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Continuing

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Ein Prediger muss nicht allein weiden, also dass er die Schafe unterweise, wie sie rechte Christen sollen sein, sondern auch daneben den Woelfen wehren, dass sie die Schafe nicht angreifen und mit falscher Lehre verfuehren und Irrtum einfuehren.

Luther.

Es ist kein Ding, das die Leute mehr bei der Kirche behaeilt denn die gute Predigt. — *Apologie, Art. 24.*

If the trumpet give an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself to the battle? — *1 Cor. 14, 8.*

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A Course in Lutheran Theology

(Continued instead of concluded)

People are saying that *De Servo Arbitrio* is a dangerous book. We have heard them rail against it, first, because of Luther's teaching on the *discretio personarum* (*Cur alii, alii non?*), and, secondly, because of his statements concerning the *Deus Absconditus*. Usually the warning against *De Servo Arbitrio* takes this third form: It teaches *Calvinistic determinism*. If this charge is well founded, our book could not serve as a handbook for a course in Lutheran theology. It is therefore necessary to examine this sinister charge at some length.

The charge is raised quite generally. It has become a commonplace among theologians that *De Servo Arbitrio* is infected with the predestinarian heresy. Some speak of it regretfully, many, however, in a rancorous spirit. Here are a few representative utterances. John F. Hurst: "Erasmus objected strenuously to Luther's predestinarianism. . . . The book was entitled *The Slavery of the Will* and affirmed such a predetermination of human action as would result in absolute philosophical fatalism." *History of the Christian Church*, II, pp. 112, 179.⁵¹⁾ Dr. Dieckhoff of Rostock wrote

51) Some definitions: "Fatalism regards all events as the inevitable result of an immutable and resistless fate. Deistic determinism turns the affairs of the world over to invariable mechanical forces supposed to be resident in nature. Theological determinism ascribes every act and event to the sovereign and absolute decree of God." (J. Stump, *The Chr. Faith*, p. 85.) "Predestinarianism' is not of course, as many think and say ignorantly or malevolently, the doctrine of predestination which is clearly taught in Scripture but the system of Calvin, with the twofold predestination to sin and righteousness, to life and to death, to salvation and damnation, with its particular grace, redemption, and vocation, with its particular power of the means of grace, and with its irresistible and inamissible grace." (C. F. W. Walther, *Lehre u. Wehre*, 26, p. 66.) "Calvinism, which is not the Scriptural, Christian doctrine but a philosophical speculation, teaches that election is founded *solely* on the will of God and not also on Christ . . . and that it never was the will of God to

a treatise entitled *The Missourian Predestinarianism and the Formula of Concord*, in which he asserts that the Formula of Concord, in rejecting in the Second Article "the delirium of philosophers who are called Stoics, as also of the Manicheans," had Luther in mind. (See *Lehre u. Wehre*, 32, p. 193. Pieper, *Chr. Dogmatik*, II, p. 595.) Dr. Wilh. Walther also asserts that "the Formula of Concord did not accept Luther's teaching of the twofold predestination." (*Lehrbuch der Symbolik*, p. 305.) K. Zickendraht: "Luther schreitet fast unmerklich vom Gnadenmonergismus zum Determinismus mit der Konsequenz der Bewirkung des Boesen durch Gott fort." (*Der Streit zwischen Erasmus und Luther ueber die Willensfreiheit*, p. 7.) Theod. Harnack: "What Luther, and his age with him, did not sufficiently distinguish, that is, with regard to God the metaphysical and personal relation of God to the world and with regard to man the formal and real freedom of will, that forced him to adopt a deterministic world-view. The deterministic bias rules markedly in *De Servo Arbitrio*. Luther openly declared for absolute predestination." (*Luthers Theologie*, pp. 183, 187.) Luthardt: "The first purpose of Luther is to prove that man's sinful will is unable to do anything towards effecting his salvation; but he goes beyond that and teaches determinism: immutabiliter omnia facit et voluntati eius neque resisti neque eam mutari aut impediri potest." (Luthardt-Jelke, *Komp. d. Dog.*, p. 174. Cp. p. 224.) G. Aulén: "Alles hat seine Ursache in der goettlichen Aktivitaet. Damit fuehrt uns Luther zu der doppelten Praedestination. Gleich wie die Auserwaelung ihren Grund im Gotteswillen hat, so auch die Verwerfung. Luther weicht hier nicht aus. Der Gedanke der doppelten Praedestination wird streng verfochten: Gott waehtl aus und 'verstockt.'" (*Das christliche Gottesbild*, p. 221.) J. Aberley: "On the subject of election Luther was as Augustinian as was

save all men, but that God absolutely ordained the majority of mankind to damnation and therefore to unbelief. . . . This characterizes what must be rejected as anti-Scriptural Calvinism, as absolute predestination." (Hoenecke, *Ev.-Luth. Dogmatik*, III, p. 34 f.) The following statement by J. B. Champion, who advocates synergism, may also serve to clarify the point under discussion: "The Deterministic Viewpoint in theology is utterly impersonal and unchristian. It is the fixity of Fate, the unalterable *kismet* of the Turk. In High Calvinism there is set forth the God of Will instead of the will of God. In this system God as much wills the reprobation of the damned as the salvation of the elect. He has no more regard for the integrity of personality than for a block of wood or stone. To hold otherwise, as Erasmus and Melancthon did, is to be Semi-Pelagian synergists. But synergism is merely the personal in God and man interacting with each other, which is the soul and process of all personal relations. It respects the self-determinating constitution which God Himself put into human personality. Extreme Calvinism leaves not an atom of foundation for human responsibility except to accept salvation or damnation as God may will, for all has been decided by unconditional predestination of irresistible decree." (*Personality and the Trinity*, p. 39.)

Calvin. Yet the vital difference between them lies here that Luther refers predestination to the secret counsels of the hidden God. . . . I would not be understood as committing myself to an acceptance of the entire theology of Luther. The distinction between the *Deus Revelatus* and the *Deus Absconditus*, as he develops it, seems too dualistic." (*The Lutheran Church Quarterly*, Jan., 1934, pp. 37, 40.)

