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ACTS OF GOD.

The acts of God are of two kinds, *internal* acts and *external* acts.

INTERNAL ACTS OF GOD.

The internal acts of God are again of two kinds, *personal* internal acts and *essential* internal acts.

The personal internal acts of God are those acts which terminate within the Godhead and pertain to the divine Person or Persons by whom they are performed as peculiar to such Person or Persons. Thus in Ps. 2, 7 we read: "*The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day HAVE I BEGOTTEN thee.*" Here the act of begetting is predicated of THE LORD, but of the Lord as distinguished from another divine person, whom he addresses by the personal pronoun, *thee*, and names *his Son*, which implies that the Person speaking is the *Father* of the Person spoken to. The act whereby the Father is personally the Father is the act of generation or begetting, an act which is not an act of the Son, nor an act of the Holy Ghost, but a definite act of the first Person in the Trinity. This act is truly an *act*,

We have not exhausted our subject. The study of Church History means more than the acquisition of correct historical concepts, and we have not even said all that should have been said on this restricted view of the topic. But we must try the reader's patience no longer. Perhaps he may be willing to continue the disquisition, and if so, we shall be pleased to hear of him.

A. G.

THE CASE OF DR. KRELL.

We have been asked whether the claim that the Lutheran church had never inflicted religious persecution can be sustained in the face of certain facts connected with Cryptocalvinism in Saxony, and, especially, in view of the imprisonment and execution of Dr. Krell, the last leader of this movement, who was beheaded at Dresden on Oct. 9, 1601. While the subject is not of such importance that we would deem it proper to give it a thorough discussion in all its points and aspects in the QUARTERLY, we readily devote enough space to the matter to substantiate the statement that Krell can *not* with historical truth be held up as an instance of religious persecution by the Lutheran church or a Lutheran government.

Nicolaus Krell had been the Chancellor of the elector of Saxony, Christian I, and had used his influence for a second attempt at introducing Calvinism into the Saxon church, after the endeavors of Peucer and his associates had failed and the Lutheran church had reasserted itself in the adoption of the Formula of Concord. This second cryptocalvinistic movement was, like the first, in itself of deep political significance inasmuch as the peace of Lutheran territories in Germany was secured by the Augsburg treaty of 1555, which recognized the rightful existence of the Lutheran, not of the Zwinglian or Calvinistic church.

But beyond this, Krell had also shaped the foreign policy of the Saxon government in the interest of Calvinistic contemporaries, and had implicated the elector and the country in the disastrous Huguenot wars in France at the expense of the Saxon exchequer, which proved inadequate to the costs incurred. While these events were coming to a crisis, the elector died Sept. 25, 1591, in the midst of his troubles, not quite 31 years of age. His widow, Sophia, a daughter of Johann Georg, elector of Brandenburg, held the chancellor largely responsible for her husband's premature death. This woman subsequently, through ten long years, relentlessly pushed the judicial prosecution of the man who, according to her conviction, had so grievously wronged her young husband, and when she, at last, saw her purpose accomplished, she did not deny herself the satisfaction of personally witnessing the execution of the former chancellor. By many others, also, Krell was looked upon as a scheming enemy of his country, and immediately after the elector's demise, the nobility, through their commissioners, lodged formal complaint against the chancellor and induced Duke Friedrich Wilhelm, the Administrator of the Electorate during the minority of Christian's sons, to institute legal process against Krell, who was put under arrest a month after the elector's death and remained a prisoner to the end of his life. The legal machinery, which was thus promptly set into motion against him, worked very slowly and with many and long intermissions. But nowhere does Krell's legal prosecution bear the stamp of religious persecution. The tribunal before which his case was finally tried was not a Consistory, not a Synod or spiritual Commission. Nor was it even a secular court of Saxony or any other Lutheran country or government. The judges to whom the evidence of the case was submitted and who passed the judgment and pronounced the sentence and imposed the penalty were the Roman catholic Emperor, Rudolph II, and the Roman catholic President and Counselors of the

Chamber of appeals at Prague, who found the accused guilty as charged and condemned him to death. The decree of this court is extant and runs as follows:—

“We, Rudolph the Second, by the Grace of God Roman Emperor, at all times augmenter of the realm in Germany, King of Hungaria, Bohemia, Dalmatia, and Croatia, Archduke of Austria, Markgrave of Moravia, Duke of Luxemburg and in Silesia, Markgrave of Lusatia, etc., do acknowledge that by the Right Honorable Prince, Our dear Uncle Frederick William, Duke of Saxony, Landgrave of Thuringia and Misnia, there has been forwarded to us a

Process of Inquisition, instituted according to the custom prevailing in the land, together with the testimony deposed, of Mag. Abraham Giessbach, the Fiscal thereunto appointed, as Prosecutor, as party of the one part, and Doctor Niclas Krell, the accused under arrest, as party of the other part, with the request that we would judge what may be right in this case. And whereas we have committed such process and evidence to our ordained President and Counselors, who sit in Court of Appeals in our royal castle at Prague, the said our President and Counselors have, after due consideration and mature deliberation thereof adjudicated

