, on which I build and teach love of one's neighbor, obedience to the civil magistrates, and mortification and crucifixion of the body of sin, as the Christian faith prescribes. What harm is there in teaching these things? Why am I condemned before I am heard? Is there not great need of reforming the abuses and tyranny of the Pope's followers, who teach other doctrines repugnant to these, looking only to tribute, luxury, gluttony, and even the kingdoms, principalities, and all the wealth of the world? Why do they not amend and teach rightly if they desire to escape censure and hatred?

Your most serene Majesty sees how many princes in Germany, and how many cities and how many wise men take my part, and by God's grace cleave to the evangelical faith, by Christ's singular blessing purified by me. To which number may Christ add your Majesty, and free you from these tyrants of souls. What wonder if the Emperor and some princes rage against me, as the Second Psalm says: "The heathen rage against the Lord and against His Christ; the people take counsel together, the kings of the earth set themselves, and the princes enter into covenants." Rather it is wonderful that any prince or king favors the Gospel. I hope with all my heart some time to be able to congratulate your Majesty on this miracle, and may the Lord Himself, in whose name and by whose will I write, cooperate with my words that the King of England may shortly become a perfect disciple of Christ, an adherent of the evangelical faith, and Luther's most clement lord. Amen.

If your Majesty sees good to answer me, I await your Majesty's clement reply.

Your Majesty's most devoted

MARTIN LUTHER, with his own hand.

D.

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NOTE. — Yielding to urgent requests of our readers, we shall reopen the Book Review also for new publications in the next volume, but cannot promise much space for this department until material that has accumulated for some time has been given space.

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