THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION (1530)

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Chapter 1

Two striking Lessons

The Reformation was accomplished in the name of a spiritual principle. It had proclaimed for its teacher the Word of God; for salvation, Faith; for king, Jesus Christ; for arms, the Holy Ghost; and had by these very means rejected all worldly elements. Rome had been established by the law of a carnal commandment; the Reformation, by the power of an endless life.

If there is any doctrine that distinguishes Christianity from every other religion, it is its spirituality. A heavenly life brought down to man — such is its work; thus the opposition of the spirit of the Gospel to the spirit of the world, was the great fact which signalized the entrance of Christianity among the nations. But what its Founder had separated, had soon come together again; the Church had fallen into the arms of the world; and by this criminal union it had been reduced to the deplorable condition in which we

find it at the era of the Reformation.

Thus one of the greatest tasks of the sixteenth century was to restore the spiritual element to its rights. The Gospel of the reformers had nothing to do with the world and with politics. While the Roman hierarchy had become a matter of diplomacy and a court intrigue, the Reformation was destined to exercise no other influence over princes and people than that which proceeds from the Gospel of peace.

If the Reformation, having attained a certain point, became untrue to its nature, began to parley and temporize with the world, and ceased thus to follow up the spiritual principle that it had so loudly proclaimed, it was faithless to God and to itself.

Henceforward its decline was at hand.

It is impossible for a society to prosper if it be unfaithful to the principles it lays down. Having abandoned what constituted its life, it can find

naught but death.

It was God’s will that this great truth should be inscribed on the very threshold of the temple He was then raising in the world; and a striking contrast was to make this truth stand gloriously prominent.

One portion of the reform was to seek the alliance of the world, and in this alliance find a destruction full of desolation.

Another portion, looking up to God, was haughtily to reject the arm of the flesh, and by this very act of faith secure a noble victory.

If three centuries have gone astray, it is because they were unable to comprehend so holy and so solemn a lesson.

It was in the beginning of September 1529 that Charles V, the victor by battles or by treaties over the pope and the King of France, landed at Genoa. The shouts of the Spaniards had saluted him as he

quitted the Iberian peninsula; but the dejected eyes, the bended heads, the silent lips of the Italians given over to his hands, alone welcomed him to the foot of the Apennines. Everything led to the belief that Charles would indemnify himself on them for the apparent generosity with which he had treated the pope.

They were deceived. Instead of those barbarous chiefs of the Goths and Huns, — instead of those proud and fierce emperors, who more than once had crossed the Alps and rushed upon Italy, sword in hand and with cries of vengeance, the Italians saw among them a young and graceful prince, with pale features, a delicate frame, and weak voice, of winning manners, having more the air of a courtier than of a warrior, scrupulously performing all the duties of the Romish religion, and leading in his train no terrible cohorts of German barbarians, but a brilliant retinue of Spanish grandees, who condescendingly paraded the pride of their race and the splendor of their nation. This prince, the victor of Europe, spoke only of peace and amnesty; and even the Duke of Ferrara, who of all the Italian

princes had most cause of fear, having at Modena placed the keys of the city in his hands, heard from his friendly lips the most unexpected encouragements.

Whence did this strange conduct proceed? Charles had shown plainly enough, at the time of the captivity of Francis I, that generosity towards his enemies was not his dominant virtue. It was not long before this mystery was explained.

Almost at the same time with Charles there arrived in Italy, by way of Lyons and Genoa, three German burgesses, whose whole equipage consisted of six horses. These were John Ehinger, burgomaster of Memmingen, who carried his head high, scattered money around him, and who was not remarkable for great sobriety; Michael Caden, syndic of Nuremberg, a worthy, pious, and brave man, but detested by the Count of Nassau, the most influential of Charles's ministers; and, lastly, Alexis Frauentraut, secretary to the Margrave of Brandenburg, who, having married a nun, was in very bad odor among the Roman-catholics. Such

were the three men whom the Protestant princes, assembled at Nuremberg, commissioned to bear to the emperor the famous Protest of Spires. They had purposely chosen these deputies from a middle station, under the impression that they would incur less danger. To carry such a message to Charles V was, to say the truth, a task that few persons cared to execute. Accordingly a pension had been secured to the widows of these envoys in case of misfortune.

Charles was on his way from Genoa to Bologna, and staying at Piacenza, when the three Protestant deputies overtook him. These plain Germans presented a singular contrast in the midst of that Spanish pomp and Romish fervor by which the young prince was surrounded. Cardinal Gattinara, the emperor's chancellor, who sincerely desired a reform of the Church, procured them an audience of Charles V for the 22nd of September; but they were recommended to be sparing in their words, for there was nothing the emperor so much disliked as a Protestant sermon.

The deputies were not checked by these intimations and after handing the protest to Charles, Frauentraut began to speak: “It is to the Supreme Judge that each one of us must render an account,” said he, “and not to creatures who turn at every wind. It is better to fall into the most cruel necessity, than to incur the anger of God. Our nation will obey no decrees that are based on any other foundation than the Holy Scriptures.” Such was the proud tone held by these German citizens to the emperor of the west. Charles said not a word — it would have been paying them too much honor; but he charged one of his secretaries to announce an answer at some future time.

There was no hurry to send back these paltry ambassadors. In vain did they renew their solicitations daily. Gattinara treated them with kindness, but Nassau sent them away with bitter words. A workman, the armorer to the court, having to visit Augsburg to purchase arms, begged the Count of Nassau to despatch the Protestant deputies. “You may tell them,” replied the minister of Charles V, “that we will terminate their business

in order that you may have travelling companions." But the armorer having found other company, they were compelled to wait. These envoys endeavored at least to make a good use of their time. "Take this book," said the landgrave to Caden at the very moment of departure, giving him a French work bound in velvet, and richly ornamented, "and deliver it to the emperor," It was a summary of the Christian Faith which the landgrave had received from Francis Lambert, and which had probably been written by that doctor. Caden sought an opportunity of presenting this treatise; and did so one day, as Charles was going publicly to mass. The emperor took the book, and passed it immediately to a Spanish bishop. The Spaniard began to read it, and lighted upon that passage of Scripture in which Christ enjoins his apostles not to exercise lordship. The author took advantage of it to maintain that the minister, charged with spiritual matters, should not interfere with those which are temporal. The papist prelate bit his lips, and Charles, who perceived it, having asked, "Well, what is the matter?" the bishop in confusion had recourse to a falsehood. "This treatise," replied he,

“takes the sword from the christian magistrate, and grants it only to nations that are strangers to the faith.” Immediately there was a great uproar: the Spaniards above all were beside themselves. “The wretches that have endeavored to mislead so young a prince,” said they, “deserve to be hung on the first tree by the wayside!” Charles swore, in fact, that the bearer should suffer the penalty of his audacity.

At length, on the 12th October, Alexander Schweiss, imperial secretary, transmitted the emperor’s reply to the deputies. It said that the minority ought to submit to the decrees passed in diet, and that if the Duke of Saxony and his allies were contumacious, means would not be wanting to compel them. Upon this Ehinger and Caden read aloud the appeal to the emperor drawn up at Spires, while Frauentraut, who had renounced his quality of deputy and assumed that of a notary, took notes of what was passing. When the reading was finished, the deputies advanced towards Schweiss, and presented the appeal. The imperial secretary rejected the document with amazement; the

deputies insisted; Schweiss continued firm. They then laid the appeal on the table. Schweiss was staggered; he took the paper, and carried it to the emperor.

After dinner, just as one of the deputies (Caden) had gone out, a tumult in the hotel announced some catastrophe. It was the imperial secretary who returned duly accompanied. “The emperor is exceedingly irritated against you on account of this appeal,” said he to the Protestants; “and he forbids you, under pain of confiscation and death, to leave your hotel, to write to Germany, or to send any message whatsoever.” Thus Charles put ambassadors under arrest, as he would the officers of his guard, desirous in this manner of showing his contempt, and of frightening the princes.

Caden’s servant slipped in alarm out of the hotel, and ran to his master.

The latter, still considering himself free, wrote a hasty account of the whole business to the senate

of Nuremberg, sent off his letters by express, and returned to share in the arrest of his colleagues. On the 23rd of October, the emperor left Piacenza, carrying the three Germans with him. But on the 30th he released Ehinger and Frauentraut, who, mounting their horses in the middle of the night, rushed at full speed along a route thronged with soldiers and robbers. “As for you,” said Granvelle to Caden, “you will stay under pain of death. The emperor expects that the book you presented to him will be given to the pope.” Perhaps Charles thought it pleasant to show the Roman pontiff this prohibition issued against the ministers of God to mingle in the government of nations. But Caden, profiting by the confusion of the court, secretly procured a horse, and fled to Ferrara, thence to Venice, from which place he returned to Nuremberg. The more Charles appeared irritated against Germany, the greater moderation he showed towards the Italians: heavy pecuniary contributions were all that he required. It was beyond the Alps, in the center of Christendom, by means of these very religious controversies, that he desired to establish his power. He pressed on, and

required only two things: behind him, — peace; with him, — money.

On the 5th of November he entered Bologna. Everything was striking about him: the crowd of nobles, the splendor of the equipages, the haughtiness of the Spanish troops, the four thousand ducats that were scattered by handfuls among the people; but above all, the majesty and magnificence of the young emperor. The two chiefs of Romish Christendom were about to meet. The pope quitted his palace with all his court; and Charles, at the head of an army which would have conquered the whole of Italy in a few days, affecting the humility of a child, fell on his knees, and kissed the pontiff’s feet.

The emperor and the pope resided at Bologna in two adjoining palaces, separated by a single wall, through which a doorway had been opened, of which each had a key; and the young and politic emperor was often seen visiting the old and crafty pontiff, carrying papers in his hand.

Clement obtained Sforza's forgiveness, who appeared before the emperor sick and leaning on a staff. Venice also was forgiven: a million of crowns arranged these two matters. But Charles could not obtain from the pope the pardon of Florence. That illustrious city was sacrificed to the Medici, "considering," it was said, "that it is impossible for Christ's vicar to demand anything that is unjust." The most important affair was the Reformation. Some represented to the emperor that, victor over all his enemies, he should carry matters with a high hand, and constrain the Protestants by force of arms. Charles was more moderate; he preferred weakening the Protestants by the Papists, and then the Papists by the Protestants, and by this means raising his power above them both.

A wiser course was nevertheless proposed in a solemn conference. "The Church is torn in pieces," said Chancellor Gattinara. "You (Charles) are the head of the empire; you (the pope) the head of the Church. It is your duty to provide by common accord against unprecedented wants. Assemble the

pious men of all nations, and let a free council deduce from the Word of God a scheme of doctrine such as may be received by every people.” A thunderbolt falling at Clement’s feet could not have startled him more.

The offspring of an illegitimate union, and having obtained the papacy by means far from honorable, and squandered the treasures of the Church in an unjust war, this pontiff had a thousand personal motives for dreading an assembly of Christendom. “Large congregations,” replied he, “serve only to introduce popular opinions. It is not by the decrees of councils, but with the edge of the sword, that we should decide controversies.” As Gattinara still persisted: “What!” said the pope, angrily interrupting him, “you dare contradict me, and excite your master against me!” Charles rose up; all the assembly preserved profound silence, and the prince resuming his seat, seconded his chancellor’s request. Clement was content to say that he would reflect upon it. He then began to work upon the young emperor in their private conferences, and

Charles promised at last to constrain the heretics by violence, while the pope should summon all other princes to his aid. “To overcome Germany by force, and then erase it from the surface of the earth, is the sole object of the Italians,” they wrote from Venice to the elector. Such was the sinister news which, by spreading alarm among the Protestants, should also have united them. Unfortunately a contrary movement was then taking place. Luther and some of his friends had revised the Marburg articles in a sense exclusively Lutheran, and the ministers of the Elector of Saxony had presented them to the conference at Schwabach. The reformed deputies from Ulm and Strasburg had immediately withdrawn, and the conference was broken up.

But new conferences had erelong become necessary. The express that Caden had forwarded from Piacenza had reached Nuremberg. Every one in Germany understood that the arrest of the princes’ deputies was a declaration of war. The elector was staggered, and ordered his chancellor to consult the theologians of Wittenberg.

“We cannot on our conscience,” replied Luther on the 18th November, “approve of the proposed alliance. We would rather die ten times than see our Gospel cause one drop of blood to be shed.

Our part is to be like lambs of the slaughter. The cross of Christ must be borne. Let your highness be without fear. We shall do more by our prayers than all our enemies by their boastings.

Only let not your hands be stained with the blood of your brethren! If the emperor requires us to be given up to his tribunals, we are ready to appear. You cannot defend our faith: each one should believe at his own risk and peril.” On the 29th November an evangelical congress was opened at Smalkald, and an unexpected event rendered this meeting still more important.

Ehinger, Caden, and Frauentraut, who had escaped from the grasp of Charles V, appeared before them. The landgrave had no further doubts of the success of his plan.

He was deceived. No agreement between contrary doctrines, no alliance between politics and religion — were Luther's two principles, and they still prevailed. It was agreed that those who felt disposed to sign the articles of Schwabach, and those only, should meet at Nuremberg on the 6th of January.

The horizon became hourly more threatening. The papists of Germany wrote one to another these few but significant words: "The Savior is coming." "Alas" exclaimed Luther, "what a pitiless saviour! He will devour them all, as well as us." In effect, two Italian bishops, authorized by Charles V, demanded in the pope's name all the gold and silver from the churches, and a third part of the ecclesiastical revenues: a proceeding which caused an immense sensation. "Let the pope go to the devil," replied a canon of Paderborn, a little too freely. "Yes, yes!" archly replied Luther, "this is your saviour that is coming!" The people already began to talk of frightful omens. It was not only the living who were agitated: a child still in its

mother’s womb had uttered horrible shrieks. “All is accomplished,” said Luther; “the Turk has reached the highest degree of his power, the glory of the papacy is declining, and the world is splitting on every side.” The reformer, dreading lest the end of the world should arrive before he had translated all the Bible, published the prophecies of Daniel separately, — “a work,” said he, “for these latter times.” “Historians tell us,” he added, “that Alexander the Great always placed Homer under his pillow: the prophet Daniel is worthy not only that kings and princes should lay him under their heads, but carry him in their hearts; for he will teach them that the government of nations proceeds from the power of God. We are balanced in the hand of the Lord, as a ship upon the sea, or a cloud in the sky.” Yet the frightful phantom that Philip of Hesse had not ceased to point out to his allies, and whose threatening jaws seemed already opening, suddenly vanished, and they discovered in its place the graceful image of the most amiable of princes.

On the 21st January, Charles had summoned all the states of the empire to Augsburg, and had

endeavored to employ the most conciliatory language.

“Let us put an end to all discord,” he said, “let us renounce our antipathies, let us offer to our Savior the sacrifice of all our errors, let us make it our business to comprehend and weigh with meekness the opinions of others. Let us annihilate all that has been said or done on both sides contrary to right, and let us seek after christian truth. Let us all fight under one and the same leader, Jesus Christ, and let us strive thus to meet in one communion, one church, and one unity.” What language! How was it that this prince, who hitherto had spoken only of the sword, should now speak only of peace? Some may say that the wise Gattinara had a share in it; that the act of convocation was drawn up under the impression of the terror caused by the Turkish invasion; that the emperor already saw with how little eagerness the Roman-catholics of Germany seconded his views; that he wished to intimidate the pope; that this language, so full of graciousness, was but a mask which Charles employed to deceive his enemies;

that he wished to manage religion in true imperial fashion, like Theodosius and Constantine, and seek first to unite both parties by the influence of his wisdom and of his favors, reserving to himself, if kindness should fail, to employ force afterwards. It is possible that each of these motives may have exercised a certain influence on Charles, but the latter appears to us nearer the truth, and more conformable to the character of this prince.

If Charles, however, showed any inclination to mildness, the fanatical Ferdinand was at hand to bring him back. “I will continue negotiating without coming to any conclusion,” wrote he to his brother; “and should I even be reduced to that, do not fear; pretexts will not be wanting to chastise these rebels, and you will find men enough who will be happy to aid you in your revenge.”

Chapter 2

The Coronation

Charles, like Charlemagne in former times, and Napoleon in later days, desired to be crowned by the pope, and had at first thought of visiting Rome for that purpose; but Ferdinand's pressing letters compelled him to choose Bologna. He appointed the 22nd February for receiving the iron crown as king of Lombardy, and resolved to assume the golden crown, as emperor of the Romans, on the 24th of the same month — his birthday and the anniversary of the battle of Pavia, and which he thought was always fortunate to him. The offices of honor that belonged to the electors of the empire were given to strangers; in the coronation of the Emperor of Germany all was Spanish or Italian. The scepter was carried by the Marquis of Montferrat, the sword by the Duke of Urbino, and the golden crown by the Duke of Savoy. One single German prince of little importance, the Count-palatine Philip, was present: he carried the orb. After these lords came the emperor himself

between two cardinals; then the members of his council. All this procession defiled across a magnificent temporary bridge erected between the palace and the church. At the very moment the emperor drew near the church of San Petronio, where the coronation was to take place, the scaffolding cracked behind him and gave way: many of his train were wounded, and the multitude fled in alarm. Charles calmly turned back and smiled, not doubting that his lucky star had saved him.