One finds the myth concerning Luther's predestinarian aberration repeated in circles where you would not look for it. E. H. Klotsche, for instance, summarizes *De Servo Arbitrio* thus: "The bondage of the will is the consequence of the natural depravity of man; hence free will can never be predicated of man; God alone has a free will, and He ordains all things according to the counsel of His will (*absolute predestination*). Though the lost perish through the *unconditioned will* of God, this is right because God wills it. It is a matter of His secret will." (*History of Doctrines*, p. 180.) *The Journal of the Am. Luth. Conference*, November, 1937, p. 38: "With Luther the doctrine of election is the working out of the logic involved in justification by faith. At least in his younger days he went further on this point than Paul, as did also Augustine and Calvin." *The Lutheran Standard*, January 2, 1932, in a review of *The Bondage of the Will*: "Speaking broadly, we have in *De Servo Arbitrio* an example of 'high Augustinianism.'" And even K. Ermisch declares: "We list Wyclif as a teacher of absolute predestination. And so was Luther. There is no doubt about it. Neither his friends nor his foes deny that he believed in absolute predestination. In his earlier days, at any rate, Luther had made statements as strong as any made by Augustine or, later, by Calvin. . . . It is certainly noteworthy that the outgoing 16th century seems to favor synergistic tendencies and apparently emphasizes the self-determination of man. In Holland, Arminius put forth his semi-Pelagian views. Did this time witness a reaction to, and an emancipation from, the strict determinism as advocated by Calvin and Luther?" (*Predestination*, pp. 30, 32, 99.⁵²)

Weighty voices are spreading the myth. The standard encyclopedias speak of it as a fact. Meusel tells the students: "Everybody knows that there are passages in Luther's book *De Servo Arbitrio* which profess determinism." (Sub v. *Determinismus*.) And the *Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia* tells them: "Determinism is the common name for all those theories of the human will which represent it as absolutely determined by motives which lie entirely outside of it, thereby reducing its freedom to a mere

52) The scope of this treatise is indicated by statements like this: "We must not deny that there may be, and in some cases likely was, synergism at the bottom of the *intuitu fidei* doctrine." (P. 101.)

delusion. There is a dogmatic determinism, which, in order to glorify the majesty of God, excludes all other causality from human action but God Himself (Luther, *De Servo Arbitrio*); and there is a philosophical determinism which," etc. The introduction to *De Servo Arbitrio* in the Weimar edition (18, p. 595) says with Koestlin-Kawerau: "Luther is here compelled to go even beyond Paul in Rom. 9 ff."

It is an old story. Melanchthon was one of those that started it. "Melanchthon could not join in Luther's delirious outbursts against Erasmus. Luther was wrong in preaching predestination and writing that inopportune, violent, and dangerous tract on the subject against Erasmus. He was wrong to repudiate free will. . . . Melanchthon restores to the human will and human cooperation their dignity as a means of salvation. As the theologians say, he becomes (or rebecomes) a synergist. . . . He saw men swayed by egotism and evil passions, interpreting the doctrine of justification through faith and salvation by divine grace as their fancy directed. To what end should they struggle, toil to make themselves better, do good? Why not just wait, without curbing the instincts or resisting the promptings of evil? God would intervene and accomplish the good which man is impotent to accomplish himself. Here Melanchthon took fright and reacted." (L. Febvre, *Martin Luther*, p. 296 f.) See page 242 of the current volume of *C. T. M.* Read again also the statement of Koeberle: "Melanchthon and the Philippists were already afraid that as a result of Luther's harsh deterministic statements concerning the bondage of the will ('the condemnation of those who have not deserved it') the practical-ethical side of faith as an inner decision might be lost. So his followers formulated, with the greatest caution, the teaching *de tribus causis efficientibus, concurrentibus in conversione hominis non renati*." (*The Quest for Holiness*, p. 140.)

Does *De Servo Arbitrio* teach predestinarianism, dogmatic determinism? Melanchthon says so. Luthardt says so, and ten thousand others say so. What are the facts in the case? In the first place, does our book teach or deny universal grace? Calvin denies universal grace. The denial of universal grace is the most essential feature of Calvinism, predestinarianism. You cannot be a Calvinist if you believe and teach that God would have all men to be saved. Now examine the quotations from *De Servo Arbitrio* given on pages 493-495 above. Look them up in their context and see how often and how strongly Luther emphasizes the universality of grace. "Luther fairly revels in such texts." "The meaning of John [John 7:12] is this, that by the coming of Christ into the world, by His Gospel, by which grace was offered but not works required, a full opportunity was given to all men of becoming

the sons of God." (P. 198 f. St. L. XVIII, 1815.) Could the man who wrote this believe at the same time that God predestined a portion of mankind to damnation? Dr. Pieper knows of no writing of Luther in which he so often and so forcefully inculcates the truth that *every sinner* should confidently lay hold of, and rely on, the *revealed* God, the God Incarnate, as in *De Servo Arbitrio*, and he quotes this passage: "The God Incarnate [that is, God in Christ and in the means of grace] was sent for this purpose, that He might desire, speak, do, suffer, and *offer unto all all things* that are necessary unto salvation. (P. 187. St. L. XVIII, 1802. — See *Chr. Dogmatik*, II, p. 595.) An article in *Lehre und Wehre*, 17, p. 161 ff., shows that Luther never, not even before 1527 (since which year Luther is supposed to have discarded his predestinarian teaching) taught particular grace. Quotations are given from the years up to 1525, and then the writer says: "Even in his book *De Servo Arbitrio* Luther states, just to give one quotation: 'The righteous God does not deplore that death of His people which He Himself works in them; but He deplores that death which He finds in His people and which He desires to remove from them. For *God Preached* desires this, that, our sin and death being taken away, we might be saved.... He desires that all men should be saved, seeing that He comes unto all by the Word of salvation.'" (P. 172 f. — XVIII, 1795.) The writer adds: "It will be seen that Luther never taught particularism. He never was a Calvinist." Study Calvin's *Institutes*, count the passages in which he denounces the Lutheran teaching on universal grace, and then tell us what you think of a man who puts Luther and Calvin in the same class. Calvin would vehemently protest against admitting Luther into his class of students. Luther, the preacher of universal grace, did not know the a-b-c of Calvinism. No, you cannot make Luther out to be a Calvinist. You will find statements in *De Servo Arbitrio* which at first blush look something like things that Augustine and Calvin wrote, and you may be tempted to speak of "high Augustinianism." But in the light of Luther's strong universal-grace statements you will have to declare with the writer in the *Lutheran Standard* whom we quoted above: "And yet, even those statements in this writing that contain the strongest expression of determinism must be read with the knowledge that Luther at all times clung to the universality of grace and the objective efficacy of the means of grace. Hence statements in Luther's mouth on the sovereign will of God determining all things appear in a different light than would the same statements in the mouth of Calvin." You will have to agree with Rohnert, who states: "Zwar laesst es sich nicht leugnen, dass Luther in seiner Schrift *De Servo Arbitrio* von 1525 Ausdruecke gebraucht, welche fast an einen Determinismus anklingen. Dort sagt er u. a.: Immutabiliter omnia facit et voluntati eius neque

resisti neque eam mutari aut impediri potest. . . ." But after an exhaustive investigation of Luther's teaching he declares: "Nein, der Mann, welcher wie kein zweiter auf der Rechtfertigungslehre stand, der so entschieden die Allgemeinheit der Gnade und die Objektivitaet der Gnadenmittel betonte, der lebenslang die Irrlehren der Schweizer bekaempfte, kann niemals deterministisch gelehrt haben." (*Die Dogm. d. Ev.-Luth. Kirche*, p. 241 f.)