That the accused, Niclas Krell, by his manifold evil practices, which he undertook against his duty and employed at home as well as with foreign potentates and their delegates, and with all manner of deceitful enterprises, whereby he offended against the established peace of the realm and disturbance of the general tranquillity and concord of the country, all of which have been explicitly charged and proven in court, has forfeited his body and life and shall, in course of the law, and, as a warning to others, be punished with the sword. Given under seal, at our royal castle at Prague, this 8th day of the month of September, in the one thousand, six hundred and first year

after the birth of Christ our Lord, being the twenty-sixth of our rule in the Roman Empire, the twenty-ninth of our Hungarian, and the twenty-sixth of our Bohemian, dominion.

Christophorus Popl. Baro a Lobcovin
mpr.
Michael Kehl.'¹⁾)

But there is another point of incontrovertible evidence to show that Krell was *not* executed for heresy. Serve de

1) We give also the German text:—

“Wir Rndolph der Ander von Gottes Gnaden Erwölter Römischer Kaiser, zu allen Zeiten Mehrer des Reiches in Germanien, zu Hungern, Behemb, Dalmatien, Croatien, Khunig, Erzherzog zu Oesterreich, Marggraf zu Mehren, Herzog zu Luxemburg und in Schlesien, Marggraf zu Lausitz etc. bekennen, als uns von dem Hochgeborenen Fürsten, unsern lieben Ohme Friedrich Wilhelm, Herzogen zu Sachsen, Landgrafen in Düringen Marggrafen zu Meissen ein

Inquisitions Process, vermöge des Landüblichen Gebrauchs angestellt, sambt geführten Beweis zwischen M. Abraham Giessbachen, als hierzu verordnetem Fiscaln Anklägern eins, und dann den verhafteten Doctor Niclas Krellen Angeklagten Anders Theils zugeschickt worden, und darinnen was Recht sein möchte zu erkennen gebethen, dass wir solchen Process und Beweis unseren verordneten Praesidenten und Rätthen, so über den Appellationen auf unserem Königlichen Schlosse Praga sitzen, zu versprechen übergeben, haben gedachte unser Praesident und Rätthe, nach Ersehung und genugsamer Erwegung derselben zu Recht erkannt: Das Angeklagter Niclas Krell mit seinen vielfältigen Bösen und wieder seine Pflicht fürgenommen auch daheim und mit fremder Herrschaften und denselben abgefertigten gebrauchten Practiciren und allerhandt arglistigen Fürnehmen dadurch er wider den aufgerichteten Landfrieden und Turbirung gemeines Vaterlandesruhe und Einigkeit gehandelt, welches Alles, wie zu Recht ausführlich gemacht und bewiesen, sein Leib und Leben verwirkt und mit dem Schwerdt Anderen zur Abscheu gerechtfertigt werden soll, von Rechtswegen. Mit Urkundt diess Briefes besiegelt, der geben ist, auf unserem königlichen Schlosse Praga, den 8ten Tag des Monats Septembers Nach Christi unseres Herrn Geburt, Im Ein Tausend sechshundert und einen (1601) unserer Reiche des Römischen im Sechszwanzigsten, des hungenrischen im neunundzwanzigsten und des Behmischen auch im Sechszwanzigsten Jahre.

Christophorus Popl. Baro a Lobcovin
mpr.
Michael Kehl.”

might have saved his life by recanting his error, and even the Roman governor of Bythinia, Plinius Secundus, says that he acquitted those who, though they had been Christians, denied or abandoned Christianity,¹⁾ and the Emperor, Traian, approved of his course.²⁾ It is obstinate persistence in a *religio illicita* which brings a violent death on the victim of religious persecution even under heathen and Mohammedan rule,³⁾ and only Papal policy and practice has at times denied pardon to the penitent errorist or the apostate confessor. But Krell died at peace with the church which has been unjustly charged with his death. His last confessor, the Lutheran pastor Mag. Blume, stated that Dr. Krell had in his and Mag. Tob. Rudolf's presence freely and voluntarily declared his willingness to live and die in adherence to the pure doctrine which he had now learned to know, and on the morning of his execution Krell received the holy sacrament from Mag. Blume's hand. This should be conclusive as a demurrer against the charge of religious persecution preferred against the Lutheran church on the strength of the case of Dr. Krell.

A. G.

1) *Dimittendos putavi.* Plin. Sec. Epp. X, 97.

2) *Veniam ex poenitentia impetret.* Ibid.

3) See also Euseb. H. E. IV, 15. (23), V, 1 (2), on the martyrdom of Polycarp and the martyrs at Lugdunum and Vienna.