At length Charles V arrived in front of the throne on which Clement was seated. But before being made emperor, it was necessary that he should be promoted to the sacred orders. The pope presented him with the surplice and the amice to make him a canon of St. Peter’s and of St. John Lateranus, and the canons of these two churches immediately stripped him of his royal ornaments, and robed him with the sacerdotal garments. The pope went to the altar and began mass, the new canon drawing near to wait upon him. After the offertory, the imperial deacon presented the water

to the pontiff; and then kneeling down between two cardinals, he communicated from the pope’s hand. The emperor new returned to his throne, where the princes robed him with the imperial mantle brought from Constantinople, all sparkling with diamonds, and Charles humbly bent the knee before Clement VII.

The pontiff, having anointed him with oil and given him the scepter, presented him with a naked sword, saying: “Make use of it in defense of the Church against the enemies of the faith!” Next taking the golden orb, studded with jewels, which the count-palatine held, he said: “Govern the world with piety and firmness!” Last came the Duke of Savoy, who carried the golden crown enriched with diamonds. The prince bent down, and Clement put the diadem on his head, saying: “Charles, emperor invincible, receive this crown which we place on your head, as a sign to all the earth of the authority that is conferred upon you.” The emperor then kissed the white cross embroidered on the pope’s red slipper, and exclaimed: “I swear to be, with all my powers and resources, the perpetual defender of

the pontifical dignity and of the Church of Rome." The two princes now took their seats under the same canopy, but on thrones of unequal height, the emperor's being half a foot lower than the pontiff's, and the cardinal-deacon proclaimed to the people "The invincible emperor, Defender of the Faith." For the next half-hour nothing was heard but the noise of musketry, trumpets, drums, and fifes, all the bells of the city, and the shouts of the multitude. Thus was proclaimed anew the close union of politics with religion. The mighty emperor, transformed to a Roman deacon and humbly serving mass, like a canon of St. Peter's, had typified and declared the indissoluble union of the Romish Church with the State. This is one of the essential doctrines of Popery, and one of the most striking characteristics that distinguish it from the evangelical and the Christian Church.

Nevertheless, during the whole of the ceremony the pope seemed ill at ease, and sighed as soon as men's eyes ceased to gaze on him. Accordingly, the French ambassador wrote to his court that these four months which the emperor and pope had spent

together at Bologna, would bear fruit of which the King of France would assuredly have no cause to complain. Scarcely had Charles V risen from before the altar of San Petronio, ere he turned his face towards Germany, and appeared on the Alps as the anointed of the Papacy. The letter of convocation, so indulgent and benign, seemed forgotten: all things were made new since the pope's blessings: there was but one thought in the imperial train, the necessity of rigorous measures; and the legate Campeggio ceased not to insinuate irritating words into Charles's ear. "At the first rumor of the storm that threatens them," said Granvelle, "we shall see the Protestants flying on every side, like timid doves upon which the Alpine eagle pounces." Great indeed was the alarm throughout the empire; already even the affrighted people, apprehensive of the greatest disasters, repeated everywhere that Luther and Melancthon were dead. "Alas!" said Melancthon, consumed by sorrow, when he heard these reports, "the rumor is but too true, for I die daily." But Luther, on the contrary, boldly raising the eye of faith towards heaven, exclaimed: "Our enemies triumph, but

erelong to perish.” In truth the councils of the elector displayed an unprecedented boldness. “Let us collect our troops,” said they; “let us march on the Tyrol, and close the passage of the Alps against the emperor.” Philip of Hesse uttered a cry of joy when he heard of this. The sword of Charles had aroused his indolent allies at last.

Immediately fresh couriers from Ferdinand were sent to hasten the arrival of Charles, and all Germany was in expectation.

Before carrying out this gigantic design, the elector desired to consult Luther once more. The emperor in the midst of the electors was only the first among his equals; and independent princes were allowed to resist another prince, even if he were of higher rank than themselves. But Luther, dreading above all things the intervention of the secular arm in church affairs, was led to reply on the 6th March in this extraordinary manner: “Our prince’s subjects are also the emperor’s subjects, and even more so than princes are. To protect by arms the emperor’s subjects against the emperor,

would be as if the burgomaster of Torgau wished to protect by force his citizens against the elector." "What must be done then?" — "Listen," replied Luther. "If the emperor desires to march against us, let no prince undertake our defense. God is faithful: he will not abandon us." All preparations for war were immediately suspended, the landgrave received a polite refusal, and the confederation was dissolved. It was the will of God that his cause should appear before the emperor without league and without soldiers, having faith alone for its shield.

Never perhaps has such boldness been witnessed in feeble and unarmed men; but never, although under an appearance of blindness, was there so much wisdom and understanding.

The question next discussed in the elector's council was, whether he should go to the diet. The majority of the councillors opposed it. "Is it not risking everything," said they, "to go and shut oneself up within the walls of a city with a powerful enemy?" Bruck and the prince-electoral

were of a different opinion. Duty in their eyes was a better councillor than fear.

“What!” said they, “would the emperor insist so much on the presence of the princes at Augsburg only to draw them into a snare? We cannot impute such perfidy to him.” The landgrave, on the contrary, seconded the opinion of the majority. “Remember Piacenza,” said he. “Some unforeseen circumstance may lead the emperor to take all his enemies in one cast of the net.” The chancellor stood firm. “Let the princes only comport themselves with courage,” said he, “and God’s cause is saved.” The decision was in favor of the nobler plan.

This diet was to be a lay council, or at the very least a national convention.

The Protestants foresaw that a few unimportant concessions would be made to them at first, and then that they would be required to sacrifice their faith. It was therefore necessary to settle what were the essential articles of christian truth, in order to

know whether, by what means, and how far they might come to an understanding with their adversaries. The elector accordingly had letters sent on the 14th March to the four principal theologians of Wittenberg, setting them this task before all other business.

Thus, instead of collecting soldiers, this prince drew up articles: they were the best armament.

Luther, Jonas, and Melancthon (Pomeranus remaining at Wittenberg), arrived at Torgau in Easter week, asking leave to deliver their articles in person to Charles the Fifth. “God forbid!” replied the elector, “I also desire to confess my Lord.” John having then confided to Melancthon the definitive arrangement of the confession, and ordered general prayers to be offered up, began his journey on the 3rd April, with one hundred and sixty horsemen, clad in rich scarlet cloaks embroidered with gold.

Every man was aware of the dangers that threatened the elector, and hence many in his escort

marched with downcast eyes and sinking hearts. But Luther, full of faith, revived the courage of his friends, by composing and singing with his fine voice that beautiful hymn, since become so famous: Ein’ feste Burg ist unser Gotte, Our God is a strong tower. Never did soul that knew its own weakness, but which, looking to God, despised every fear, find such noble accents.

With our own strength we nought can do,
Destruction yawns on every side: He fights for us,
our champion true, Elect of God to be our guide.

What is his name? The anointed One, The God of armies he; Of earth and heaven the Lord alone — With him, on field of battle won, Abideth victory.

This hymn was sung during the diet, not only at Augsburg, but in all the churches of Saxony, and its energetic strains were often seen to revive and inspirit the most dejected minds. On Easter-eve the troop reached Coburg, and on the 23rd April the elector resumed his journey; but at the very

moment of departure Luther received an order to remain. “Some one has said, Hold your tongue, you have a harsh voice,’” wrote he to a friend. He submitted, however, without hesitation, setting an example of that passive obedience which he so boldly advocated. The elector feared that Luther’s presence would still further exasperate his adversaries, and drive Charles to extreme measures: the city of Augsburg had also written to him to that effect. But at the same time John was anxious to keep the reformer within reach, that he might be able to consult him. He was therefore left at Coburg, in the castle overlooking the town and the river Itz, in the upper story on the south side. It was from this place he wrote those numerous letters dated from the region of birds; and it was there that for many months he had to maintain with his old enemy of the Wartburg, Satan, a struggle full of darkness and of anguish.

On the 2nd May the elector reached Augsburg; it had been expected that he would stay away, and, to the great astonishment of all, he was the first at the rendezvous. He immediately sent Dolzig,

marshal of the court, to meet the emperor and to compliment him. On the 12th May Philip of Hesse, who had at last resolved on not separating himself from his ally, arrived with an escort on one hundred and ninety horsemen; and almost at the same time the emperor entered Innspruck, in the Tyrol, accompanied by his brother, the queens of Hungary and Bohemia, the ambassadors of France, England, and Portugal, Campeggio the papal legate, and other cardinals, with many princes and nobles of Germany, Spain, and Italy.

How to bring back the heretics to obedience to the Church was the great topic of conversation in this brilliant court among nobles and priests, ladies and soldiers, councillors and ambassadors. They, or Charles at least, were not for making them ascend the scaffold, but they wished to act in such a manner that, untrue to their faith, they should bend the knee to the pope.

Charles stopped at Innspruck to study the situation of Germany, and ensure the success of his schemes. Scarcely was his arrival known ere a

crowd of people high and low, flocked round him on every side, and more than 270,000 crowns, previously raised in Italy, served to make the Germans understand the justice of Rome's cause. "All these heretics," was the cry, "will fall to the ground and crawl to the feet of the pope." Charles did not think so. He was, on the contrary, astonished to see what power the Reformation had gained. He momentarily even entertained the idea of leaving Augsburg alone, and of going straight to Cologne, and there proclaiming his brother King of the Romans. Thus, religious interests would have given way to dynastic interests, at least so ran the report. But Charles the Fifth did not stop at this idea. The question of the Reformation was there before him, increasing hourly in strength, and it could not be eluded.

Two parties divided the imperial court. The one, numerous and active, called upon the emperor to revive simply the edict of Worms, and, without hearing the Protestants, condemn their cause. The legate was at the head of this party. "Do not hesitate," said he to Charles; "confiscate their

property, establish the inquisition, and punish these obstinate heretics with fire and sword." The Spaniards, who strongly seconded these exhortations, gave way to their accustomed debauchery, and many of them were arrested for seduction. This was a sad specimen of the faith they wished to impose on Germany. Rome has always thought lightly of morality.

Gattinara, although sick, had painfully followed in Charles's train to neutralize the influence of the legate. A determined adversary of the Roman policy, he thought that the Protestants might render important services to Christendom. "There is nothing I desire so much," said he, "as to see the Elector of Saxony and his allies persevere courageously in the profession of the Gospel, and call for a free religious council. If they allow themselves to be checked by promises or threats, I hesitate myself, I stagger, and I doubt of the means of salvation." The enlightened and honest members of the Papal Church (and of whom there is always a small number) necessarily sympathize with the Reformation.

Charles V, exposed to these contrary influences, desired to restore Germany to religious unity by his personal intervention: for a moment he thought himself on the eve of success.

Amongst the persons who crowded to Innspruck was the unfortunate Christian, king of Denmark, Charles's brother-in-law. In vain had he proposed to his subjects undertaking a pilgrimage to Rome in expiation of the cruelties of which he was accused: his people had expelled him. Having repaired to Saxony, to his uncle the elector, he had there heard Luther, and had embraced the evangelical doctrines, as far at least as external profession goes. This poor dethroned monarch could not resist the eloquence of the powerful ruler of two worlds, and Christian, won over by Charles the Fifth, publicly placed himself again under the scepter of the Roman hierarchy. All the papal party uttered a shout of triumph. Nothing equals their credulity, and the importance they attach to such valueless accessions. "I cannot describe the emotion with which this news has filled me," wrote

Clement VII to Charles, his hand trembling with joy; “the brightness of your majesty’s virtues begins at last to scatter the darkness: this example will lead to numberless conversions.” Things were in this state when Duke George of Saxony, Duke William of Bavaria, and the Elector Joachim of Brandenburg, the three German princes who were the greatest enemies to the Reformation, hastily arrived at Innspruck.

The tranquillity of the elector, whom they had seen at Augsburg, had alarmed them, for they knew not the source whence John derived his courage: they fancied he was meditating some perfidious design. “It is not without reason,” said they to Charles, “that the Elector John has repaired the first to Augsburg, and that he appeared there with a considerable train: he wishes to seize your person. Act then with energy, and allow us to offer your majesty a guard of six thousand horse.” Conference upon conference immediately took place. The Protestants were affrighted.

“They are holding a diet at Innspruck,” said

Melancthon, “on the best means of having our heads.” But Gattinara prevailed on Charles to preserve his neutrality.

While this agitation prevailed in the Tyrol, the evangelical Christians, instead of mustering in arms, as they were accused, sent up their prayers to heaven, and the Protestant princes were preparing to render an account of their faith.

The Elector of Saxony held the first rank among them. Sincere, upright, and pure from his youth, early disgusted with the brilliant tourneys in which he had at first taken part, John of Saxony had joyfully hailed the day of the Reformation, and the Gospel light had gradually penetrated his serious and reflective mind. His great pleasure was to have the Holy Scriptures read to him during the latter hours of the day. It is true that, having arrived at an advanced age, the pious elector sometimes fell asleep, but he soon awoke with a start, and repeated the last passage aloud. Although moderate and a friend of peace, he yet possessed an energy that was powerfully aroused by the great interests

of the faith. There is no prince in the sixteenth century, and none perhaps since the primitive times of the Church, who has done so much as John of Saxony for the cause of the Gospel. Accordingly it was against him that the first efforts of the Papists were directed.

In order to gain him over, they wished to put in operation very different tactics from those which had been previously employed. At Spires the evangelicals had met with angry looks in every quarter; at Augsburg, on the contrary, the Papists gave them a hearty welcome; they represented the distance that separated the two parties as very trifling, and in their private conversations made use of the mildest language, “seeking thus to entice the credulous Protestants to take the bait,” says an historian. The latter yielded with simplicity to these skillful manoeuvers.

Charles the Fifth was convinced that the simple Germans would not be able to resist his star. “The King of Denmark has been converted,” said his courtiers to him, “why should not the elector

follow his example? Let us draw him into the imperial atmosphere.” John was immediately invited to come and converse familiarly with the emperor at Innspruck, with an assurance that he might reckon on Charles’s particular favor.

The prince-electoral, John Frederick, who on seeing the advances of the Papists had at first exclaimed: “We conduct our affairs with such awkwardness, that it is quite pitiable!” allowed himself to be caught by this stratagem. “The Papist princes,” said he to his father, “exert every means of blackening our characters. Go to Innspruck in order to put a stop to these underhand practices; or if you are unwilling, send me in your place.” This time the prudent elector moderated his son’s precipitancy, and replied to Charles’s ministers, that it was not proper to treat of the affairs of the diet in any other place than that which the emperor had himself appointed, and begged, in consequence, that his majesty would hasten his arrival. This was the first check that Charles met with.

Chapter 3

Augsburg

Meantime Augsburg was filling more and more every day. Princes, bishops, deputies, gentlemen, cavaliers, soldiers in rich uniforms, entered by every gate, and thronged the streets, the public places, inns, churches, and palaces. All that was most magnificent in Germany was there about to be collected. The critical circumstances in which the empire and Christendom were placed, the presence of Charles V and his kindly manners, the love of novelty, of grand shows, and of lively emotions, tore the Germans from their homes. All those who had great interests to discuss, without reckoning a crowd of idlers, flocked from the various provinces of the empire, and hastily made their way towards this illustrious city. In the midst of this crowd the elector and the landgrave were resolved to confess Jesus Christ, and to take advantage of this convocation in order to convert the empire. Scarcely had John arrived when he ordered one of his theologians to preach daily with

open doors in the church of the Dominicans. On Sunday the 8th May, the same was done in the church of St. Catherine; on the 13th, Philip of Hesse opened the gates of the cathedral, and his chaplain Snepff there proclaimed the Word of Salvation; and on the following Sunday (May 15) this prince ordered Cellarius, minister of Augsburg and a follower of Zwingle, to preach in the same temple. Somewhat later the landgrave firmly settled himself in the church of St. Ulric, and the elector in that of St. Catherine. These were the two positions taken up by these illustrious princes. Every day the Gospel was announced in these places to an immense and attentive crowd. 1308 The partisans of Rome were amazed. They expected to see criminals endeavoring to dissemble their faults, and they met with confessors of Christ with uplifted heads and words of power. Desirous of counterbalancing these sermons, the Bishop of Augsburg ordered his suffragan and his chaplain to ascend the pulpit. But the Romish priests understood better how to say mass than to preach the Gospel. “They shout, they bawl,” said some. “They are stupid fellows,” added all their hearers,

shrugging their shoulders. The Romanists, ashamed of their own priests, began to grow angry, and unable to hold their ground by preaching, had recourse to the secular power. “The priests are setting wondrous machines at work to gain Caesar’s mind,” said Melancthon. They succeeded, and Charles made known his displeasure at the hardihood of the princes. The friends of the pope then drew near the Protestants, and whispered into their ears, “that the emperor, victor over the King of France and the Roman pontiff, would appear in Germany to crush all the Gospellers.” The anxious elector demanded the advice of his theologians.