In the second place, what is, according to Calvinism, the ultimate, the real, reason why some are lost? God's eternal decree of reprobation. What is, according to Luther, the real reason? "God desires that all men should be saved, seeing that He comes unto all by the Word of salvation, and it is the fault of the will which does not receive Him, as He saith: 'How often would I have gathered thy children together, . . . and ye would not!' Matt. 23:37." (P. 173.) "The God Incarnate, then, here speaks thus, 'I would, and thou wouldst not.'" (P. 181.) "John is preaching the riches of the kingdom of God offered to the world by the Gospel and signifying at the same time how few there are who receive it: that is, from the enmity of the 'free will' against it, the power of which is nothing else than this: Satan reigning over it and causing it to reject grace." (P. 199.) No, the Luther of *De Servo Arbitrio* cannot qualify as a Calvinistic theologian. He is ignorant of one of the fundamental tenets of Calvinism.

In the third place, a fundamental difference between Calvin's theology and Luther's consists in this, that the doctrine of predestination forms the heart and center of Calvinism, while Luther's theology is dominated by the Gospel of sole, universal, saving grace in Christ Crucified. "Even the Reformed theologian A. Schweitzer admits as much when he says in his *Zentraldogmen* (I, 445): 'In the Zwinglian-Calvinian type of doctrine, predestination is a dogma important as such and *regulating* the other doctrines, yea, as Martyr, Beza, and others say, the chief part of Christian doctrine, while in the Lutheran type of doctrine it is merely a dogma supporting other, more important central doctrines.'" (Bente, *Trigl.*, Hist. Intro., p. 210.) Abraham Kuyper, ranking in our day with Hodge and Warfield, tells us that Calvinism makes the dogma of the twofold predestination, of the sovereign majesty of God, the material principle of theology, "the *cor ecclesiae*," "the very center of our confession." (*The Bibl. Doct. of Election*, p. 6.) Let Kuyper read *De Servo Arbitrio*, and he would soon say: That is not Calvinian doctrine! Luther preached "nothing but Christ Crucified — Christ Crucified who brings all these things along with Himself. There is no other wisdom to be taught among Christians." (P. 80. — XVIII, 723.) Yes, Luther says much about the *hidden God*, as much as Scripture says, but he always hastens on to preach Christ

Crucified. "But let the man acquaint himself with the God Incarnate, or, as Paul saith, with Jesus crucified, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. . . . The God Incarnate, then, here speaks thus: 'I would, and thou wouldst not!' The God Incarnate, I say, was sent for this purpose, that He might desire, speak, do, suffer, and offer unto all all things that are necessary unto salvation. . . . It belongs also to this same God Incarnate to weep, to lament, and to sigh over the perdition of the wicked." (P. 181. — XVIII, 1802.) Luther, in contrast to Calvin and Kuyper, made much, made *everything*, of the *Gospel*. "What is more than half of the Holy Scriptures but mere promises of grace, by which mercy, life, peace, and salvation are extended from God unto men? And what else is the whole word of promise but this: 'I desire not the death of a sinner'? . . . And if there were not these divine promises standing, by which consciences, afflicted with a sense of sin and terrified at the fear of death and Judgment, might be raised up, what place would there be for pardon or for hope? What sinner would not sink in despair?" (P. 168. — XVIII, 1791.) Luther exalts, emphasizes, preaches, first and last the *Gospel of Christ Crucified*. Says T. R. Glover of Cambridge: "I have said it often and do say it still," said Luther, 'he that without danger will know God and will speculate on Him, let him look first into the manger; that is, let him begin below and let him first learn to know the Son of the Virgin Mary. . . . Take good heed, I say, of high-climbing cogitations, to clamber up to heaven without this ladder, namely, the Lord Christ in His humanity.' And again, in a passage that haunts me: 'Dispute not in any case,' said Luther, 'of predestination. But if thou wilt need dispute touching the same, then I truly advise thee to begin first at the wounds of Christ, as there all disputation will cease and have an end therewith.' . . . Half our troubles in theology come from our inverting the natural Christian order—working from God to Jesus instead of from Jesus to God. Lo, I repeat to myself and to you, 'Begin first with the wounds of Christ,' and I am grateful to Luther for saying it." (See *Theol. Monthly*, 9, p. 109 f.) And the rumor has gone out that this man Luther is a masked Calvinist!

In the fourth and last place,—if we had more space at our disposal, we would not stop here,—it is a fact that Luther refuses to answer the *crux theologorum* *Cur alii, alii non?* That fact has been established on pages 562–572 above (August number). It is a fact that Luther declared and repeated it again and again: "Why it is that some are touched by the Law and some are not touched, why some receive the offered grace and some despise it, that is another question." (P. 171.) "Why that majesty does not take away or change this fault of the will in all it becomes us not to inquire." (P. 173.) Only the light of glory will shed light on this

matter. (P.389.) But this is also a fact, a stubborn fact, that Calvin and all of his followers had a ready answer to this question. To them the matter is quite simple: Some are saved because of God's decree of predestination, some are lost because of God's decree of predestination. God elected some to life and others to damnation. The Calvinists cannot understand why Luther should waste so many pages on enforcing silence in this matter. They glory in the idea that they have found a satisfactory solution of the problem. They pity the Lutherans for their refusal to accept the logical solution offered by Calvin. C.Hodge says: "This [synergistic] controversy was for a time authoritatively settled by the Form of Concord. In this document both the doctrine of cooperation and that of absolute predestination were rejected. As this system was illogical and contrary to the clear declarations of Scripture, it did not long maintain its ground." (*Syst. Theol.*, II, p.325.) Hodge declares that a theology which rejects both synergism and Calvinism is illogical. A logical mind would answer the question of the *discretio personarum* either by assuming cooperation or an absolute, twofold predestination. If Hodge or Calvin had censored *De Servo Arbitrio*, they would have stricken out all those sections dealing with the *Cur alii prae aliis?* And when Luther refused to renounce his declaration that it is wicked to give an answer satisfactory to reason, they tell him: You cannot think Calvinistically. And still the ten thousand are shouting: *De Servo Arbitrio* reflects the views of Calvin!