Before the answer was ready, Charles’s orders arrived, brought by two of his most influential ministers, the Counts of Nassau and of Nuenar. A more skillful choice could not have been made. These two nobles, although devoted to Charles, were favorable to the Gospel, which they professed not long after. The elector was therefore fully disposed to listen to their counsel.

On the 24th May, the two counts delivered their

letters to John of Saxony, and declared to him the emperor's exceeding grief that religious controversies should disturb the good understanding which had for so many years united the houses of Saxony and Austria; that he was astonished at seeing the elector oppose an edict (that of Worms) which had been unanimously passed by all the states of the empire; and that the alliances he had made tended to tear asunder the unity of Germany, and might inundate it with blood. They required at last that the elector would immediately put a stop to the evangelical preachings, and added, in a confidential tone, that they trembled at the thought of the immediate and deplorable consequences which would certainly follow the elector's refusal. "This," said they, "is only the expression of our own personal sentiments." It was a diplomatic manoeuver, the emperor having enjoined them to give utterance to a few threats, but solely as if proceeding from themselves. The elector was greatly agitated. "If his majesty forbids the preaching of the Gospel," exclaimed he, "I shall immediately return home." He waited however for the advice of his

theologians.

Luther’s answer was ready first. “The emperor is our master,” said he; “the town and all that is in it belong to him. If your highness should give orders at Torgau for this to be done, and for that to be left undone, the people ought not to resist. I should prefer endeavoring to change his majesty’s decision by humble and respectful solicitation; but if he persists, might makes right; we have but done our duty.” Thus spoke the man who has often been represented as a rebel.

Melancthon and the others were nearly of the same opinion, except that they insisted more on the necessity of representing to the emperor, “that in their sermons nothing controversial was introduced, but they were content simply to teach the doctrine of Christ the Savior. Let us beware, above all,” continued they, “of leaving the city. Let your highness with an intrepid heart confess in presence of his majesty by what wonderful ways you have attained to a right understanding of the truth, and do not allow yourself to be alarmed at

these thunder-claps that fall from the lips of our enemies.” To confess the truth — such was the object to which, according to the Reformers, everything else should be subordinate.

Will the elector yield to this first demand of Charles, and thus begin, even before the emperor’s arrival, that list of sacrifices, the end of which cannot be foreseen?

No one in Augsburg was firmer than John. In vain did the reformers represent that they were in the emperor’s city, and only strangers: the elector shook his head. Melancthon in despair wrote to Luther: “Alas! how untractable is our old man!” Nevertheless he again returned to the charge. Fortunately there was an intrepid man at the elector’s right hand, the chancellor Bruck, who feeling convinced that policy, honor, and above all, duty, bound the friends of the Reformation to resist the menaces of Charles, said to the elector: “The emperor’s demand is but a worthy beginning to bring about the definitive abolition of the Gospel. If we yield at present, they will crush us by and by.

Let us therefore humbly beg his majesty to permit the continuance of the sermons.” Thus, at that time, a statesman stood in the foremost rank of the confessors of Jesus Christ.

This is one of the characteristic features of this great age, and it must not be forgotten, if we would understand its history aright.

On the 31st May, the elector sent his answer in writing to Charles’s ministers. “It is not true,” it bore, “that the edict of Worms was approved of by the six electors. How could the elector, my brother, and myself, by approving it, have opposed the everlasting word of Almighty God?

Accordingly, succeeding diets have declared this edict impossible to be executed. As for the relations of friendship that I have formed, their only aim is to protect me against acts of violence. Let my accusers lay before the eyes of his majesty the alliances they have made; I am ready to produce mine, and the emperor shall decide between us. — Finally, As to the demand to

suspend our preachings, nothing is proclaimed in them but the glorious truth of God, and never was it so necessary to us. We cannot therefore do without it!” This reply must necessarily hasten the arrival of Charles; and it was urgent they should be prepared to receive him. To proclaim their belief, and then be silent, was the whole plan of the protestant campaign. A Confession was therefore necessary. One man, of small stature, frail, timid, and in great alarm, was commissioned to prepare this instrument of war. Philip Melancthon worked at it night and day: he weighed every expression, softened it down, changed it, and then frequently returned to his first idea.

He was wasting away his strength; his friends trembled lest he should die over his task; and Luther enjoined him, as early as the 12th of May, under pain of anathema, to take measures for the preservation of “his little body,” and not “to commit suicide for the love of God.” “God is as usefully served by repose,” added he, “and indeed man never serves him better than by keeping himself tranquil. It is for this reason God willed

that the Sabbath should be so strictly observed." Notwithstanding these solicitations, Melancthon's application augmented, and he set about an exposition of the christian faith, at once mild, moderate, and as little removed as possible from the doctrine of the Latin Church. At Coburg he had already put his hand to the task, and traced out in the first part the doctrines of the faith, according to the articles of Schwabach; and in the second, the abuses of the Church, according to the articles of Torgau, making altogether quite a new work. At Augsburg he gave a more correct and elegant form to this Confession. The Apology, as it was then called, was completed on the 11th May; and the elector sent it to Luther, begging him to mark what ought to be changed. "I have said what I thought most useful," added Melancthon, who feared that his friend would find the Confession too weak; "for Eck ceases not to circulate against us the most diabolical calumnies, and I have endeavored to oppose an antidote to his poisons." Luther replied to the elector on the 15th May: "I have read Master Philip's Apology; I like it well enough, and have no corrections to make.

Besides, that would hardly suit me, for I cannot walk so meekly and so silently. May Christ our Lord grant that this work may produce much and great fruit." Each day, however, the elector's councillors and theologians, in concert with Melancthon, improved the Confession, and endeavored to render it such that the charmed diet should, in its own despite, hear it to the very end. While the struggle was thus preparing at Augsburg, Luther at Coburg, on the summit of the hill, "on his Sinai," as he called it, raised his hands like Moses towards heaven. He was the real general of the spiritual war that was then waging; his letters ceased not to bear to the combatants the directions which they needed, and numerous pamphlets issuing from his stronghold, like discharges of musketry, spread confusion in the enemy's camp.

The place where he had been left was, by its solitude, favorable to study and to meditation. "I shall make a Zion of this Sinai," said he on the 22nd April, "and I shall build here three tabernacles; one to the Psalms, another to the

Prophets, and a third — — -to Esop!” This last word may well startle us. The association belongs neither to the language nor the spirit of the Apostles. It is true that Esop was not to be his principal study: the fables were soon laid aside, and truth alone engaged Luther. “I shall weep, I shall pray, I shall never be silent,” wrote he, “until I know that my cry has been heard in heaven.” Besides, by way of relaxation, he had something better than Esop; he had those domestic joys whose precious treasures the Reformation had opened to the ministers of the Word. It was at this time he wrote that charming letter to his infant son, in which he describes a delightful garden where children dressed in gold are sporting about, picking up apples, pears, cherries, and plums; they sing, dance, and enjoy themselves, and ride pretty little horses, with golden bridles and silver saddles. But the reformer was soon drawn away from these pleasing images. About this time he learnt that his father had gently fallen asleep in the faith which is in Jesus Christ. “Alas!” exclaimed he, shedding tears of filial love, “it is by the sweat of his brow that he made me what I am.” Other trials assailed

him; and to bodily pains were added the phantoms of his imagination. One night in particular he saw three torches pass rapidly before his eyes, and at the same moment heard claps of thunder in his head, which he ascribed to the devil. His servant ran in at the moment he fainted, and after having restored him to animation, read to him the Epistle to the Galatians. Luther, who had fallen asleep, said as he awoke: “Come, and despite of the devil let us sing the Psalm, Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord!” They both sang the hymn. While Luther was thus tormented by these internal noises, he translated the prophet Jeremiah, and yet he often deplored his idleness.

He soon devoted himself to other studies, and poured out the floods of his irony on the mundane practices of courts. He saw Venice, the pope, and the King of France, giving their hands to Charles V to crush the Gospel.

Then, alone in his chamber in the old castle, he burst into irresistible laughter. “Mr. Par-ma-foy (it was thus he designated Francis I), Innomine-

Domini (the pope), and the republic of Venice, pledge their goods and their bodies to the emperor.....Sanctissimum foedus. A most holy alliance truly! This league between these four powers belongs to the chapter Non-credimus. Venice, the pope, and France become imperialists!.....But these are three persons in one substance, filled with unspeakable hatred against the emperor. Mr. Par-ma-foy cannot forget his defeat at Pavia; Mr. In-nomine-Domini is, 1st, an Italian, which is already too much; 2nd, a Florentine, which is worse; 3rd, a bastard — that is to say, a child of the devil; 4th, he will never forget the disgrace of the sack of Rome. As for the Venetians, they are Venetians: that is quite enough; and they have good reason to avenge themselves on the posterity of Maximilian. All this belongs to the chapter Firmiter-credimus. But God will help the pious Charles, who is a sheep among wolves. Amen.” The ex-monk of Erfurth had a surer political foresight than many diplomatists of his age.

Impatient at seeing the diet put off from day to

day, Luther formed his resolution, and ended by convoking it even at Coburg. “We are already in full assembly,” wrote he on the 28th April and the 9th May. “You might here see kings, dukes, and other grandees, deliberating on the affairs of their kingdom, and with indefatigable voice publishing their dogmas and decrees in the air. They dwell not in those caverns which you decorate with the name of palaces: the heavens are their canopy; the leafy trees form a floor of a thousand colors, and their walls are the ends of the earth. They have a horror of all the unmeaning luxury of silk and gold; they ask neither coursers nor armor, and have all the same clothing and the same color. I have not seen or heard their emperor; but if I can understand them, they have determined this year to make a pitiless war upon — — the most excellent fruits of the earth. — Ah! my dear friends,” said he to his colleagues, to whom he was writing, “these are the sophists, the papists, who are assembled before me from all quarters of the world to make me hear their sermons and their cries.” These two letters, dated from the “empire of ravens and crows,” finish in the following mournful strain, which

shows us the reformer descending into himself after this play of his imagination: “Enough of jesting! — jesting which is, however, sometimes necessary to dispel the gloomy thoughts that overwhelm me.” Luther soon returned to real life, and thrilled with joy at beholding the fruits that the Reformation was already bearing, and which were for him a more powerful “apology” than even the Confession of Melancthon. “Is there in the whole world a single country to be compared to your highness’s states,” wrote he to the elector, “and which possesses preachers of so pure a doctrine, or pastors so fitted to bring about the reign of peace? Where do we see, as in Saxony, boys and girls well instructed in the Holy Scriptures and in the Catechism, increasing in wisdom and in stature, praying, believing, talking of God and of Christ better than has been done hitherto by all the universities, convents, and chapters of Christendom?” — “My dear Duke John, says the Lord to you, I commend this paradise to thee, the most beautiful that exists in the world, that thou mayst be its gardener.” And then he added: “Alas! the madness of the papist princes changes this

paradise of God into a dirty slough, and corrupting the youth, daily peoples with real devils their states, their tables, and their palaces." Luther, not content with encouraging his prince, desired also to frighten his adversaries. It was with this intent that he wrote at that time an address to the members of the clergy assembled at Augsburg. A crowd of thoughts, like lansquenets armed cap-a-pie, "rushed in to fatigue and bewilder him;" and in fact there is no want of barbed words in the discourse he addresses to the bishops. "In short," said he to them in conclusion, "we know and you know that we have the Word of God, and that you have it not. O pope! if I live I shall be a pestilence to thee; and if I die, I shall be thy death!" Thus was Luther present at Augsburg, although invisible; and he effected more by his words and by his prayers than Agricola, Brentz, or Melancthon. These were the days of travail for the Gospel truth. It was about to appear in the world with a might, destined to eclipse all that had been done since the time of St. Paul; but Luther only announced and manifested the things that God was effecting: he did not execute them himself. He was, as regards the

events of the Church, what Socrates was to philosophy: “I imitate my mother (she was a midwife),” this philosopher was in the habit of saying; “she does not travail herself, but she aids others.” Luther — and he never ceased repeating it — has created nothing; but he has brought to light the precious seed, hidden for ages in the bosom of the Church. The man of God is not he who seeks to form his age according to his own peculiar ideas, but he who, distinctly perceiving God’s truth, such as it is found in his Word, and as it is hidden in his Church, brings it to his contemporaries with courage and decision.

Never had these qualities been more necessary, for matters were taking an alarming aspect. On the 4th June died Chancellor Gattinara, who was to Charles the Fifth “what Ulpian was to Alexander Severus,” says Melancthon, and with him all the human hopes of the Protestants vanished. “It is God,” Luther had said, “who has raised up for us a Naaman in the court of the King of Syria.” In truth Gattinara alone resisted the pope. When Charles brought to him the objections of Rome:

“Remember,” said the chancellor, “that you are master!” Henceforward everything seemed to take a new direction. The pope required that Charles should be satisfied with being his “lictor,” as Luther says, to carry out his judgments against the heretics. Eck, whose name (according to Melancthon) was no bad imitation of the cry of Luther’s crows, heaped one upon another a multitude of pretended heretical propositions, extracted from the reformer’s writings. They amounted to four hundred and four, and yet he made excuse that, being taken unawares, he was forced to restrict himself to so small a number, and he called loudly for a disputation with the Lutherans. They retorted on these propositions by a number of ironical and biting theses on “wine, Venus, and baths, against John Eck;” and the poor doctor became the general laughing-stock.

But others went to work more skillfully than he. Cochloeus, who became chaplain to Duke George of Saxony in 1527, begged an interview with Melancthon, “for,” added he, “I cannot converse with your married ministers.”

Melancthon, who was looked upon with an evil eye at Augsburg, and who had complained of being more solitary there than Luther in his castle, was touched by this courtesy, and was still more fully penetrated with the idea that things should be ordered in the mildest manner possible.

The Romish priests and laymen made a great uproar, because on fast days meat was usually eaten at the elector's court. Melancthon advised his prince to restrict the liberty of his attendants in this respect. "This disorder," said he, "far from leading the simple-minded to the Gospel, scandalizes them." He added, in his ill-humor: "A fine holiness truly, to make it a matter of conscience to fast, and yet to be night and day given up to wine and folly!" The elector did not yield to Melancthon's advice; it would have been a mark of weakness of which his adversaries would have known how to take advantage.

On the 31st May, the Saxon Confession was at length communicated to the other protestant states, who required that it should be presented in

common in the name of them all. But at the same time they desired to make their reservations with regard to the influence of the state. “We appeal to a council,” said Melancthon; “we will not receive the emperor as our judge; the ecclesiastical constitutions themselves forbid him to pronounce in spiritual matters. Moses declares that it is not the civil magistrate who decides, but the sons of Levi. St. Paul also says (1 Corinthians xiv.), ‘let the others judge,’ which cannot be understood except of an entire christian assembly; and the Savior himself gives us this commandment: ‘Tell it unto the Church.’ We pledge, therefore, our obedience to the emperor in all civil matters; but as for the Word of God, we demand liberty.” All were agreed on this point; but the dissent came from another quarter.

The Lutherans feared to compromise their cause if they went hand in hand with the Zwinglians. “This is Lutheran madness,” replied Bucer: “it will perish of its own weight.” But, far from allowing this madness “to perish,” the reformed augmented the disunion by exaggerated

complaints.

“In Saxony they are beginning to sing Latin hymns again,” said they; “the sacred vestments are resumed, and oblations are called for anew. We would rather be led to slaughter, than be Christians after that fashion.” The afflicted landgrave, says Bucer, was “between the hammer and the anvil;” and his allies caused him more uneasiness than his enemies. He applied to Rhegius, to Brentz, to Melancthon, declaring that it was his most earnest wish to see concord prevail among all the evangelical doctors.

“If these fatal doctrines are not opposed,” replied Melancthon, “there will be rents in the Church that will last to the end of the world. Do not the Zwinglians boast of their full coffers, of having soldiers prepared, and of foreign nations disposed to aid them? Do they not talk of sharing among them the rights and the property of the bishops, and of proclaiming liberty.....Good God! shall we not think of posterity, which, if we do not repress these guilty seditions, will be at once

without throne and without altar?” — “No, no! we are one,” replied this generous prince, who was so much in advance of his age; “we all confess the same Christ, we all profess that we must eat Jesus Christ, by faith, in the eucharist. Let us unite.” All was unavailing. The time in which true catholicity was to replace this sectarian spirit, of which Rome is the most perfect expression, had not yet arrived.

Chapter 4

Agitation in Augsburg

In proportion as the emperor drew near Augsburg, the anxieties of the Protestants continued increasing. The burghers of this imperial city expected to see it become the theater of strange events. Accordingly they said that if the elector, the landgrave, and other friends of the Reformation were not in the midst of them, they would all desert it. “A great destruction threatens us,” was repeated on every side. One of Charles’s haughty expressions above all disquieted the Protestants. “What do these electors want with me?” he had said impatiently; “I shall do what I please!” Thus arbitrary rule was the imperial law destined to prevail in the diet.

To this agitation of men’s minds was added the agitation of the streets, or rather one led to the other. Masons and locksmiths were at work in all the public places and crossings, laboriously fastening barriers and chains to the walls, that

might be closed or stretched at the first cry of alarm. At the same time about eight hundred foot and horse soldiers were seen patrolling the streets, dressed in velvet and silk, whom the magistrates had enrolled in order to receive the emperor with magnificence. Matters were in this state, and it was about the middle of May, when a number of insolent Spanish quartermasters arrived, who, looking with contemptuous eyes on these wretched burghers, entered their houses, conducted themselves with violence, and even rudely tore down the arms of some of the princes. The magistrates having delegated councillors to treat with them, the Spaniards made an impudent reply. “Alas!” said the citizens, “if the servants are so, what will their master be?” The ministers of Charles were grieved at their impertinence, and sent a German quartermaster who employed the forms of German politeness to make them forget this Spanish haughtiness.

That did not last long, and they soon felt more serious alarm. The Council of Augsburg were asked what was the meaning of these chains and

soldiers, and they were ordered, in the emperor's name, to take down the one and disband the other. The magistrates of the city answered in alarm, "For more than ten years past we have intended putting up these chains; and as for the soldiers, our object is simply to pay due honor to his majesty." After many parleys it was agreed to dismiss the troops, and that the imperial commanders should select afresh a thousand men, who should make oath to the emperor, but be paid by the city of Augsburg.

The imperial quartermasters then resumed all their insolence; and no longer giving themselves the trouble of entering the houses and the shops, they tore down the signboards of the Augsburg citizens, and wrote in their place how many men and horses the latter would be required to lodge. Such were the preludes to the work of conciliation that Charles V had announced, and that he was so slow in beginning. Accordingly his delay, attributed by some to the crowds of people who surrounded him with their acclamations; by others to the solicitations of the priests, who opposed his entry into Augsburg until he had imposed silence

on the ministers; and by others, finally, to the lessons the pope had given him in the arts of policy and stratagem, still more estranged the elector and his allies. At last Charles, having quitted Innspruck two days after Gattinara's death, arrived at Munich on the 10th June. His reception was magnificent. About two miles from the town a temporary fortress had been erected, around which a sham-fight took place. Soldiers mounted to the assault, mines were exploded; discharges of artillery, clouds of smoke, the clash of arms, the shouts of the combatants, delighted the eyes and ears of the emperor; within the city, theaters had been raised in the open air, in which the Jewish Esther, the Persian Cambyses, and other pieces not less famous, were represented; and the whole, combined with splendid fireworks, formed the welcome given by the adherents of the pope to him whom they styled their saviour.

Charles was not far distant from Augsburg. As early as the 11th June, every day and every hour, members of the imperial household, carriages, wagons, and baggage entered the city, to the sound

of the clacking whip and of the horn; and the burghers in amazement gazed with dejected eyes on all this insolent train, that fell upon their city like a flight of locusts. At five o'clock in the morning of the 15th June, the elector, the princes, and their councillors, assembled at the townhall, and erelong arrived the imperial commissaries, with orders for them to go out and meet Charles. At three in the afternoon the princes and deputies quitted the city, and, having reached a little bridge across the river Lech, they there halted and waited for the emperor. The eyes of every member of the brilliant assemblage, thus stopping on the smiling banks of an alpine torrent, were directed along the road to Munich. At length, after waiting two or three hours, clouds of dust and a loud noise announced the emperor. Two thousand of the imperial guard marched first; and as soon as Charles had come to within fifty paces of the river, the electors and princes alighted. Their sons, who had advanced beyond the bridge, perceiving the emperor preparing to do the same, ran to him and begged him to remain on horseback; but Charles dismounted without hesitation, and approaching

the princes with an amiable smile, cordially shook hands with them. Albert of Mentz, in his quality of archchancellor of the empire, now welcomed the emperor, and the Countpalatine Frederick replied in behalf of Charles.

While this was passing, three individuals remained apart on a little elevation; these were the Roman legate, proudly seated on a mule, glittering with purple, and accompanied by two other cardinals, the Archbishop of Salzburg and the Bishop of Trent. The Nuncio, beholding all these great personages on the road, raised his hands, and gave them his blessing. Immediately the emperor, the king, and the princes who submitted to the pope, fell on their knees; the Spaniards, Italians, Netherlanders, and Germans in their train, imitated their movements, casting however a side glance on the Protestants, who, in the midst of this humbly prostrate crowd, alone remained standing. Charles did not appear to notice this, but he doubtless understood what it meant. The Elector of Brandenburg then delivered a Latin speech to the legate. He had been selected because he spoke this

language better than the princes of the Church; and accordingly, Charles, when praising his eloquence, slily put in a word about the negligence of the prelates. The emperor now prepared to remount his horse; the Prince-electoral of Saxony, and the young princes of Luneburg, Mecklenburg, Brandenburg, and Anhalt, rushed towards him to aid him in getting into his saddle: one held the bridle, another the stirrup, and all were charmed at the magnificent appearance of their powerful sovereign. The procession began to move on.

First came two companies of lansquenets, commanded by Simon Seitz, a citizen of Augsburg, who had made the campaign of Italy, and was returning home laden with gold. Next advanced the households of the six electors, composed of princes, counts, councillors, gentlemen, and soldiers; the household of the Dukes of Bavaria had slipped into their ranks, and the four hundred and fifty horsemen that composed it marched five abreast, covered with bright cuirasses, and wearing red doublets, while over their heads floated handsome many-colored plumes. Bavaria was

already in this age the main support of Rome in Germany.

Immediately after came the households of the emperor and of his brother, in striking contrast with this warlike show. They were composed of Turkish, Polish, Arabian, and other led horses; then followed a multitude of young pages, clad in yellow or red velvet, with Spanish, Bohemian, and Austrian nobles in robes of silk and velvet; among these the Bohemians had the most martial air, and gracefully rode their superb and prancing coursers. Last the trumpeters, drummers, heralds, grooms, footmen, and the legate’s cross-bearers, announced the approach of the princes.

In fact these powerful lords, whose contentions had so often filled Germany with confusion and war, now advanced riding peacefully side by side. After the princes appeared the electors; and the Elector of Saxony, according to custom, carried the naked and glittering imperial sword immediately before the emperor. Last came the prince, on whom all eyes were fixed. Thirty years of age, of

distinguished port and pleasing features, robed in golden garments that glittered all over with precious stones, wearing a small Spanish hat on the crown of his head, mounted on a beautiful Polish hackney of the most brilliant whiteness, riding beneath a rich canopy of red, white, and green damask borne by six senators of Augsburg, and casting around him looks in which gentleness was mingled with gravity, Charles excited the liveliest enthusiasm, and every one exclaimed that he was the handsomest man in the empire, as well as the mightiest prince in the world.

He had at first desired to place his brother and the legate at his side; but the Elector of Mentz, attended by two hundred guards arrayed in silk, had claimed the emperor’s right hand; and the Elector of Cologne, with a hundred well-armed attendants, had taken his station on the left. King Ferdinand and the legate came next; to whom succeeded the cardinals, ambassadors, and prelates, among whom was remarked the haughty Bishop of Osma, the emperor’s confessor. The imperial cavalry and the troops of Augsburg closed the

procession.

Never, according to the historians, had anything so magnificent been seen in the empire; but they advanced slowly, and it was between eight and nine o’clock in the evening before they reached the gates of Augsburg. Here they met the burgomaster and councillors, who prostrated themselves before Charles, and at the same time the cannon from the ramparts, the bells from all the steeples in full peal, the noise of trumpets and kettledrums, and the joyful acclamations of the people, re-echoed with loud din.

Stadion, bishop of Augsburg, and his clergy robed in white, struck up the Advenisti desirabilis; and six canons, advancing with a magnificent canopy, prepared to conduct the emperor to the cathedral, when Charles’s horse, startled at this unusual sight, suddenly reared, and the emperor had some difficulty in mastering him. At length Charles entered the minster, which was ornamented with garlands and flowers, and suddenly illuminated by a thousand torches.

The emperor went up to the altar, and falling on his knees, raised his hands towards heaven. During the Te Deum, the Protestants observed with anxiety that Charles kept conversing in a low tone with the Archbishop of Mentz; that he bent his ear to the legate who approached to speak to him, and nodded in a friendly manner to Duke George. All this appeared to them of evil omen; but at the moment when the priests sang the Te ergo quoesimus, Charles, breaking off his conversations, suddenly rose, and one of the acolytes running to him with a gold embroidered cushion, the emperor put it aside, and knelt on the bare stones of the church. All the assembly knelt with him; the elector and the landgrave alone remained standing. Duke George astonished at such boldness, cast a threatening glance at his cousin. The Margrave of Brandenburg, carried away by the crowd, had fallen on his knees; but having seen his two allies standing, he hastily rose up again.

The Cardinal-archbishop of Salzburg then proceeded to pronounce the benediction; but

Campeggio, impatient at having as yet taken no part in the ceremony, hastened to the altar, and rudely thrusting the archbishop aside, said sharply to him: “This office belongs to me, and not to you.” The other gave way, the emperor bent down, and the landgrave, with difficulty concealing a smile, hid himself behind a candelabrum. The bells now rang out anew, the procession recommenced its march, and the princes conducted the emperor to the palatinate (the name given to the bishop’s palace), which had been prepared for him. The crowd now dispersed: it was after ten at night.

The hour was come in which the partisans of the papacy flattered themselves with the prospect of rendering the Protestants untrue to their faith. The arrival of the emperor, the procession of the holy sacrament that was preparing, the late hour, — all had been calculated beforehand; “the nocturns of treason were about to begin,” said Spalatin.

A few minutes of general conversation took place in the emperor’s apartments; the princes of

the Romish party were then allowed to retire; but Charles had given a sign to the Elector of Saxony, to the Landgrave of Hesse, to George, margrave of Brandenburg, to the Prince of Anhalt, and to the Duke of Luneburg, to follow him into his private chamber. His brother Ferdinand, who was to serve as interpreter, alone went in with them. Charles thought that so long as the Protestant princes were before the world, they would not yield; but that in a private and friendly interview, he might obtain all he desired of them.

“His majesty requests you to discontinue the sermons,” said Ferdinand.

On hearing these words the two elder princes (the elector and the margrave) turned pale and did not speak: there was a long silence.

At last the landgrave said: “We entreat your majesty to withdraw your request, for our ministers preach only the pure Word of God, as did the ancient doctors of the Church, St. Augustine, St. Hilary, and so many others. Of this your majesty

may easily convince yourself. We cannot deprive ourselves of the food of the Word of God, and deny his Gospel.” Ferdinand, resuming the conversation in French (for it was in this language that he conversed with his brother), informed the emperor of the landgrave’s answer. Nothing was more displeasing to Charles than these citations of Hilary and Augustine; the color mounted to his cheeks, and he was nearly giving way to his anger. “His Majesty,” said Ferdinand in a more positive tone, “cannot desist from his demand.” — “Your conscience,” quickly replied the landgrave, “has no right to command ours.” As Ferdinand still persisted, the margrave, who had been silent until then, could contain himself no longer; and without caring for interpreters, stretched out his neck towards Charles, exclaiming in deep emotion: “Rather than allow the Word of the Lord to be taken from me, rather than deny my God, I would kneel down before your majesty and have my head cut off!” As he uttered these simple and magnanimous words, says a contemporary, the prince accompanied them with a significant gesture, and let his hands fall on his neck like the

headsman’s axe. The excitement of the princes was at its height: had it been necessary, they would all four have instantly walked to the scaffold. Charles was moved by it; surprised and agitated, he hastily cried out in his bad German, making a show of checking the landgrave: “Dear prince, not the head! not the head!” But he had scarcely uttered these few words, when he checked himself.

These were the only words that Charles pronounced before the princes during all the diet. His ignorance of the German language, and sometimes also the etiquette of the Escurial, compelled him to speak only by the mouth of his brother or of the count-palatine. As he was in the habit of consecrating four hours daily to divine worship, the people said: “He talks more with God than with men.” This habitual silence was not favorable to his plans. They required activity and eloquence; but instead of that the Germans saw in the dumb countenance of their youthful emperor, a mere puppet, nodding his head and winking his eyes. Charles sometimes felt very keenly the faults of this position: “To be able to speak German,”

said he, “I would willingly sacrifice any other language, even were it Spanish or French, and more than that, one of my states.” Ferdinand saw that it was useless to insist on the cessation of these meetings; but he had another arrow in his quiver. The next day was the festival of Corpus Christi, and by a custom that had never as yet been infringed, all the princes and deputies present at the diet were expected to take part in the procession. Would the Protestants refuse this act of courtesy at the very opening of a diet to which each one came in a conciliatory spirit? Have they not declared that the body and blood of Christ are really in the Host? Do they not boast of their opposition to Zwingle, and can they stand aloof, without being tainted with heresy?

Now, if they share in the pomp that surrounds “the Lord’s body;” if they mingle with that crowd of clergy, glittering in luxury and swelling with pride, who carry about the God whom they have created; if they are present when the people bow down; will they not irrevocably compromise their faith? The machine is well prepared; its movements

cannot fail; there is no more doubt! The craft of the Italians is about to triumph over the simplicity of these German boors!

Ferdinand therefore resumes, and making a weapon of the very refusal that he had just met with: “Since the emperor,” said he, “cannot obtain from you the suspension of your assemblies, he begs at least that you will accompany him tomorrow, according to custom, in the procession of the Holy Sacrament. Do so, if not from regard to him, at least for the honor of Almighty God.” The princes were still more irritated and alarmed. “Christ,” said they, “did not institute his sacrament to be worshipped.” Charles persevered in his demand, and the Protestants in their refusal. Upon this the emperor declared that he would not accept their excuse, that he would give them time for reflection, and that they must be prepared to reply early on the morrow.

They separated in the greatest agitation. The prince-electoral, who had waited for his father in the first hall along with other lords, sought, at the

moment the princes issued from the emperor's chamber, to read on their countenance what had taken place. Judging from the emotion depicted on their features that the struggle had been severe, he thought that his father was incurring the greatest dangers, and accordingly, grasping him by the hand, dragged him to the staircase of the palace, exclaiming in affright, as if Charles's satellites were already at his heels, "Come, come quickly!" Charles, who had expected no such resistance, was in truth confounded, and the legate endeavored to exasperate him still more. Agitated, filled with anger and vexation, and uttering the most terrible threats, the young emperor paced hastily to and fro the halls of his palace; and unable to wait for the answer until the morrow, he sent in the middle of the night to demand the elector's final decision. "At present we require sleep," replied the latter; "tomorrow we will let you know our determination." As for the landgrave, he could not rest any more than Charles.

Scarcely had he returned home, when he sent his chancellor to the Nuremberg deputies, and had

them awoke to make them acquainted with what had taken place. At the same time Charles's demand was laid before the theologians, and Spalatin, taking the pen, drew up their opinion during the night. "The sacrament," it bore, "was not instituted to be worshipped, as the Jews worshipped the brazen image. We are here to confess the truth, and not for the confirmation of abuses. Let us therefore stay away!" This opinion confirmed the evangelical princes in their determination; and the day of the 16th June began.

The Elector of Saxony, feeling indisposed during the night, commissioned his son to represent him; and at seven o'clock the princes and councillors repaired on horseback to the emperor's palace. The Margrave of Brandenburg was their spokesman. "You know," said he to Charles, "how, at the risk of our lives, my ancestors and myself have supported your august house. But, in the things of God, the commands of God himself oblige me to put aside all commandment of man. We are told that death awaits those who shall persevere in the sound doctrine: I am ready to

suffer it.” He then presented the declaration of the evangelical princes to the emperor. “We will not countenance by our presence,” said they, “these impious human traditions, which are opposed to the Word of God. We declare, on the contrary, without hesitation, and with one accord, that we must expel them from the Church, lest those of its members that are still sound should be infected by this deadly poison.” “If you will not accompany his majesty for the love of God,” said Ferdinand, “do so at least for love of the emperor, and as vassals of the empire. His majesty commands you.” “An act of worship is in question,” replied the princes, “our conscience forbids it.” Then Ferdinand and Charles having conversed together in a low tone: “His majesty desires to see,” said the king, “whether you will obey him or not.” At the same time the emperor and his brother quitted the room; but the princes, instead of following him, as Charles had hoped, returned full of joy to their palaces.