No, it does not! Rohnert is right when he declares: "No! The man who so emphatically asserted the universality of grace and the objectivity of the means of grace [and who found the sole cause of man's perdition in his wickedness, who put Christ into the center of his teaching and refused to explain the *discretio personarum* by assuming a twofold predestination], such a man cannot have taught deterministic doctrine." Rudelbach is right: "So viel ist sonnenklar, dass, wenn auch alle Formeln, in welchen Luther die freie Gnade und die Erwählung preist als frei schwebend ueber alle Kreaturen, zusammengenommen werden, so kommt doch kein Hundert- und kein Tausendteil von dem Calvinischen *absolutum decretum* heraus; denn kein Gran der Irrlehre kann je in ein System eindringen, ohne das Ganze zu schwaengern geschweige denn eine solche Irrlehre wie die von der absoluten Praedestination." (*Reformation, Luthertum und Union*, p. 281 f.)

In spite of this, men have been charging Luther for four hundred years with teaching fatalism, determinism, predestinationism, Calvinism, in *De Servo Arbitrio*. And they think they are justified in doing that. What proofs are being offered? They are of a twofold nature.

The first group of arguments consists of certain statements

in *De Servo Arbitrio* which, they say, unmistakably reveal Luther's deterministic, Calvinistic views or can at least have no other than a deterministic meaning. Long lists of such statements, usually referred to as "hard," "harsh" statements, have been drawn up. An edition of *De Servo Arbitrio*, edited in 1664 by Seb. Schmid, marks those passages which seem to be "hard" and might therefore be misused, and sets them in the proper light. (XVIII, 1670.) Dr. Pieper tells us that "even some of the later Lutheran dogmaticians, well-meaning men," have complained about "the rather hard statements (*duriusculas phrases*)" occurring in our book. (*Chr. Dog.*, II, p. 53.) We do not mean to imply that all of those who stamp certain statements as Calvinistic are not in accord with the spirit of Luther's theology. But our present business is to examine these suspicious statements and see what they really mean.

They fall into three groups. The statements of the first group are of such a nature that a brief study of the context and of parallel passages will at once allay the suspicion that Luther was thinking Calvinian thoughts. There is, for instance, the statement referred to by Koeberle: "Luther's harsh deterministic statements ('the condemnation of those who have not deserved it')." This statement is perhaps considered the most incriminating piece of evidence against Luther. It is produced again and again. Harnack has it: "Luther laesst sich zu der Behauptung fortreissen, dass Gott 'die verdamme, die es nicht verdient haben.' . . . Luther laesst sich hier zu gunsten einer aeussern Konsequenz zu Behauptungen treiben, die ueber die Grenzen der Schriftwahrheit hinausgehen." (*Op. cit.*, p. 188.) Frank has it. (*Theol. der Conc.* — *Form.*, I, p. 128.) Zickendraht has it. Dieckhoff has it. And many others. Now, Luther used those very words: "If you are concerned about this, that it is difficult to defend the mercy and justice of God, seeing that He damns the undeserving." (P. 385. — XVIII, 1962.) God damns those who do not deserve damnation! That sounds bad. But Luther does not believe that those who are damned do not deserve it. He had stated on p. 325: "What is this [Rom. 1:18] but declaring that they all merit wrath and punishment?" He had certainly not forgotten that when he got to page 385. We need not list any additional statements. Why, the very next words describe these "undeserving" as "ungodly." "He damns the undeserving, that is, those who are for that reason *ungodly*." Men should not quote statements of Luther in such a way as to create the impression that Luther really taught that the God of love and of justice consigned innocent, holy, God-fearing men to eternal damnation. What does Luther really say and mean when he speaks of ungodly men being undeserving of damnation?

Please read on page 389 (XVIII, 1966): "By the light of grace it is insolvable how God can damn him who by his own powers can do nothing but sin and become guilty. Both the light of nature and the light of grace here say that the fault is not in miserable man, but in the unjust God; nor can they judge otherwise of that God who crowns the wicked man freely, without any merit, and yet crowns not, but damns another, who is perhaps less, or at least not more, wicked. But the light of glory speaks otherwise." When Luther says that God damns the undeserving, he is giving expression to what *reason* thinks. Reason thinks and says that it is unjust that God should damn men who can do nothing but sin and therefore, as reason judges, do not merit damnation. And reason insists on this the more when it deals with the *discretio personarum*, and seeing that God damns another who is perhaps less, or at least not more, wicked than the other, insists that the former does not merit damnation. You might also study pages 265-269 (XVIII, 1867 ff.). There Madam Reason has the floor and declaims on the subject of God damning the undeserving. We hear her say: "It is absurd that He should condemn him who *cannot avoid the merit of damnation*. And, on account of this absurdity it must be false that 'God hath mercy on whom He will have mercy and whom He will He hardeneth,' Rom. 9:18. He must be brought to order. He must have certain laws prescribed to Him that He damn not any one but him who, *according to our judgment*, deserves to be damned." And read on page 220: "It still remains absurd [*according to the judgment of reason*] that that God who is just and good should exact of free will impossibilities and that, when free will *cannot will good* and of necessity serves sin, that sin should yet be laid to its charge; and that, moreover, when He does not give the Spirit." And all of this our passage itself states. Only read *all* of it! "It is difficult to defend the mercy and justice of God, seeing that He damns the undeserving, that is, those who are for that reason ungodly, because being born in iniquity, they cannot by any means prevent themselves from being ungodly and from remaining so and being damned but are compelled from the necessity of nature to sin and perish, as Paul saith, 'We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others,' Eph. 2:3, when at the same time they were created such by God Himself from a corrupt seed, by means of the sin of Adam."—It is a crime to quote these bare four words and broadcast them as a quotation from Luther, "God damns the undeserving," in order to prove that Luther was a determinist, a fatalist, a Calvinist. Luther does not say that God damns the undeserving.—You say he did say it, that he certainly did write down these twenty-two letters. All right, take your

pound of flesh. You will be getting more than you bargain for. You are making Luther worse than the extremest Calvinists; for the Supralapsarians do not say that God predestinated innocent beings to damnation but that God created some *for sin* and for damnation. You are making Luther utter blasphemies of the blackest kind. (Cp. *Lehre u. Wehre*, 32, p. 196 f.)