The procession did not begin till noon. Immediately behind the canopy under which the Elector of Mentz carried the host, came the

emperor alone, with a devout air, bearing a taper in his hand, his head bare and shorn like a priest’s, although the noon-day sun darted on him its most ardent rays. By exposing himself to these fatigues, Charles desired to profess aloud his faith in what constitutes the essence of Romancatholicism.

In proportion as the spirit and the life had escaped from the primitive churches, they had striven to replace them by forms, shows, and ceremonies. The essential cause of the Romish worship is found in that decline of charity and faith which catholic Christians of the first ages have often deplored; and the history of Rome is summed up in this expression of St. Paul, Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. But as the power was then beginning to revive in the Church, the form began also to decline. Barely a hundred citizens of Augsburg had joined in the procession of the 16th June. It was no longer the pomp of former times: the christian people had learned anew to love and to believe.

Charles, however, under an air of devotion

concealed a wounded heart. The legate was less able to command himself, and said aloud that this obstinacy of the princes would be the cause of great mischief to the pope. When the procession was over (it had lasted an hour), Charles could no longer master his extreme irritation; and he had scarcely returned to his palace, when he declared that he would give the protestant princes a safe-conduct, and that on the very next day these obstinate and rebellious men should quit Augsburg; the diet would then take such resolutions as were required for the safety of the Church and of the Empire. It was no doubt the legate who had given Charles this idea, which, if executed, would infallibly have led to a religious war. But some of the princes of the Roman party, desirous of preserving peace, succeeded, though not without difficulty, in getting the emperor to withdraw his threatening order.

Chapter 5

The Sermons prohibited

Charles, being defeated on the subject of the procession, resolved to take his revenge on the assemblies, for nothing galled him like these sermons.

The crowd ceased not to fill the vast church of the Franciscans, where a Zwinglian minister of lively and penetrating eloquence was preaching on the Book of Joshua. He placed the kings of Canaan and the children of Israel before them: his congregation heard them speak and saw them act, and every one recognized in the kings of Canaan the emperor and the ultramontane princes, and in the people of God the adherents of the Reformation. In consequence, his hearers quitted the church enthusiastic in their faith, and filled with the desire of seeing the abominations of the idolaters fall to the ground. On the 16th June, the Protestants deliberated on Charles’s demand, and it was rejected by the majority. “It is only a

scarecrow," said they; "the Papists only desire to see if the nail shakes in the wall, and if they can start the hare from the thicket." The next morning (17th June) before breakfast, the princes replied to the emperor. "To forbid our ministers to preach purely the holy Gospel would be rebellion against God, who wills not that his Word be bound.

Poor sinners that we are, we have need of this Divine Word to surmount our troubles. Moreover, his majesty has declared, that in this diet each doctrine should be examined with impartiality. Now, to order us henceforward to suspend the sermons, would be to condemn ours beforehand." Charles immediately convoked the other temporal and spiritual princes, who arrived at mid-day at the palatine palace, and remained sitting until the evening; the discussion was exceedingly animated. "This very morning," said some of the speakers, "the Protestant princes, as they quitted the emperor, had sermons delivered in public." Exasperated at this new affront, Charles with difficulty contained himself. Some of the princes, however, entreated him to accept their mediation, to which he

consented; but the Protestants were immovable. Did these heretics, whom they imagined to reduce so easily, appear in Augsburg only to humiliate Charles? The honor of the chief of the empire must be saved at any cost.

“Let us ourselves renounce our preachers,” said the princes; “the Protestants will not then persist in keeping theirs!” The committee accordingly proposed that the emperor should set aside both Papist and Lutheran preachers, and should nominate a few chaplains, with authority to announce the pure Word of God, without attacking either of the two parties. “They shall be neutral men,” said they to the Protestants; neither Faber nor his partisans shall be admitted.” — “But they will condemn our doctrine.” — “By no means. The preacher shall do nothing but read the text of the Gospels, Epistles, and a general confession of sins.” The evangelical states required time to reflect upon it.

“We must accept it,” said Melancthon; “for if our obstinacy should lead the emperor to refuse

hearing our confession, the evil would be greater still." "We are called to Augsburg," said Agricola, "to give an account of our doctrine, and not to preach." "There is no little disorder in the city," remarked Spalatin. "The sacramentarians and enthusiasts preach here as well as we: we must get out of this confusion." "What do the papists propose?" said other theologians; "to read the Gospels and Epistles without explanation. But is not that a victory?

What! we protest against the interpretations of the Church; and lo! priests who are to read the Word of God without their notes and commentaries, that is to say, transforming themselves into protestant ministers!" "O! admirable wisdom of the courtiers!" exclaimed Melancthon, smiling. To these motives were added the opinions of the lawyers. As the emperor ought to be considered the rightful magistrate of an imperial city, so long as he made it his residence, all jurisdiction in Augsburg really belonged to him.

"Well, then," said the protestant princes, "we

agree to silence our preachers, in the hope that we shall hear nothing offensive to our consciences. If it were otherwise, we should feel ourselves constrained to repel so serious an insult. Besides," added the elector, as he withdrew, "we expect that if at any time we desire to hear one of our chaplains in our own palace, we shall be free to do so." They hastened to the emperor, who desired nothing better than to come to an understanding with the Protestants on this subject, and who ratified everything.

This was Saturday. An imperial herald was immediately sent out, who, parading the streets of the city at seven in the evening to the sound of trumpets, made the following proclamation: — "O yes, O yes! Thus ordains his imperial majesty, our most gracious lord: no one shall be allowed to preach in Augsburg except by his majesty's nomination, under penalty of incurring the displeasure and punishment of his majesty." A thousand different remarks were exchanged in the houses of the citizens of Augsburg. "We are very impatient," said they, "to see the preachers

appointed by the emperor, and who will preach (O! unprecedented wonder!) neither against the evangelical doctrine nor against the doctrine of the pope!" "We must expect," added another, "to behold some Tragelaph or some chimera with the head of a lion, a goat's body, and a dragon's tail." The Spaniards appeared well satisfied with this agreement, for many of them had never heard a single sermon in their lives; it was not the custom in Spain; but Zwingle's friends were filled with indignation and alarm. At length Sunday the 19th of June arrived; every one hastened to the churches, and the people who filled them, with eyes fixed on the priest and with attentive ears, prepared to listen to what these new and strange preachers would say. It was generally believed that their task would be to make an evangelico-papistical discourse, and they were very impatient to hear this marvel. But "The mountain in labor gave birth to a mouse!" The preacher first read the common prayer; he then added the Gospel of the day, finished with a general confession of sins, and dismissed his congregation. People looked at one another in surprise: "Verily," said they, "here is a

preacher that is neither Gospeller nor Papist, but strictly textual.” At last all burst into laughter; “and truly,” adds Brentz, “there was reason enough.” In some churches, however, the chaplains, after reading the Gospel, added a few puerile words, void of Christianity and of consolation, and in no way founded on the holy Scripture. After the so-called sermon, they proceeded to the mass. That in the cathedral was particularly noisy. The emperor was not present, for he was accustomed to sleep until nine or ten o’clock, and a late mass was performed for him; but Ferdinand and many of the princes were present.

The pealing notes of the organ, the resounding voices of the choir, echoed through the minister, and a numerous and motley crowd, rushing in at all the doors, filled the aisles of the temple. One might have said that every nation in the world had agreed to meet in the cathedral of Augsburg. Here were Frenchmen, there Spaniards, Moors in one place, Moriscos in another, on one side Italians; on the other Turks, and even, says Brentz, those who are called Stratiots. This crowd was no bad

representation of the medley of popery.

One priest alone, a fervent Romanist, dared to offer an apology for the mass in the church of the Holy Cross. Charles, wishing to maintain his authority, had him thrown into the Grayfriars' prison, whence they contrived to let him escape. As for the evangelical pastors of Augsburg, almost all left the city to hear the Gospel elsewhere. The protestant princes were anxious to secure for their churches the assistance of such distinguished men. Discouragement and alarm followed close upon this step, and even the firmest were moved. The elector was inconsolable at the privation imposed upon him by the emperor. "Our Lord God," said he, heaving a deep sigh, "has received an order to be silent at the Diet of Augsburg." From that time forward Luther lost the good opinion he had previously entertained of Charles, and foreboded the stormiest future.

"See what will be the end of all this," said he. "The emperor, who has ordered the elector to renounce the assemblies, will afterwards command

him to renounce the doctrine; the diet will enter upon its paroxysm, and nothing will remain for us but to rely upon the arm of the Lord." Then giving way to all his indignation, he added: "The papists, abandoned to devils, are transported with rage; and to live they must drink blood. They wish to give themselves an air of justice, by giving us one of obstinacy. At Augsburg you have not to deal with men, but with the very gates of hell." Melancthon himself saw his hopes vanish. "All, except the emperor," said he, "hate us with the most violent hatred. The danger is great, very great. ....Pray to Christ that he may save us!" But Luther, however full of sorrow he might be, far from being cast down, raised his head and endeavored to reanimate the courage of his brethren. "Be assured and doubt not," wrote he to them, "that you are the confessors of Jesus Christ, and the ambassadors of the Great King." They had need of these thoughts, for their adversaries, elated by this first success, neglected nothing that might destroy the Protestants, and taking another step forward, proposed forcing them to be present at the Romish ceremonies. "The Elector of Saxony," said the legate to Charles,

“ought in virtue of his office of grand-marshal of the empire to carry the sword before you in all the ceremonies of the diet. Order him therefore to perform his duty at the mass of the Holy Ghost, which is to open the sittings.” The emperor did so immediately, and the elector, uneasy at this message, called together his theologians. If he refused, his dignity would be taken away; and if he obeyed, he would trample his faith under foot (thought he), and would do dishonor to the Gospel.

But the Lutheran divines removed the scruples of their prince. “It is for a ceremony of the empire,” said they, “as grand-marshal, and not as a Christian, that you are summoned; the Word of God itself, in the history of Naaman, authorizes you to comply with this invitation.” The friends of Zwingle did not think so; their walk was more decided than that of Wittenberg. “The martyrs allowed themselves to be put to death,” said they, “rather than burn a grain of incense before the idols.” Even some of the Protestants, hearing that the Veni Spiritus was to be sung, said, wagging their heads: “We are very much afraid that the

chariot of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, having been taken away by the papists, the Holy Ghost, despite their mass, will never reach Augsburg." Neither these fears nor these objections were listened to.

On Monday the 20th June, the emperor and his brother, with the electors and princes of the empire, having entered the cathedral, took their seats on the right side of the choir; on the left were placed the legate, the archbishops, and bishops; in the middle were the ambassadors. Without the choir, in a gallery that overlooked it, were ranged the landgrave and other Protestants, who preferred being at a distance from the host. The elector, bearing the sword, remained upright near the altar at the moment of the adoration. The acolytes, having closed the gates of the choir immediately after, Vincent Pompinello, archbishop of Salerno, preached the sermon. He commenced with the Turks and their ravages, and then, by an unexpected turn, began suddenly to exalt the Turks even above the Germans. "The Turks," said he, "have but one prince whom they obey; but the

Germans have many who obey no one. The Turks live under one sole law, one only custom, one only religion; but among the Germans there are some who are always wishing for new laws, new customs, new religions. They tear the seamless coat of Christ; they abolish by devilish inspirations the sacred doctrines established by unanimous consent, and substitute for them, alas! buffoonery and obscenity. Magnanimous emperor, powerful king!" said he, turning towards Charles and his brother, "sharpen your swords, wield them against these perfidious disturbers of religion, and thus bring them back into the fold of the Church. There is no peace for Germany so long as the sword shall not have entirely eradicated this heresy. O St. Peter and St. Paul! I call upon you; upon you, St. Peter, in order that you may open the stony hearts of these princes with your keys; and upon you, St. Paul, that if they show themselves too rebellious, you may come with your sword, and cut in pieces this unexampled hardness!" This discourse, intermingled with panegyrics of Aristides, Themistocles, Scipio, Cato, the Curtii and Scaevola, being concluded, the emperor and

princes arose to make their offerings. Pappenheim returned the sword to the elector, who had intrusted it to him; and the grand-marshal, as well as the margrave, went to the offertory, but with a smile, as it is reported. This fact is but little in harmony with the character of these princes.

At length they quitted the cathedral. No one, except the friends of the nuncio, was pleased with the sermon. Even the Archbishop of Mentz was offended at it. “What does he mean,” exclaimed he, “by calling on St. Paul to cut the Germans with his sword?” Nothing but a few inarticulate sounds had been heard in the nave; the Protestants eagerly questioned those of their party who had been present in the choir. “The more these priests inflame people’s minds, and the more they urge their princes to bloody wars,” said Brentz at that time, “the more we must hinder ours from giving way to violence.” Thus spoke a minister of the Gospel of peace after the sermon of the priests of Rome.

After the mass of the Holy Ghost, the emperor

entered his carriage, and having reached the town-hall, where the sittings of the diet were to take place, took his seat on a throne covered with cloth of gold, while his brother placed himself on a bench in front of him; then all around them were ranged the electors, forty-two sovereign princes, the deputies from the cities, the bishops, and ambassadors, forming, indeed, that illustrious assembly which Luther, six weeks before, had imagined he saw sitting in the air. The count-palatine read the imperial proposition. It referred to two points; the war against the Turks, and the religious controversy. “Sacrificing my private injuries and interests to the common good,” said the emperor, “I have quitted my hereditary kingdoms, to pass, not without great danger, into Italy, and from thence to Germany. I have heard with sorrow of the divisions that have broken out here, and which, striking not only at the imperial majesty, but still more at the commandments of Almighty God, must engender pillage, conflagration, war, and death.” At one o’clock the emperor, accompanied by all the princes, returned to his palace.

On the same day the elector gathered around him all his co-religionists, whom the emperor's speech had greatly excited, and exhorted them not to be turned aside by any threats from a cause which was that of God himself. All seemed penetrated with this expression of Scripture: "Speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us." The elector had a heavy burden to bear. Not only had he to walk at the head of the princes, but he had further to defend himself against the enervating influence of Melancthon. Throughout the whole of the diet this prince offers to our notice no mere abstraction of the state, but the noblest individuality. Early on Tuesday morning, feeling the necessity of that invisible strength which, according to a beautiful figure in the Holy Scriptures, causes us to ride upon the high places of the earth; and seeing, as was usual, his domestics, his councillors, and his son assembled around him, John begged them affectionately to withdraw. He knew that it was only be kneeling humbly before God that he could stand with courage before Charles. Alone in his chamber, he

opened and read the Psalms; then falling on his knees, he offered up the most fervent prayer to God; next, wishing to confirm himself in the immovable fidelity that he had just vowed to the Lord, he went to his desk, and there committed his resolutions to writing. Dolzig and Melancthon afterwards saw these lines, and were filled with admiration as they read them. Being thus tempered anew in heavenly thoughts, John took up the imperial proposition, and meditated over it; then, having called in his son and the chancellor Bruck, and Melancthon shortly after, they all agreed that the deliberations of the diet ought to commence with the affairs of religion; and his allies, who were consulted, concurred in this advice.

The legate had conceived a plan diametrically opposed to this. He desired to stifle the religious question, and for this end required that the princes should examine it in a secret committee. The evangelical Christians entertained no doubt that if the truth was proclaimed in the great council of the nation, it would gain the victory; but the more they desired a public confession, the more it was

dreaded by the pope’s friends. The latter wished to take their adversaries by silence, without confession, without discussion, as a city is taken by famine without fighting and without a storm: to gag the Reformation, and thus reduce it to powerlessness and death, were their tactics. To have silenced the preachers was not enough: the princes must be silenced also. They wished to shut up the Reformation as in a dungeon, and there leave it to die, thinking they would thus get rid of it more surely than by leading it to the scaffold.

This plan was well conceived: it now remained to be put in execution, and for that purpose it was necessary to persuade the Protestants that such a method would be the surest for them. The person selected for this intrigue was Alphonso Valdez, secretary to Charles V, a Spanish gentleman, a worthy individual, and who afterwards showed a leaning towards the Reformation. Policy often makes use of good men for the most perfidious designs. It was decided that Valdez should address the most timid of the Protestants — Melancthon.

On the 16th or 17th of June, immediately after the arrival of Charles, Valdez begged Melancthon to call on him.

“The Spaniards,” said he, “imagine that the Lutherans teach impious doctrines on the Holy Trinity, on Jesus Christ, on the blessed Mother of God. Accordingly, they think they do a more meritorious work in killing a Lutheran than in slaying a Turk.” “I know it,” replied Melancthon, “and I have not yet been able to succeed in making your fellow-countrymen abandon that idea.” “But what, pray, do the Lutherans desire?” “The Lutheran question is not so complicated and so unseemly as his majesty fancies. We do not attack the Catholic Church, as is commonly believed; and the whole controversy is reducible to these three points. The two kinds in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, the marriage of pastors, and the abolition of private masses. If we could agree on these articles, it would be easy to come to an understanding on the others.” “Well, I will report this to his majesty.” Charles V was charmed at this communication. “Go,” said he to Valdez, “and

impart these things to the legate, and ask Master Philip to transmit to you in writing a short exposition of what they believe and what they deny." Valdez hastened to Campeggio. "What you relate pleases me tolerably," said the latter. "As for the two kinds in the sacrament, and the marriage of priests, there will be means of accommodation; but we cannot consent to the abolition of private masses." This would have been in fact cutting off one of the greatest revenues of the Church.

On Saturday, June 18th, Valdez saw Melancthon again. "The emperor begs of you a moderate and concise exposition," said he, "and he is persuaded that it will be more advantageous to treat of this matter briefly and privately, avoiding all public hearing and all prolix discussion, which would only engender anger and division." — "Well," said Melancthon, "I will reflect upon it." Melancthon was almost won over: a secret conference agreed better with his disposition. Had he not often repeated that peace should be sought after above all things? Thus everything induced the legate to hope that a public struggle would be

avoided, and that he might be content, as it were, to send mutes against the Reform, and strangle it in a dungeon. Fortunately the chancellor and the Elector Frederick did not think fit to entertain the propositions with which Charles had commissioned the worthy Valdez. The resolution of these lay members of the Church saved it from the false step its doctors were about to take; and the wiles of the Italians failed against evangelical firmness. Melancthon was only permitted to lay the Confession before the Spaniard, that he might look into it, and in despite of the moderation employed in it, Valdez exclaimed: “These words are too bitter, and your adversaries will never put up with them!” Thus finished the legate’s manoeuvre.

Chapter 6

The Elector’s Zeal

Charles, compelled to resign himself to a public sitting, ordered on Wednesday, 22nd June, that the elector and his allies should have their Confession ready for the ensuing Friday. The Roman party were also invited to present a confession of faith; but they excused themselves, saying that they were satisfied with the Edict of Worms.

The emperor’s order took the Protestants by surprise, for the negotiations between Valdez and Melancthon had prevented the latter from putting the finishing stroke to the Confession. It was not copied out fair; and the conclusions, as well as the exordium, were not definitively drawn up. In consequence of this, the Protestants begged the Archbishop of Mentz to obtain for them the delay of a day; but their petition was refused. They therefore labored incessantly, even during the night, to correct and transcribe the Confession.

On Thursday, 23rd June, all the protestant princes, deputies, councillors, and theologians met early at the elector's. The Confession was read in German, and all gave their adhesion to it, except the landgrave and the Strasburgers, who required a change in the article on the sacrament. The princes rejected their demand.

The Elector of Saxony was already preparing to sign it, when Melancthon stopped him: he feared giving too political a coloring to this religious business. In his idea it was the Church that should appear, and not the State. "It is for the theologians and ministers to propose these things," said he; "let us reserve for other matters the authority of the mighty ones of the earth." — "God forbid that you should exclude me," replied the elector; "I am resolved to do what is right without troubling myself about my crown. I desire to confess the Lord. My electoral hat and my ermine are not so precious to me as the cross of Jesus Christ. I shall leave on earth these marks of my greatness; but my Master's cross will accompany me to heaven." How resist such christian language! Melancthon

gave way.

The elector then approached, signed, and handed the pen to the landgrave, who at first made some objections; however the enemy was at the door; was this a time for disunion? At last he signed, but with a declaration that the doctrine of the Eucharist did not please him. The margrave and Luneburg having joyfully subscribed their names, Anhalt took the pen in his turn, and said, “I have tilted more than once to please others; now, if the honor of my Lord Jesus Christ requires it, I am ready to saddle my horse, to leave my goods and life behind, and rush into eternity, towards an everlasting crown.” Then, having signed, this youthful prince said, turning to the theologians, “I would rather renounce my subjects and my states, rather quit the country of my fathers staff in hand, rather gain my bread by cleaning the shoes of the foreigner, than receive any other doctrine than that which is contained in this Confession.” Nuremberg and Reutlingen alone of the cities subscribed their signatures; and all resolved on demanding of the emperor that the Confession should be read

publicly. The courage of the princes surprised every one. Rome had crushed the members of the Church, and had reduced them to a herd of slaves, whom she dragged silent and humiliated behind her: the Reformation enfranchised them, and with their rights it restored to them their duties. The priest no longer enjoyed the monopoly of religion; each head of a family again became priest in his own house, and all the members of the Church of God were thenceforward called to the rank of confessors. The laymen are nothing, or almost nothing, in the sect of Rome, but they are the essential portion of the Church of Jesus Christ. Where ever the priestly spirit is established, the Church dies; where ever laymen, as these Augsburg princes, understand their duty and their immediate dependence on Christ, the Church lives.

The evangelical theologians were moved by the devotedness of the princes.

“When I consider their firmness in the confession of the Gospel,” said Brentz, “the color mounts to my cheeks. What a disgrace that we,

who are only beggars beside them, are so afraid of confessing Christ!” Brentz was then thinking of certain towns, particularly of Halle, of which he was pastor, but no doubt also of the theologians.

The latter, in truth, without being deficient in devotedness, were sometimes wanting in courage. Melancthon was in constant agitation; he ran to and fro, slipping in everywhere (says Cochloeus in his Philippics), visiting not only the houses and mansions of private persons, but also insinuating himself into the palaces of cardinals and princes, nay, even into the court of the emperor; and, whether at table or in conversation, he spared no means of persuading every person, that nothing was more easy than to restore peace between the two parties. One day he was with the Archbishop of Salzburg, who in a long discourse gave an eloquent description of the troubles produced, as he said, by the Reformation, and ended with a peroration “written in blood,” as Melancthon characterized it. Philip in agony had ventured during the conversation to slip in the word conscience. “Conscience!” hastily interrupted the

archbishop, “Conscience! — What does that mean? I tell you plainly that the emperor will not allow confusion to be thus brought upon the empire.” — “Had I been in Melancthon’s place,” said Luther, “I should have immediately replied to the archbishop: And our emperor, ours, will not tolerate such blasphemy.” — “Alas,” said Melancthon, “they are all as full of assurance as if there was no God.” Another day Melancthon was with Campeggio, and conjured him to persevere in the moderate sentiments he appeared to entertain. And at another time, as it would seem, he was with the emperor himself. “Alas!” said the alarmed Zwinglians, “after having qualified one-half of the Gospel, Melancthon is sacrificing the other.” The wiles of the Ultramontanists were added to Philip’s dejection, in order to arrest the courageous proceedings of the princes. Friday, 24th June, was the day fixed for reading the Confession, but measures were taken to prevent it. The sitting of the diet did not begin till three in the afternoon; the legate was then announced; Charles went to meet him as far as the top of the grand staircase, and Campeggio, taking his seat in front of the emperor,

in King Ferdinand’s place, delivered a harangue in Ciceronian style. “Never,” said he, “has St. Peter’s bark been so violently tossed by such various waves, whirlwinds, and abysses. The Holy Father has learned these things with pain, and desires to drag the Church from these frightful gulfs. For the love of Jesus Christ, for the safety of your country and for you own, O mighty Prince! get rid of these errors, deliver Germany, and save Christendom!” After a temperate reply from Albert of Mentz, the legate quitted the town-hall, and the evangelical princes stood up; but a fresh obstacle had been provided. Deputies from Austria, Carinthia, and Carniola, first received a hearing. Much time had thus elapsed. The evangelical princes, however, rose up again, and the Chancellor Bruck said: “It is pretended that new doctrines not based on Scripture, that heresies and schisms, are spread among the people by us. Considering that such accusations compromise not only our good name, but also the safety of our souls, we beg his majesty will have the goodness to hear what are the doctrines we profess.” The emperor, no doubt by arrangement with the legate, made reply that it was

too late; besides, that this reading would be useless; and that the princes should be satisfied with putting in their Confession in writing.

Thus the mine, so skillfully prepared, worked admirably; the Confession, once handed to the emperor, would be thrown aside, and the Reformation would be forced to retire, without the papists having even condescended to hear it, without defense, and overwhelmed with contumely.

The protestant princes, uneasy and agitated, insisted. “Our honor is at stake,” said they; “our souls are endangered. We are accused publicly; publicly we ought to answer.” Charles was shaken; Ferdinand leaned towards him, and whispered a few words in his ear: the emperor refused a second time.

Upon this the elector and princes, in still greater alarm, said for the third time, with emotion and earnestness: “For the love of God, let us read our Confession! No person is insulted in it.” Thus

were seen, on the one hand, a few faithful men, desiring with loud cries to confess their faith; and on the other, the great emperor of the west, surrounded by a crowd of cardinals, prelates, and princes, endeavoring to stifle the manifestation of the truth. It was a serious, violent, and decisive struggle, in which the holiest interests were discussed!

At last Charles appeared to yield: “His majesty grants your request,” was the reply to the princes; “but as it is now too late, he begs you to transmit him your written Confession, and tomorrow, at two o’clock, the diet will be prepared to hear it read at the Palatine Palace.” The princes were struck by these words, which, seeming to grant them everything, in reality granted nothing. In the first place, it was not in a public sitting at the town-hall, but privately in his own palace, that the emperor was willing to hear them; then they had no doubt that if the Confession left their hands it was all over with the public reading. They therefore remained firm. “The work has been done in great haste,” said they, and it was the truth; “pray leave it

with us tonight, that we may revise it.” The emperor was obliged to yield, and the Protestants returned to their hotels full of joy; while the legate and his friends, perceiving that the Confession was inevitable, saw the morrow approach with continually increasing anxiety.

Among those who prepared to confess the evangelical truth, was one, however, whose heart was filled with sadness: — it was Melancthon.

Placed between two fires, he saw the reformed, and many even of his own friends, reproach his weakness; while the opposite party detested what they called his hypocrisy. His friend Camerarius, who visited Augsburg about this time, often found him plunged in thought, uttering deep sighs, and shedding bitter tears. Brentz, moved with compassion, coming to the unhappy Philip, would sit down by his side and weep with him; and Jonas endeavored to console him in another manner, by exhorting him to take the book of Psalms, and cry to God with all his heart, making use of David’s words rather than of his own.

One day intelligence arrived which formed a general topic of conversation in Augsburg, and which, by spreading terror among the partisans of the pope, gave a momentary relief to Melancthon. It was said that a mule in Rome had given birth to a colt with crane's feet. "This prodigy," said Melancthon thoughtfully, "announces that Rome is near its end;" perhaps because the crane is a bird of passage, and that the pope's mule thus gave signs of departure. Melancthon had immediately written to 1344 Luther, who replied that he was exceedingly rejoiced that God had given the pope so striking a sign of his approaching fall. It is good to recall to memory these puerilities of the age of the reformers, that we may better understand the high range of these men of God in matters of faith.

These idle Roman stories did not long console Melancthon. On the eve of the 25th of June, he was present in imagination at the reading of that Confession which he had drawn up, which was about to be proclaimed before the world, and in which one word too many or too few might decide

on the approbation or the hatred of the princes, on the safety or ruin of the Reformation and of the empire. He could bear up no longer, and the feeble Atlas, crushed under the burden of the world upon his shoulders, gave utterance to a cry of anguish. “All my time here is spent in tears and mourning,” wrote he to Vitus Diedrich, Luther’s secretary in the castle of Coburg; and on the morrow he wrote to Luther himself: “My dwelling is in perpetual tears. My consternation is indescribable. O my father! I do not wish my words to exaggerate my sorrows; but without your consolations, it is impossible for me to enjoy here the least peace.

Nothing in fact presented so strong a contrast to Melancthon’s distrust and dejection, as the faith, calmness, and exultation of Luther. It was of advantage to him that he was not then in the midst of the Augsburg vortex, and to be able from his stronghold to set his foot with tranquillity upon the rock of God’s promises. He was sensible himself of the value of this peaceful hermitage, as he called it. “I cannot sufficiently admire,” said Vitus Diedrich, “the firmness, cheerfulness, and faith of this man,

so astonishing in such cruel times.” Luther, besides his constant reading of the Word of God, did not pass a day without devoting three hours at least to prayer, and they were hours selected from those the most favorable to study. One day, as Diedrich approached the reformer’s chamber, he heard his voice, and remained motionless, holding his breath, a few steps from the door. Luther was praying, and his prayer (said the secretary) was full of adoration, fear, and hope, as when one speaks to a friend or to a father. “I know that thou art our Father and our God,” said the reformer, alone in his chamber, “and that thou wilt scatter the persecutors of they children, for thou art thyself endangered with us. All this matter is thine, and it is only by thy constraint that we have put our hands to it. Defend us then, O Father!” The secretary, motionless as a statue, in the long gallery of the castle, lost not one of the words that the clear and resounding voice of Luther bore to his ears. The reformer was earnest with God, and called upon him with such unction to accomplish his promises, that Diedrich felt his heart glow within him. “Oh! exclaimed he, as he retired, “How could not these prayers but prevail in

the desperate struggle at Augsburg!" Luther might also have allowed himself to be overcome with fear, for he was left in complete ignorance of what was taking place in the diet. A Wittenberg messenger, who should have brought him forests of letters (according to his own expression), having presented himself: "Do you bring any letters?" asked Luther. "No!" "How are those gentlemen?" "Well!" Luther, grieved at such silence, returned and shut himself up in his chamber.

Erelong there appeared a courier on horseback carrying despatches from the elector to Torgau. "Do you bring me any letters?" asked Luther, "No!" "How are those gentlemen?" continued he, fearfully. "Well!" "This is strange," thought the reformer. A wagon having left Coburg laden with flour (for they were almost in want of provisions at Augsburg), Luther impatiently awaited the return of the driver; but he returned empty. Luther then began to revolve the gloomiest thoughts in his mind, not doubting that they were concealing some misfortune from him. At last another individual, Jobst Nymptzen, having arrived from Augsburg,

Luther rushed anew towards him, with his usual question: “Do you bring me any letters?” He waited trembling for the reply. “No!” “And how are those gentlemen?” “Well!” The reformer withdrew, a prey to anger and to fear.

Then Luther opened his Bible, and to console himself for the silence of men, conversed with God. There were some passages of Scripture in particular that he read continually. We point them out below. He did more; he wrote with his own hand many declarations of Scripture over the doors and windows, and on the walls of the castle. In one place were these words from the 118th Psalm: I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. In another, those of the 12th chapter of Proverbs: The way of the wicked seduceth them; and over his bed, this passage from the 4th Psalm: I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou, O Lord, only makest me dwell in safety. Never perhaps did man so environ himself with the promises of the Lord, or so dwell in the atmosphere of his Word and live by his breath, as Luther at Coburg.

At length letters came.

“If the times in which we live were not opposed to it, I should have imaged some revenge,” wrote Luther to Jonas; “but prayer checked my anger, and anger checked my prayer. I am delighted at that tranquil mind which God gives our prince. As for Melancthon, it is his philosophy that tortures him, and nothing else. For our cause is in the very hands of Him who can say with unspeakable dignity: No one shall pluck it out of my hands. I would not have it in our hands, and it would not be desirable that it were so. I have had many things in my hands, and I have lost them all; but whatever I have been able to place in “God’s, I still possess.” On learning that Melancthon’s anguish still continued, Luther wrote to him; and these are words that should be preserved: — “Grace and peace in Christ! in Christ, I say, and not in the world, Amen. I hate with exceeding hatred those extreme cares which consume you. If the cause is unjust, abandon it; if the cause is just, why should be belie the promises of Him who commands us to sleep

without fear? Can the devil do more than kill us? Christ will not be wanting to the work of justice and of truth. He lives; he reigns; what fear, then, can we have? God is powerful to upraise his cause if it is overthrown, to make it proceed if it remains motionless, and if we are not worthy of it, he will do it by others.

“I have received your Apology, and I cannot understand what you mean, when you ask what we must concede to the papists. We have already conceded too much. Night and day I meditate on this affair, turning it over and over, diligently searching the Scriptures, and the conviction of the truth of our doctrine every day becomes stronger in my mind. With the help of God, I will not permit a single letter of all that we have said to be torn from us.