Again, people charge Luther with teaching that God is the cause of sin (see Zickendraht, above), that He creates the evil and works sin. In other words, Luther taught what amounts to dualism: Evil springs from a divine being; Luther is no better than a Manichean. Moehler tells the world: "Melanchthon in his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, in the edition of the year 1525, had the hardihood to assert that God wrought all things, evil as well as good; that He was the author of David's adultery. . . . However, in this matter Melanchthon merely spoke after Luther, as the writing of the latter against Erasmus will show. . . . The Council of Trent anathematized the proposition that God works evil as well as good." (*Symbolism*, p. 38.) Now, what did Luther really say? He *did* teach: "God *made* Pharaoh wicked." But read on! "God *made* Pharaoh wicked, that is, from a wicked and corrupt seed, as He saith in the Proverbs of Solomon, 16:4: 'The Lord hath made all things for Himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil,' that is, *not by creating evil in them*, but by forming them out of a corrupt seed and ruling over them. . . . For although God did not make sin, yet He ceases not to form and multiply that nature which, from the Spirit being withdrawn, is defiled by sin. . . . Since, therefore, God moves and does all in all, He necessarily moves and does all in Satan and the wicked man. But He so does all in them as they themselves are and as He finds them; that is, as they are themselves averse and evil, being carried along by that motion of the divine omnipotence, they cannot but do what is averse and evil. Just as it is with a man driving a horse lame on one foot or lame on two feet; he drives him just so as the horse himself is; that is, the horse moves badly. But what can the man do? . . . God cannot do evil, although He thus works the evils by evil men; because, being good Himself, He cannot do evil; but He uses evil instruments, which cannot escape the sway and motion of His omnipotence." (P. 221 ff.—XVIII, 1833 ff.) This is repeated on page 303. And on page 318 Luther declares: "God does not work *in us without us*." But Schaff-Herzog declares that Luther excludes all other causality from human action but God Himself, and Moehler and the rest insist that Luther plainly states that God is the author of sin!—Have these men never heard anything of the *concursum divinum*? Then let them study just these portions of *De Servo Arbitrio* and

Pieper's dogmatics, I, 592 ff., and Hoenecke, II, 135, 253 ff. — Others here charge Luther with something even worse. We read in Aulén: "Es ist nicht leicht, Luther hier richtig zu verstehen. Er ist oft dahin gedeutet worden, als wuerde er bis zu einem *naturalistischen Gottesbegriff* gedraengt. Die goettliche Allmacht scheint eine *unpersoenlich* wirkende, indifferente Kraft zu werden. 'Wenn Gott treibt und wirkt alles in allem, so treibt und wirkt er mit Notwendigkeit auch beim Satan und bei den Gottlosen.'" (Weimar ed., 18, p. 709. Quoted above.) "Luther will nicht sagen, dass Gott direkt das Boese wirkt, und auch nicht, dass die Schuld dieses Boesen auf Gott ruht. Es gibt etwas, dass seinen Grund nicht im goettlichen Willen hat. Es ist erklarlich, dass man im Hinblick auf diese Gedankengaenge von einem naturalistischen Zuge im Gottesbegriff Luthers hat sprechen koennen. Es ist in der Tat verlockend, Luther in dieser Richtung zu deuten. Und doch kann eine solche Deutung nicht gutgeheissen werden." (*Op. cit.*, p. 222.)

Another sample: Luther was a determinist, they say, who taught that whatever man does he does under compulsion; he is a mere machine, driven by God's irresistible will. See how Luthardt above quotes Luther to that effect. He adds the additional quotation: "This, therefore, is also essentially necessary and wholesome for Christians to know: that God foreknows nothing by contingency, but that He foresees, purposes, and does all things according to His immutable, eternal, and infallible will." (P. 38.) And Moehler says: "Luther asserted that man is devoid of freedom, that every [pretended] free action is only apparent, that an irresistible divine necessity rules all things, and that every human act is at bottom only the act of God." With Melancthon, Luther "comprised all things in the circle of an unavoidable necessity and predestination, declared the doctrine that God is the sole agent to be a necessary part of all Christian science," etc. (*Op. cit.*, p. 32.) Are Luthardt and the others quoting Luther correctly? Yes. Luther said what Luthardt quotes. And he said: "All things take place according to the immutable will of God." (P. 42.) No; for they put a wrong sense into the words. Luther does not say that whatever man does he does under compulsion, against his will. (We shall have to restrict ourselves to this one feature of Luther's alleged determinism.) In the first place, Luther distinctly says: "For will, whether divine or human, does what it does, be it good or evil, not by any compulsion but by mere willingness or desire, as it were, totally free." (P. 41. — XVIII, 1692.) We might close the discussion here. But let us perform an *opus supererogationis*. Luther distinctly says: "A man void of the Spirit of God does not evil against his will as by violence, or as if he were taken by the

neck and forced to it, in the same way as a thief or cutthroat is dragged to punishment against his will; but he does it spontaneously and with a desiring willingness." (P. 72. — XVIII, 1717.) Luther a fatalist, a determinist! We could multiply similar quotations, but we refuse to do so. In the second place, Luther *does* speak in this connection of necessity. But note first: "I could wish indeed that we were furnished with some better term for this discussion than the commonly used term *necessity*, which cannot rightly be used, either with reference to the human will or the divine. It is of a signification too harsh and ill-suited for this subject, forcing upon the mind an idea of compulsion and that which is altogether contrary to *will*, whereas the subject which we are discussing does not require such an idea; for will does what it does . . . totally free." Note, secondly, in what sense Luther uses the term necessity. "By *necessity* I do not mean *compulsion* but (as they term it) the necessity of *immutability*, not of *compulsion*; that is, a man void of the Spirit does not evil against his will. . . . And this willingness and desire of doing evil he *cannot* by his own power leave off, restrain, or change." Luther makes it impossible for men to misunderstand him. Man sins *necessarily*? Absolutely. "He is a captive, slave, and servant to the will of Satan." (P. 79.) "He is compulsively bound to the service of sin." (P. 139.) "He must continue of necessity to sin and err until he be amended by the Spirit of God." (P. 225.) "They are compelled *from the necessity of nature* to sin and perish." (P. 385. — XVIII, 1962.) Will this suffice? But how about the Christian? "Man has no free will, but is a captive, slave, and servant *either to the will of God* or to the will of Satan." (P. 79.) The Christian *must* do good? He cannot help himself? Yes, say it. It is a sweet, a glorious necessity. "But again, on the other hand, when God works in us, the *will*, being changed and sweetly breathed on by the Spirit of God, desires and acts, not from *compulsion* but *responsively*, from pure willingness, inclination, and accord, so that it cannot be turned another way by anything contrary nor be compelled or overcome even by the gates of hell." (P. 73. — XVIII, 1718.) The Christians do good by necessity—they are under the powerful sway of their gracious Lord and, as to their new nature, *cannot* resist. They cannot but respond. It requires a great amount of animosity to misunderstand Luther.—And finally, while Luther says that man sins from necessity, he does not state anywhere that this necessity is due to a secret counsel of God's pleasure. (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 17, 183.)

Taking up a second group of hard statements charged against Luther, we find that the quotations are correct and fair, but also, that the matter objected to is the plain teaching of Scripture. For

instance, Koestlin lists among "the declarations of much harsher sound" this, that "in Luther's view no other course is possible to man, left to himself, than that he remains under the dominion of evil or even that he becomes hardened in his evil ways." (Koestlin-Hay, *The Theology of Luther*, I, 486.) But *Scripture* teaches that. Let Luther quote us a few passages. We read on page 364 (and the book is full of similar passages): "They cannot please God.' Again, 'The carnal mind is death.' Again, 'The carnal mind is enmity against God.' And again, 'It is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be,' Rom. 8:5-8. . . . 'What the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,' Rom. 8:3." Harsh indeed but true; hard on proud man.

Again, men characterize the statements concerning the immutable will of God as deterministic. See the quotations offered by Luthardt and Rohnert. Luther replies and quotes *Scripture*: "This asserted truth therefore stands and remains invincible, that all things take place according to the immutable will of God, which they call the necessity of the consequence. Nor is there here any obscurity or ambiguity. In Isaiah He saith: 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,' Is. 46:10." (P. 42.) Will you say that, when God has decided a thing, — and all of his decisions are from eternity, — the thing may, after all, not come to pass? And if you believe that God rules and orders all things, as *Scripture* teaches that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without His will, Matt. 10:29, why do you object to Luther's statement (which is good *Scripture* teaching) "that nothing can take place but according to His will (which reason herself is compelled to confess)"? (P. 390. — XVIII, 1966.) The collect says: "Whose providence ordereth all things" (Seventh Sunday after Trinity). And will you say that God's plan, covering all mankind and all creation, formed in eternity, based on His prescience, wisdom, justice, and love, changes in the course of the century, in the course of the year, in the course of the day, as though God were moved by passing whims or finds that He has made a mistake or cannot carry through His plan in the face of man's opposition? O yes, the *contingentia rerum* in human life stands. Things that have happened thus might have happened otherwise. The immutability of God's will does not mean that men have no freedom of action. But God has taken full account of this, and having ordered all things in His eternal providence, His plan and His will are immutable. "According to Scripture both necessity and contingency must be maintained, necessity [*necessitas immutabilitatis*] from the viewpoint of divine providence, contingency from the human viewpoint." (Pieper, *Chr. Dog.*, I, 598. See also H. Schmid, *Doc. Theol.*, p. 18.) If this be determinism, Luther was misled by Scripture.

Another example: Luther, they say, speaks of a divine judgment of obduration, and that is Calvinism. We say: *Scripture* speaks of this judgment of obduration. Luther quotes Scripture when he declares that "God hardened Pharaoh." He quotes Scripture when he says that "God hath mercy on whom He will have mercy and whom He will He hardeneth," Rom. 9:18! "God suffered the ungodly to be hardened and to remain in unbelief." That is Luther speaking, p. 299. It is Scripture speaking. "That will of Majesty, from purpose, leaves and reprobates some that they might perish." (P. 181.) That is exactly what Rom. 9:18 declares. If that is a harsh statement, settle it with Scripture. Yes, it is a hard truth. Our flesh detests it. Luther knew that "it is this that seems to give the greatest offense to common sense or natural reason, that the God who is set forth as being so full of mercy and goodness should, of His mere will, leave men, harden them, and damn them." (P. 243. — XVIII, 1850.) And still Luther said it because Scripture says it.

Aulén is constrained to admit that Luther got his doctrine from Scripture. "Weiter kann auf ein biblizistisches Motiv hingewiesen werden, ein Motiv, das auf die Schriftautoritaet zurueckgeht. Luther sieht, wie die Schrift von einer Verstockung durch Gott spricht. Gott verstockt Pharaoh usw. Er fuehlt sich gebunden an solche Aussagen." (*Op. cit.*, p. 221.) Aulén does not think much of a theologian who unhesitatingly accepts any statement of Scripture as it stands. That would be *Biblicism*! But we who are "*Biblicists*" gladly take note of his characterization of Luther's theology.

But he is wrong when he adds: "Der Gedanke der doppelten Praedestination wird [von Luther] streng verfochten." The Scripture teaching, Luther's teaching, on this matter is something altogether different from the teaching of Calvin. Rudelbach: "Mit dem Ausdruck, dass Gott durch seine Erwaehlung geschieden habe diejenigen, so selig und verdammt werden ["determined by certain election who should be saved and who should be damned," p. 217. — XVIII, 1829], scheint Luther zwar sich dem falschen Begriff einer *absoluten* Praedestination zu naehern; allein, es ist nur *Schein*; denn den Grund der Verstockung und endlichen Verwerfung der Boesen findet er nicht in Gott, sondern im boesen Willen der Menschen und des Teufels. Und hier tritt eben die *Praeszienz* als das klare, sondernde Prinzip ein, das den Ratschluss Gottes zurueckfuehrt einerseits auf die unverdiente Guete und Barmherzigkeit, andererseits auf die waltende und strafende Gerechtigkeit. Mit der groessten Entschiedenheit scheidet Luther sich so von der Annahme eines *absolutum decretum*, indem er an den hervorragenden Beispielen der Verstockung im Alten und Neuen Testamente, Pharaoh und Judas, zeigt, dass beide sowie alle Gottlosen boeser

Art gewesen, das heisst, dass ihr Wille durch Verführung des Teufels und Hingabe an die Gewalt des Bösen eine von Gott abgewendete Richtung genommen habe." (*Op. cit.*, p. 282.) Stoeckhardt: "Die Verstockung *a parte Dei* erscheint demnach als die göttliche Reaktion gegen das menschliche Verhalten, als die adaequate Strafe der Selbstverstockung. Es ist schriftwidrig und im Grunde eine Blasphemie, wenn man die Verstockung aus einem *decretum absolutum reprobationis* herleitet. Auch an denen, welche schliesslich sich selbst verstocken und zur Strafe dafür von Gott verstockt werden, hat Gott zuvor nichts unversucht und ungetan gelassen, um sie zur Umkehr willig zu machen. . . . Ist es wirklich an dem, dass Paulus im 9. Kapitel die Verstockung, Verwerfung, Verdammnis der Juden in einem absoluten göttlichen Verwerfungsdekret begründet sein lässt, so widerspricht das dem, was er im 10. Kapitel von der Verwerfung Israels, von dem Unglauben der Juden lehrt." (*Roemerbrief*, pp. 438, 504.) "Was wir gemeinlich den Reprobationsbeschluss nennen, ist *nicht* die Kehrseite des Praedestinationsbeschlusses, der Gnadenwahl. Die zwei Seiten sind eben nicht parallel. Gott hat beschlossen, diejenigen, deren Unglauben er voraussah, um ihres Unglaubens willen zu verdammen. Das ist freilich eine *voluntas consequens*." (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 26, p. 308.)