“The issue of this affair torments you, because you cannot understand it. But if you could, I would not have the least share in it. God has put it in a ‘common place,’ that you will not find either in your rhetoric or in your philosophy: that place is

called Faith.

It is that in which subsist all things that we can neither understand nor see. Whoever wishes to touch them, as you do, will have tears for his sole reward.

“If Christ is not with us, where is he in the whole universe? If we are not the Church, where, I pray, is the Church? Is it the Dukes of Bavaria, is it Ferdinand, is it the pope, is it the Turk, who is the Church? If we have not the Word of God, who is it that possesses it?

“Only we must have faith, lest the cause of faith should be found to be without faith. “If we fall, Christ falls with us, that is to say, the Master of the world. I would rather fall with Christ, than remain standing with Caesar.” Thus wrote Luther. The faith which animated him flowed from him like torrents of living water. He was indefatigable: in a single day he wrote to Melancthon, Spalatin, Brentz, Agricola, and John Frederick, and they were letters full of life. He was not alone in

praying, speaking, and believing. At the same moment, the evangelical Christians exhorted one another everywhere to prayer. Such was the arsenal in which the weapons were forged that the confessors of Christ wielded before the Diet of Augsburg.

Chapter 7

The 25th June 1530

At length the 25th June arrived. This was destined to be the greatest day of the Reformation, and one of the most glorious in the history of Christianity and of mankind.

As the chapel of the Palatine Palace, where the emperor had resolved to hear the Confession, could contain only about two hundred persons, before three o’clock a great crowd was to be seen surrounding the building and thronging the court, hoping by this means to catch a few words; and many having gained entrance to the chapel, all were turned out except those who were, at the least, councillors to the princes.

Charles took his seat on the throne. The electors or their representatives were on his right and left hand; after them, the other princes and states of the empire. The legate had refused to appear in this solemnity, lest he should seem by his

presence to authorize the reading of the Confession.

Then stood up John elector of Saxony, with his son John Frederick, Philip landgrave of Hesse, the Margrave George of Brandenburg, Wolfgang prince of Anhalt, Ernest duke of Brunswick-Luneburg, and his brother Francis, and last of all the deputies of Nuremberg and Reutlingen. Their air was animated and their features radiant with joy. The apologies of the early Christians, of Tertullian and Justin Martyr, hardly reached in writing the sovereigns to whom they were addressed. But now, to hear the new apology of resuscitated Christianity, behold that puissant emperor, whose scepter, stretching far beyond the Columns of Hercules, reaches the utmost limits of the world, his brother the King of the Romans, with electors, princes, prelates, deputies, ambassadors, all of whom desire to destroy the Gospel, but who are constrained by an invisible power to listen, and, by that very listening, to honor the Confession!

One thought was involuntarily present in the

minds of the spectators, — the recollection of the Diet of Worms. Only nine years before, a poor monk stood alone for this same cause in a hall of the town-house at Worms, in presence of the empire. And now in his stead behold the foremost of the electors, princes, and cities! What a victory is declared by this simple fact! No doubt Charles himself cannot escape from this recollection.

The emperor, seeing the Protestants stand up, motioned them to sit down; and then the two chancellors of the elector, Bruck and Bayer, advanced to the middle of the chapel, and stood before the throne, holding in their hands, the former the Latin and the other the German copy of the Confession. The emperor required the Latin copy to be read. “We are Germans,” said the Elector of Saxony, “and on German soil; I hope therefore your majesty will allow us to speak German.” If the Confession had been read in Latin, a language unknown to most of the princes, the general effect would have been lost. This was another means of shutting the mouth of the Gospel. The emperor complied with the elector’s demand.

Bayer then began to read the evangelical Confession, slowly, seriously, distinctly, with a clear, strong, and sonorous voice, which re-echoed under the arched roof of the chapel, and carried even to the outside this great testimony paid to the truth. “Most serene, most mighty, and invincible emperor and most gracious lord,” said he, “we who appear in your presence, declare ourselves ready to confer amicably with you on the fittest means of restoring one sole, true, and same faith, since it is for one sole and same Christ that we fight. And in case that these religious dissensions cannot be settled amicably, we then offer to your majesty to explain our cause in a general, free, and christian council.” This prologue being ended, Bayer confessed the Holy Trinity, conformably with the Nicene Council, original and hereditary sin, “which bringeth eternal death to all who are not born again,” and the incarnation of the Son, “very God and very man.” “We teach, moreover,” continued he, “that we cannot be justified before God by our own strength, our merits, or our works; but that we are justified freely for Christ’s sake through faith,

when we believe that our sins are forgiven in virtue of Christ, who by his death has made satisfaction for our sins: this faith is the righteousness that God imputeth to the sinner.

“But we teach, at the same time, that this faith ought to bear good fruits, and that we must do all the good works commanded by God, for the love of God, and not by their means to gain the grace of God.” The Protestants next declared their faith in the Christian Church, “which is,” said they, “the assembly of all true believers and all the saints,” in the midst of whom there are, nevertheless, in this life, many false Christians, hypocrites even, and manifest sinners; and they added, “that it is sufficient for the real unity of the Church that they agree on the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, without the rites and ceremonies instituted by men being everywhere the same.” They proclaimed the necessity of baptism, and declared “that the body and blood of Christ are really present and administered in the Lord’s Supper to those who partake of it.” The chancellor then successively

confessed the faith of the evangelical Christians touching confession, penance, the nature of the sacraments, the government of the Church, ecclesiastical ordinances, political government, and the last judgment. “As regards free will,” continued he, “we confess that man’s will has a certain liberty of accomplishing civil justice, and of loving the things that reason comprehends; that man can do the good that is within the sphere of nature — plough his fields, eat, drink, have a friend, put on a coat, build a house, take a wife, feed cattle, exercise a calling; as also he can, of his own movement, do evil, kneel before an idol, and commit murder. But we maintain that without the Holy Ghost he cannot do what is righteous in the sight of God.” Then, returning to the grand doctrine of the Reformation, and recalling to mind that the doctors of the pope “have never ceased impelling the faithful to puerile and useless works, as the custom of chaplets, invocations of saints, monastic vows, processions, fasts, feast-days, brotherhoods,” the Protestants added, that as for themselves, while urging the practice of truly christian works, of which little had been said

before their time, “they taught that man is justified by faith alone; not by that faith which is a simple knowledge of the history, and which wicked men and even devils possess, but by a faith which believes not only the history, but also the effect of the history; which believes that through Christ we obtain grace; which sees that in Christ we have a merciful Father; which knows this God; which calls upon him; in a word, which is not without God, as the heathen are.” “Such,” said Bayer, “is a summary of the doctrine professed in our churches, by which it may be seen that this doctrine is by no means opposed to Scripture, to the universal Church, nor even to the Romish Church, such as the doctors describe it to us; and since it is so, to reject us as heretics is an offense against unity and charity.” Here terminated the first part of the Confession, the aim of which was to explain the evangelical doctrine. The chancellor read with so distinct a voice, that the crowd which was unable to enter the hall, and which filled the court and all the approaches of the episcopal palace, did not lose a word. This reading produced the most marvelous effect on the princes who thronged the chapel.

Jonas watched every change in their countenances, and there beheld interest, astonishment, and even approbation depicted by turns. “The adversaries imagine they have done a wonderful thing by forbidding the preaching of the Gospel,” wrote Luther to the elector; “and they do not see, poor creatures! that by the reading of the Confession in the presence of the diet, there has been more preaching than in the sermons of ten doctors. Exquisite subtlety! admirable expedient! Master Agricola and the other ministers are reduced to silence; but in their place appear the Elector of Saxony and the other princes and lords, who preach before his imperial majesty and the members of the whole empire, freely, to their beard, and before their noses. Yes, Christ is in the diet, and he does not keep silence: the Word of God cannot be bound. They forbid it in the pulpit, and are forced to hear it in the palace; poor ministers cannot announce it, and great princes proclaim it; the servants are forbidden to listen to it, and their masters are compelled to hear it; they will have nothing to do with it during the whole course of the diet, and they are forced to submit to hear more in

one day than is heard ordinarily in a whole year.....When all else is silent, the very stones cry out, as says our Lord Jesus Christ.” That part of the Confession destined to point out errors and abuses still remained. Bayer continued: he explained and demonstrated the doctrine of the two kinds; he attacked the compulsory celibacy of priests, maintained that the Lord’s Supper had been changed into a regular fair, in which it was merely a question of buying and selling, and that it had been re-established in its primitive purity by the Reformation, and was celebrated in the evangelical churches with entirely new devotion and gravity. He declared that the sacrament was administered to no one who had not first made confession of his faults, and he quoted this expression of Chrysostom: “Confess thyself to God the Lord, thy real Judge; tell thy sin, not with the tongue, but in thy conscience and in thy heart.” Bayer next came to the precepts on the distinction of meats and other Roman usages. “Celebrate such a festival,” said he; “repeat such a prayer, or keep such a fast; be dressed in such a manner, and so many other ordinances of men — this is what is now styled a

spiritual and christian life; while the good works prescribed by God, as those of a father of a family who toils to support his wife, his sons, and his daughters — of a mother who brings children into the world, and takes care of them — of a prince or of a magistrate who governs his subjects, are looked upon as secular things, and of an imperfect nature." As for monastic vows in particular, he represented that, as the pope could give a dispensation from them, those vows ought therefore to be abolished.

The last article of the Confession treated of the authority of the bishops: powerful princes crowned with the episcopal mitre were there; the Archbishops of Mentz, Cologne, Salzburg, and Bremen, with the Bishops of Bamberg, Wurzburg, Eichstadt, Worms, Spires, Strasburg, Augsburg, Constance, Coire, Passau, Liege, Trent, Brixen, and of Lebus and Ratzburg, fixed their eyes on the humble confessor. He fearlessly continued, and energetically protesting against that confusion of Church and State which had characterized the Middle Ages, he called for the distinction and

independence of the two societies.

“Many,” said he, “have unskillfully confounded the episcopal and the temporal power; and from this confusion have resulted great wars, revolts, and seditions. It is for this reason, and to reassure men’s consciences, that we find ourselves constrained to establish the difference, which exists between the power of the Church and the power of the sword. “We therefore teach that the power of the keys or of the bishops is, conformably with the Word of the Lord, a commandment emanating from God, to preach the Gospel, to remit or retain sins, and to administer the Sacraments. This power has reference only to eternal goods, is exercised only by the minister of the Word, and does not trouble itself with political administration. The political administration, on the other hand, is busied with everything else but the Gospel. The magistrate protects, not souls, but bodies and temporal possessions. He defends them against all attacks from without, and, by making use of the sword and of punishment, compels men to observe civil justice and peace. “For this reason we must

take particular care not to mingle the power of the Church with the power of the State. The power of the Church ought never to invade an office that is foreign to it; for Christ himself said: My kingdom is not of this world. And again: Who made me a judge over you? St. Paul said to the Philippians: Our citizenship is in heaven. And to the Corinthians: The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.

“It is thus that we distinguish the two governments and the two powers, and that we honor both as the most excellent gifts that God has given here on earth.

“The duty of the bishops is therefore to preach the Gospel, to forgive sins, and to exclude from the Christian Church all who rebel against the Lord, but without human power, and solely by the Word of God. If the bishops act thus, the churches ought to be obedient to them, according to this declaration of Christ: Whoever heareth you, heareth me.

“But if the bishops teach anything that is contrary to the Gospel, then the churches have an order from God which forbids them to obey (Matthew 7:15; Galatians 1:8; 2 Corinthians 13:8,10). And St. Augustine himself, in his letter against Pertilian, writes: ‘We must not obey the catholic bishops, if they go astray, and teach anything contrary to the canonical Scriptures of God.’” After some remarks on the ordinances and traditions of the Church, Bayer came to the epilogue of the Confession.

“It is not from hatred that we have spoken,” added he, “nor to insult any one; but we have explained the doctrines that we maintain to be essential, in order that it may be understood that we admit of neither dogma nor ceremony which is contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and to the usage of the universal Church.” Bayer then ceased to read. He had spoken for two hours: the silence and serious attention of the assembly were no once disturbed. This Confession of Augsburg will ever remain one of the masterpieces of the human mind enlightened by the Spirit of God.

The language that had been adopted, while it was perfectly natural, was the result of a profound study of character. These princes, these warriors, these politicians who were sitting in the Palatine Palace, entirely ignorant as they were of divinity, easily understood the Protestant doctrine; for it was not explained to them in the style of the schools, but in that of everyday life, and with a simplicity and clearness that rendered all misunderstanding impossible.

At the same time the power of argumentation was so much the more remarkable, as it was the more concealed. At one time Melancthon (for it was really he who spoke through the mouth of Bayer) was content to quote a single passage of Scripture or of the Fathers in favor of the doctrine he maintained; and at another he proved his thesis so much the more strongly, that he appeared only to be declaring it. With a single stroke he pointed out the sad consequences that would follow the rejection of the faith he professed, or with one word showed its importance for the prosperity of

the Church; so that, while listening to him, the most violent enemies were obliged to acknowledge to themselves that there was really something to say in favor of the new sect.

To this force of reasoning the apology added a prudence no less remarkable. Melancthon, while declining with firmness the errors attributed to his party, did not even appear to feel the injustice of these erroneous imputations; and while pointing out those of Popery, he did not say expressly they were those of his adversaries; thus carefully avoiding everything that might irritate their minds. In this he showed himself wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.

But the most admirable thing of all is the fidelity with which the Confession explains the doctrines most essential to salvation. Rome is accustomed to represent the reformers as the creators of the Protestant doctrines; but it is not in the sixteenth century that we must look for the days of that creation. A bright track of light, of which Wickliffe and Augustine mark the most salient

points, carries us back to the apostolic age: it was then that shone in all their brilliancy the creative days of evangelical truth. Yet it is true (and if this is what Rome means, we fully concur in the idea), never since the time of St. Paul had the Christian doctrine appeared with so much beauty, depth, and life, as in the days of the Reformation.

Among these doctrines, that of the Church, which had been so long disfigured, appeared at this time in all its native purity. With what wisdom, in particular, the confessors of Augsburg protest against that confusion of religion and politics which, since the deplorable epoch of Constantine, had changed the kingdom of God into an earthly and carnal institution! Undoubtedly what the Confession stigmatizes with the greatest energy is the intrusion of the Church into the affairs of the State; but can it be thought that it was to approve the intrusion of the State in Church affairs? The evil of the Middle Ages was the having enslaved the State to the Church, and the confessors of Augsburg rose like one man to combat it. The evil of the three centuries which have passed away

since then, is to have subjected the Church to the State; and we may believe that Luther and Melancthon would have found against this disorder thunders no less powerful. What they attack in a general sense, is the confusion of the two societies; what they demand, is their independence, I do not say their separation, for separation of Church and State was quite unknown to the reformers. If the Augsburg confessors were unwilling that things from above should monopolize those of the earth, they would have been still less willing for things of earth to oppress those from heaven.

There is a particular application of this principle, which the Confession points out. It wills the bishops should reprimand those who obey wickedness, “but without human power, and solely by the Word of God.” It therefore rejects the use of the sword in the chastisement of heretics.

This we see is a primitive principle, fundamental and essential to the Reformation, as the contrary doctrine is a primitive principle, fundamental and essential to the Papacy. If among

Protestants we find some writing, or even some example opposed to this, it is but an isolated fact, which cannot invalidate the official principles of the reform — it is one of those exceptions which always serve to confirm the rule.

Finally, the Augsburg Confession does not usurp the rights of the Word of God; it desires to be its handmaid and not its rival; it does not found, it does not regulate the faith, but simply professes it. “Our churches teach,” it says; and it will be remembered that Luther considered it only as a sermon preached by princes and kings. Had it desired more, as has since been maintained, by that very circumstance it would have been nullified.

Was, however, the Confession able to follow in all things the exact path of truth? We may be permitted to doubt it.

It professes not to separate from the teaching of the Catholic Church, and even from that of the Romish Church — by which is no doubt signified the ancient Roman Church — and rejects the

popish particularism which, for about eight centuries, imprisoned men's consciences. The Confession, however, seems overlaid with superstitious fears when there is any question of deviating from the views entertained by some of the Fathers of the Church, of breaking the toils of the hierarchy, and of acting as regards Rome, without blamable forbearance. This, at least, is what its author, Melancthon, professes. "We do not put forward any dogma," said he, "which is not founded on the Gospel or on the teaching of the Catholic 1357 Church; we are prepared to concede everything that is necessary for the episcopal dignity; and, provided the bishops do not condemn the Gospel, we preserve all the rites that appear indifferent to us. In a word, there is no burden that we reject, if we can bear it without guilt." Many will think, no doubt, that a little more independence would have been proper in this matter, and that it would have been better to have passed over the ages that have followed the times of the apostles, and have frankly put in practice the grand principle which the Reformation had proclaimed: "There is for articles of faith no other

foundation than the Word of God.” Melancthon’s moderation has been admired; and, in truth, while pointing out the abuses of Rome, he was silent on what is most revolting in them, on their disgraceful origin, their scandalous consequences, and is content to show that they are in contradiction to the Scripture. But he does more; he is silent on the divine right claimed by the pope, on the number of the sacraments, and on several other points. His great business is to justify the renovated, and not to attack the deformed, Church. “Peace, peace!” was his cry. But if, instead of all this circumspection, the Reformation had advanced with courage, had wholly unveiled the Word of God, and had made an energetic appeal to the sympathies of reform then spread in men’s hearts, would it not have taken a stronger and more honorable position, and would it not have secured more extensive conquests?