One more point. Those who charge Luther with Calvinian aberrations object most strongly to his teaching on the hidden will of God (*Deus absconditus*), on the unsearchable judgments of God, "who crowns the wicked man freely without any merit and yet crowns not, but damns, another who is perhaps less, or at least not more, wicked" (p. 389), and on page 173: "Why that Majesty does not take away or change this fault of the will in all . . . it becomes us not to inquire." (*Cur alii, alii non?* — See the preceding article.) These are "the declarations of much harsher sound," declares Koestlin, this, for instance: "Why, then, does God not improve also those whom He leaves under Satan's power?" (*Op. cit.*, p. 487.) And Theod. Harnack places Luther's statements concerning the secret and the revealed will among "the hardest sayings" in *De Servo Arbitrio*. "Here Luther went too far. He indulged in untheological speculations." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 190, 193.) But it is Scripture, says Luther, that makes these statements. "It is no invention of mine but a command supported by the Holy Scriptures. Paul (Rom. 9:19) speaks thus: 'Nay, but, O man, who art thou that replest against God?'" (P. 182.) "It is here the hand is to be laid upon the mouth; it is here we are to reverence what lies hidden, to adore the secret counsels of the divine Majesty, Rom. 9:20." (P. 67. See also pp. 173 and 247.) "If His righteousness were such that it was considered to be righteousness according to human judgment, it

would be no longer divine. . . . As He is the one and true God and, moreover, incomprehensible and inaccessible to human reason, it is right, nay, it is necessary, that His righteousness should be incomprehensible, even as Paul exclaims, saying: 'How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!' Rom. 11:33." (P. 386.) "In whatever God hides Himself and will be unknown by us, that is nothing to us; and here that sentiment stands — 'What is above us does not concern us.' . . . Human temerity is to be called off and driven back that it employ not itself in prying into those secrets of Majesty which it is impossible to attain unto, seeing that they dwell in that light which is inaccessible, as Paul witnesseth 1 Tim. 6:16." (Pp. 171, 181. — XVIII, 1794, 1801.) "Christ (Matt. 11:25, 26) gives no other reason why the Gospel is hidden from the wise and revealed unto babes than this: So it pleased the Father!" (P. 194.) Do not stop with Luther and Brenz when you are listing "rather hard statements." (See Pieper, *op. cit.*, II, 53.) You will have to deal also with Scripture!

Harsh statements? Yes, and Luther knew it. "The Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, discourses on these same things, not 'in a corner,' but in public and before the whole world, and that with a free open mouth, nay, in the harshest terms, saying, 'Whom He will He hardeneth,' Rom. 9:18; and again, 'God, willing to show His wrath,' etc., Rom. 9:22. What is more severe, that is, to the flesh, than that word of Christ: 'Many are called but few chosen,' Matt. 22:14?" (P. 65. — XVIII, 1712.)

"He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth," Rom. 9:18. It is not Calvinism to teach that. It is not Calvinism when Stoeckhardt writes: "Wir koennen nicht begreifen, warum von zweien, die beide von Natur gleich suendig und verkehrt sind, Gott des einen sich erbarmt und den andern verstockt, den einen in die selbstverschuldete Verstockung dahingibt, waehrend er einen andern, der sich nicht besser verhaelt, bekehrt, warum Gott bei den einen das Widerstreben bis zum Aeussersten gewaehren laesst, waehrend er es bei andern wegnimmt, ehe es zur Selbstverstockung und Verstockung kommt." (*Op. cit.*, p. 442.) It is not Calvinism to say that what God does He wills to do, to say that the hidden will of God is a will. "Gewiss, Gott hat hierfuer seine weisen und gerechten Motive. . . . Gott laesst eben geschehen, was sie wollen. Indes involviert dieses Geschehenlassen keine Schwaeche in Gott und geschieht nicht ohne den Willen Gottes, ohne den nichts auf Erden geschieht und der immer weise und gerecht ist, ob wir es auch nicht verstehen." (*L. c.*) It is not Calvinism to teach that what God does He wills to do, but it is Calvinism to teach that an absolute decree of reprobation lies back of God's judgment of obduration, that God would not save

some. "Es sei an diesem Ort nochmals betont, dass Paulus von keinem geheimen, absoluten Verwerfungsdekret Gottes weiss. Was er an unserer Stelle (Roem. 9:18) von dem Willen Gottes sagt, und zwar sofern er auf die Verstockung geht, schliesst kein solches Dekret in sich und schliesst den allgemeinen Gnadenwillen Gottes nicht aus. . . . Sie haben nicht gewollt." (L. c.)⁵³

Coming to the third group of hard statements, we hear Dr. Pieper saying: "Luthers *De Servo Arbitrio* dagegen ist starke Speise; Luther redet von den hohen Dingen kuehn, so kuehn, dass der Leser wohl wiederholt stehenbleibt und sich fragt: 'Wie mag Luther das meinen?' Aber wir glauben nicht, dass jemand, in dem wirklich die Lehre des lutherischen Bekenntnisses lebt, den Mut gewinnen kann, Luther falscher Lehre zu zeihen, selbst wenn er *sich nicht getraut, so zu reden, wie Luther redet.*" (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 32, p. 204.) We would not in every instance use Luther's language. Rohnert says: "The phraseology of Luther may not in all cases be perfectly correct, but his words serve a right cause." (*Op. cit.*, p. 242.) The old theologian quoted above makes this apt statement: "Augustine said that the ancient fathers, in the days before the Pelagian controversy, did not always speak guardedly ("sie haetten etwas sorglos geredet"). We say the same with respect to Luther.

53) Is it necessary to discuss in this connection the fact that Luther and Calvin in some instances use the same words and phrases? If so, we shall point out that this does not identify their teaching. *Lehre und Wehre*, 14, p. 125, quotes a writer of Germany: "When Calvin employs in his teaching on justification to some extent the *words* of Luther, and when, on the other hand, Luther, in his teaching on predestination (particularly in *De Servo Arbitrio*), employs to some extent the *words* of Calvin, attention must be called to the old saw *Duo si dicunt idem, non est idem*. The facts of this case are that Calvin subordinates his doctrine of justification to the doctrine of predestination, but Luther subordinates his doctrine of predestination to his doctrine of justification." See Pieper, *Chr. Dog.*, II, p. 51 f.: Though both, Calvin and Luther, speak of a revealed and a secret will of God, they differ absolutely on the matter itself. Luther clings to Scripture in defining the extent of God's gracious will; Calvin follows the light of reason and experience. Luther clings to the universality of grace, proclaimed in Scripture, Calvin insists on the particularity of grace, since not all are actually saved. Luther teaches the efficacy of the means of grace also in the case of those who resist; Calvin teaches that this efficacy is restricted to the elect. Luther speaks of a *seeming* contradiction between the revealed and the secret will of God; Calvin, of a real contradiction; and he cancels the revealed will by means of the secret will. See also *Lehre u. Wehre*, 32, p. 201: Pieper on the same point. An old Lutheran theologian, quoted in *Lehre u. Wehre*, 17, p. 183: "Though Luther employs somewhat hard words in *De Servo Arbitrio*, they are not the same as the rude language of the Zwinglians, who say that God is the cause of sin, that the thief is compelled by God to steal, that God would not have all men to be saved, that reprobation is absolute."—On the use of the term "reprobation" in Lutheran theology, as being the act of the *voluntas consequens, voluntas iustitiae*, see Formula of Concord, Thor. Decl., XI, §§ 40, 57; *Lehre u. Wehre*, 26, 308; 29, 55 (Walther).

The Calvinistic dogma of an absolute reprobation was not yet born." (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 17, 182.) We do not quite know what to make of Luther's statements: "Having determined by certain election who should be saved and who should be damned." (P. 217. — XVIII, 1829.) "As one created unto eternal life or eternal death." (P. 76. — XVIII, 1720.) With regard to a similar expression occurring in Luther's Preface to Romans "—the eternal predestination of God, whence it originally flows whether a person is to believe or not," Dr. Walther, after stating that "Luther does not mean to utter the Calvinian heresy that also unbelief must be traced back to predestination," adds: "We have only stated what Luther's words, judged by his other utterances, cannot mean; but *what* they mean we have not attempted to explain, for the simple reason that the matter has not been, and still is not, perfectly clear to us." (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 27, p. 48.) We may have some idea what Luther meant to express in these words. But now, since the Calvinists have made such phrases as "create unto death," "predestination unto damnation," their trade-mark, we absolutely reject them. And if that had been the situation when Luther wrote, he might not have written as he did. *Er hat etwas sorglos geredet*. His opponent was not Calvin but Erasmus. He kept his eye on the monster free will and let fall an occasional unguarded word.⁵⁴

Are men justified, on the basis of these "hard statements,"⁵⁵ in putting the stigma of Calvinism on Luther? If Luther had here really been thinking and expressing and inculcating determinism, while he, on the other pages, was denying and combating the essential teachings of Calvinism, he could not have been in his right senses when he wrote his classic. Are you willing to assume that? Are you willing to give his book the subtitle "Confusion worse Confounded"? Besides, Luther himself issued an injunction against those who would put a deterministic sense into it. Towards the end of his life he publicly stated: "I hear that everywhere among the nobles and magnates profane sayings are spread concerning

54) It is not fair to quote Lutheran words and pronounce them with the Calvinian accent. A. E. Deitz writes: "One way out of the dilemma is to say, as some theologians do, that it is quite impossible for us to determine why God elects some men to salvation and passes others by." (See page 566, August issue.) Now, Luther uses a phrase equivalent to "pass by." "That will of Majesty *leaves* and reprobates some." (P. 181.) "Nor do they solve the question, Why does God justify one and *leave* another?" (P. 353.) Luther might have said "pass by." But it is not fair to use such phrases, in their Calvinian connotation, in setting forth the Lutheran doctrine.

55) We have not discussed all of them in detail. But those we have discussed are fairly representative of all.—The difficulties in the sphere of philosophy which Luther is compelled to discuss in his refutation of the arguments of Erasmus do not concern us here. We'll leave that to the philosophers. We are here concerned with Luther the theologian.

predestination or divine prescience. For they say: 'If I am predestinated, I shall be saved whether I have done good or evil. If I am not predestinated, I shall be damned without any regard whatever to my works.' Against these ungodly sayings I would gladly argue at length if my ill health would permit." And then, having referred specially to his book *De Servo Arbitrio*, he declares: "After my death many will quote my books and by them try to prove and confirm all manner of errors and follies of their own. Now, among others I have written that all things are absolute and necessary; but at the same time (and very often at other times) I added that we must look upon the revealed God. . . . But they will pass by all these passages and pick out those only concerning the hidden God. You, therefore, who are now hearing me, remember that I have taught that we must not inquire concerning the predestination of the hidden God but acquiesce in that which is revealed by the call and the ministry of the Word. . . . In Him [Christ] therefore is no damnation or wrath but the good will of God the Father." Be sure to read the full statement, cols. 174—185 of the St. Louis Edition, Vol. II, on Gen. 26:9. (Portions translated in *Triglotta*, Hist. Intr., p. 223 ff.) Read, to be fair, *De Servo Arbitrio* as interpreted by its author. And it does not need Luther's interpretation. Let it speak for itself; get the spirit of this panegyric of God's alone-saving, universal grace, and you will declare that it is impossible that the man who stressed the universality of grace and the objectivity of the means of grace as no other man did could have been harboring deterministic thoughts. So says Rohnert, even though he finds that certain statements of Luther sound deterministic. And Rudelbach is not speaking hyperbolically and extravagantly when he declares that, when you add up all those statements which so uncompromisingly stress the sovereignty of grace, you will not get the hundredth nor the thousandth part of the Calvinian *decretum absolutum*; for if but one grain of the predestinarian heresy had been injected, it would have infected the whole. Universal grace and particular grace do not mix. (See further *Theol. Quartalschrift*, 1938, p. 74 ff. *Theol. Quarterly*, 10, p. 222 f. A. Hamel, *Der junge Luther u. Augustinus*, II, p. 111 ff. Dau, *Luther Examined and Reexamined*, chap. 16: "The Fatalist Luther." Pieper, *Chr. Dog.*, II, p. 46 ff.)

There is a second reason why men feel impelled to brand *De Servo Arbitrio* as a predestinarian writing, a reason which has more weight with a certain type of theologians than all of these "hard" sayings. What Luther really taught in his book is of such a nature that these men would denounce him as a Calvinist even if he had not uttered these "hard" sayings.

TH. ENGELDER

(To be concluded)