The interest that Charles the Fifth showed in listening to the Confession seems doubtful. According to some, he endeavored to understand that foreign language; according to others, he fell

asleep. It is easy to reconcile these contradictory testimonies.

When the reading was finished, Chancellor Bruck, with the two copies in his hand, advanced towards the emperor's secretary and presented them to him. Charles the Fifth, who was wide awake at this moment, himself took the two Confessions, handed the German copy, considered as official, to the Elector of Mentz, and kept the Latin one for himself. He then made reply to the Elector of Saxony and to his allies, that he had graciously heard their Confession; but as this affair was one of extreme importance, he required time to deliberate upon it.

The joy with which the Protestants were filled shone in their eyes. God had been with them; and they saw that the striking act which had so recently been accomplished imposed on them the obligation of confessing the truth with immovable perseverance. "I am overjoyed," wrote Luther, "that I have lived until this hour, in which Christ has been publicly exalted by such illustrious

confessors and in so glorious an assembly.” The whole evangelical church, excited and renovated by this public confession of its representatives, was then more intimately united to its Divine Chief, and baptized with a new baptism. “Since the apostolic age,” said they (these are the words of a contemporary), “there has never been a greater work or a more magnificent confession.” The emperor, having descended from his throne, approached the Protestant princes, and begged them in a low tone not to publish the Confession; they acceded to his request, and every one withdrew.

Chapter 8

Effect on the Romanists

The Romanists had expected nothing like this. Instead of a hateful controversy, they had heard a striking confession of Jesus Christ; the most hostile minds were consequently disarmed. “We would not for a great deal,” was the remark on every side, “have missed being present at this reading.” The effect was so prompt, that for an instant the cause was thought to be definitively gained. The bishops themselves imposed silence on the sophisms and clamors of the Fabers and the Ecks. “All that the Lutherans have said is true,” exclaimed the Bishop of Augsburg; “we cannot deny it.” — “Well, doctor,” said the Duke of Bavaria to Eck, in a reproachful tone, “you had given me a very different idea of this doctrine and of this affair.” This was the general cry; accordingly the sophists, as they called them, were embarrassed. “But, after all,” said the Duke of Bavaria to them, “can you refute by sound reasons the Confession made by the elector and his allies?” — “With the writings of

the apostles and prophets — no!" replied Eck; "but with those of the Fathers and of the councils — yes!" "I understand," quickly replied the duke; "I understand. The Lutherans, according to you, are in Scripture; and we are outside." The Archbishop Hermann, elector of Cologne, the Count-palatine Frederick, Duke Erick of Brunswick-Luneburg, Duke Henry of Mecklenburg, and the Dukes of Pomerania, were gained over to the truth; and Hermann sought erelong to establish it in his electorate.

The impression produced in other countries by the Confession was perhaps still greater. Charles sent copies to all the courts; it was translated into French, Italian, and even into Spanish and Portuguese; it circulated through all Europe, and thus accomplished what Luther had said: "Our Confession will penetrate into every court, and the sound thereof will spread through the whole earth." It destroyed the prejudices that had been entertained, gave Europe a sounder idea of the Reformation, and prepared the most distant countries to receive the seeds of the Gospel.

Then Luther’s voice began to be heard again. He saw that it was a decisive moment, and that he ought now to give the impulse that would gain religious liberty. He boldly demanded this liberty of the Roman-catholic princes of the diet; and at the same time endeavored to make his friends quit Augsburg. Jesus Christ had been boldly confessed. Instead of that long series of quarrels and discussions which was about to become connected with this courageous act, Luther would have wished for a striking rupture, even should he seal with his blood the testimony rendered to the Gospel. The stake, in his idea, would have been the real catastrophe of this tragedy. “I absolve you from this diet, in the name of the Lord,” wrote he to his friends. “Now home, return home, again I say home!

Would to God that I were the sacrifice offered to this new council, as John Huss at Constance!” But Luther did not expect so glorious a conclusion: he compared the diet to a drama. First, there had been the exposition, then the prologue, afterwards

the action, and now he waited for the tragic catastrophe, according to some, but which, in his opinion, would be merely comic. Every thing, he thought, would be sacrificed to political peace, and dogmas would be set aside. This proceeding, which, even in our own days, would be in the eyes of the world the height of wisdom, was in Luther's eyes the height of folly.

He was especially alarmed at the thought of Charles's intervention. To withdraw the Church from all secular influence, and the governments from all clerical influence, was then one of the dominant ideas of the great reformer. "You see," wrote he to Melancthon, "that they oppose to our cause the same argument as at Worms, to wit, still and for ever the judgment of the emperor. Thus Satan is always harping on the same string, 1361 and that emaciated strength of the civil power is the only one which this myriad-wiled spirit is able to find against Jesus Christ." But Luther took courage, and boldly raised his head. "Christ is coming," continued he; "he is coming, sitting at the right hand.....Of whom? not of the emperor, or we

should long ago have been lost, but of God himself: let us fear nothing.

Christ is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. If he loses this title at Augsburg, he must also lose it in all the earth, and in all the heavens." Thus a song of triumph was, on the part of the confessors of Augsburg, the first movement that followed this courageous act, unique doubtless in the annals of the Church. Some of their adversaries at first shared in their triumph, and the others were silent; but a powerful reaction took place erelong.

On the following morning, Charles having risen in ill-humor and tired for want of sleep, the first of his ministers who appeared in the imperial apartments was the count-palatine, as wearied and embarrassed as his master. "We must yield something," said he to Charles; "and I would remind your majesty that the Emperor Maximilian was willing to grant the two kinds in the Eucharist, the marriage of priests, and liberty with respect to the fasts." Charles the Fifth eagerly seized at this proposition as a means of safety. But Granvelle and

Campeggio soon arrived, who induced him to withdraw it.

Rome, bewildered for a moment by the blow that had struck her, rose up again with energy. “I stay with the mother,” exclaimed the Bishop of Wartzburg, meaning by it the Church of Rome; “the mother, the mother!” “My lord,” wittily replied Brentz, “pray, do not, for the mother, forget either the Father or the Son!” — “Well! I grant it,” replied the Archbishop of Salzburg to one of his friends, “I also should desire the communion in both kinds, the marriage of priests, the reformation of the mass, and liberty as regards food and other traditions.....But that it should be a monk, a poor monk, who presumes to reform us all, is what we cannot tolerate.” — “I should have no objection,” said another bishop, “for Divine worship to be celebrated everywhere as it is at Wittenberg; but we can never consent that this new doctrine should issue from such a corner.” And Melancthon insisting with the Archbishop of Salzburg on the necessity of a reform of the clergy: “Well! and how can you wish to 1362 reform us?” said the latter

abruptly: “we priests have always been good for nothing.” This is one of the most ingenuous confessions that the Reformation has torn from the priests. Every day fanatical monks and doctors, brimful of sophisms, were seen arriving at Augsburg, who endeavored to inflame the hatred of the emperor and of the princes. “If we formerly had friends,” said Melancthon on the morrow of the Confession, “now we possess them no longer. We are here alone, abandoned by all, and contending against measureless dangers.” Charles, impelled by these contrary parties, affected a great indifference.

But without permitting it to be seen, he endeavored, meanwhile, to examine this affair thoroughly. “Let there not be a word wanting,” he had said to his secretary, when requiring from him a French translation of the Confession. “He does not allow anything to be observed,” whispered the Protestants one to another, convinced that Charles was gained; “for if it were known, he would lose his Spanish states: let us maintain the most profound secrecy.” But the emperor’s courtiers, who perceived these strange hopes, smiled and

shook their heads. “If you have money,” said Schepper, one of the secretaries of state, to Jonas and Melancthon, “it will be easy for you to buy from the Italians whatever religion you please; but if your purse is empty, your cause is lost.” Then assuming a more serious tone: “It is impossible,” said he, “for the emperor, surrounded as he is by bishops and cardinals, to approve of any other religion than that of the pope.” This was soon evident. On the day after the Confession (Sunday, 26th June), before the breakfast hour, all the deputations from the imperial cities were collected in the emperor’s antechamber. Charles, desirous of bringing back the states of the empire to unity, began with the weakest.

“Some of the cities,” said the count-palatine, “have not adhered to the last Diet of Spires: the emperor calls upon them to submit to it.” Strasburg, Nuremberg, Constance, Ulm, Reutlingen, Heilbronn, Memmingen, Lindau, Kempten, Windsheim, Isny, and Weissemburg, which were thus summoned to renounce the famous protest, thought the moment curiously

chosen. They asked for time.

The position was complicated: discord had been thrown in the midst of the cities, and intrigue was laboring daily to increase it. It was not only between the popish and the evangelical cities that disagreement existed; but also between the Zwinglian and the Lutheran cities, and even among the latter, those which had not adhered to the Confession of Augsburg manifested great ill-humor towards the deputies of Reutlingen and Nuremberg. This proceeding of Charles the Fifth was therefore skillfully calculated; for it was based on the old axiom, Divide et impera.

But the enthusiasm of faith overcame all these stratagems, and on the next day (27th June), the deputies from the cities transmitted a reply to the emperor, in which they declared that they could not adhere to the Recess of Spires “without disobeying God, and without compromising the salvation of their souls.” Charles, who desired to observe a just medium, more from policy than from equity, wavered between so many contrary convictions.

Desirous nevertheless of essaying his mediating influence, he convoked the states faithful to Rome, on Sunday, 26th June, shortly after his conference with the cities.

All the princes were present: even the pope's legate and the most influential Roman divines appeared at this council, to the great scandal of the Protestants. "What reply should be made to the Confession?" was the question set by Charles the Fifth to the senate that surrounded him. Three different opinions were proposed. "Let us beware," said the men of the papacy, "of discussing our adversaries reasons, and let us be content with executing the edict of Worms against the Lutherans, and with constraining them by arms." — "Let us submit the Confession to the examination of impartial judges," said the men of the empire, "and refer the final decision to the emperor. Is not even the reading of the Confession an appeal of the Protestants to the imperial power?" Others, in the last place (and these were the men of tradition and of ecclesiastical doctrine), were desirous of commissioning certain doctors to

compose a refutation, which should be read to the Protestants and ratified by Charles.

The debate was very animated: the mild and the violent, the politic and the fanatical, took a decided course in the assembly. George of Saxony and Joachim of Brandenburg showed themselves the most inveterate, and surpassed in this respect even the ecclesiastical princes. “A certain clown, whom you know well, is pushing them all from behind,” wrote Melancthon to Luther; “and certain hypocritical theologians hold the torch and lead the whole band.” This clown was doubtless Duke George. Even the princes of Bavaria, whom the Confession had staggered at first, immediately rallied around the chiefs of the Roman party. The Elector of Mentz, the Bishop of Augsburg, the Duke of Brunswick, showed themselves the least unfavorable to the evangelical cause. “I can by no means advise his majesty to employ force,” said Albert. “If his majesty should constrain their consciences, and should afterwards quit the empire, the first victims sacrificed would be the priests; and who knows whether, in the midst of these discords,

the Turks would not suddenly fall upon us?” But this somewhat interested wisdom of the archbishop did not find many supporters, and the men of war immediately plunged into the discussion with their harsh voices. “If there is any fighting against the Lutherans,” said Count Felix of Werdenberg, “I gratuitously offer my sword, and I swear never to return it to its scabbard until it has overthrown the stronghold of Luther.” This nobleman died suddenly a few days after, from the consequences of his intemperance. Then the moderate men again interfered: “The Lutherans attack no one article of the faith,” said the Bishop of Augsburg; “let us come to an arrangement with them; and to obtain peace, let us concede to them the sacrament in both kinds and the marriage of priests. I would even yield more, if it were necessary.” Upon this loud cries arose: “He is a Lutheran,” they exclaimed, “and you will see that he is fully prepared to sacrifice even the private masses!” — “The masses! we must not even think of it,” remarked some with an ironical smile; “Rome will never give them up, for it is they which maintain her cardinals and her courtiers, with their luxury and their

kitchens.” The Archbishop of Salzburg and the Elector of Brandenburg replied with great violence to the motion of the Bishop of Augsburg. “The Lutherans,” said they abruptly, “have laid before us a Confession written with black ink on white paper. Well: If I were emperor, I would answer them with red ink.” — “Sirs,” quickly replied the Bishop of Augsburg, “take care then that the red letters do not fly in your faces!” The Elector of Mentz was compelled to interfere and calm the speakers.

The emperor, desirous of playing the character of an umpire, would have wished the Roman party at least to have placed in his hands an act of accusation against the Reform: but all was now altered; the majority, becoming daily more compact since the Diet of Spires, no longer sided with Charles. Full of the sentiment of their own strength, they refused to assume the title of a party, and to take the emperor as a judge. “What are you saying,” cried they, “of diversity between the members of the empire?

There is but one legitimate party. It is not a

question of deciding between two opinions whose rights are equal, but of crushing rebels, and of aiding those who have remained faithful to the constitution of the empire." This haughty language enlightened Charles: he found they had outstripped him, and that, abandoning his lofty position of arbiter, he must submit merely to be the executer of the orders of the majority. It was this majority which henceforward commanded in Augsburg. They excluded the imperial councillors who advocated more equitable views, and the Archbishop of Mentz himself ceased for a time to appear in the diet. The majority ordered that a refutation of the Evangelical doctrine should be immediately drawn up by Romish theologians. If they had selected for this purpose moderate men like the Bishop of Augsburg, the Reformation would still have had some chance of success with the great principles of Christianity; but it was to the enemies of the Reform, to the old champions of Rome and of Aristotle, exasperated by so many defeats, that they resolved to intrust this task.

They were numerous at Augsburg, and not held

in very great esteem. “The princes,” said Jonas, “have brought their learned men with them, and some even their unlearned and their fools.” Provost Faber and Doctor Eck led the troop; behind them was drawn up a cohort of monks, and above all of Dominicans, tools of the Inquisition, and impatient to recompense themselves for the opprobrium they had so long endured. There was the provincial of the Dominicans, Paul Hugo, their vicar John Bourkard, one of their priors Conrad Koelein, who had written against Luther’s marriage; with a number of Carthusians, Augustines, Franciscans, and the vicars of several bishops. Such were the men who, to the number of twenty, were commissioned to refute Melancthon.

One might beforehand have augured of the work by the workmen. Each one understood that it was a question, not of refuting the Confession, but of branding it. Campeggio, who doubtless suggested this ill-omened list to Charles, was well aware that these doctors were incapable of measuring themselves with Melancthon; but their names formed the most decided standard of

popery, and announced to the world clearly and immediately what the diet proposed to do. This was the essential point. Rome would not leave Christendom even hope.

It was, however, requisite to know whether the diet, and the emperor who was its organ, had the right of pronouncing in this purely religious matter.

Charles put the question both to the Evangelicals and to the Romanists.

“Your highness,” said Luther, who was consulted by the elector, “may reply with all assurance: Yes, if the emperor wish it, let him be judge! I will bear everything on his part; but let him decide nothing contrary to the Word of God. Your highness cannot put the emperor above God himself.

Does not the first commandment say, Thou shalt have no other Gods before me?” The reply of the papal adherents was quite as positive in a contrary sense.

“We think,” said they, “that his majesty, in accord with the electors, princes, and states of the empire, has the right to proceed in this affair, as Roman Emperor, guardian, advocate, and sovereign protector of the Church and of our most holy faith.” Thus, in the first days of the Reformation, the Evangelical Church frankly ranged itself under the throne of Jesus Christ, and the Roman Church under the Scepter of kings.

Enlightened men, even among Protestants, have misunderstood this double nature of Protestantism an Popery.

The philosophy of Aristotle and the hierarchy of Rome, thanks to this alliance with the civil power, were at length about to see the day of their long-expected triumph arrive. So long as the schoolmen had been left to the force of their syllogisms and of their abuse, they had been defeated; but now Charles the Fifth and the diet held out their hands to them; the reasonings of Faber, Eck, and Wimpina were about to be

countersigned by the German chancellor, and confirmed by the great seals of the empire.

Who could resist them? The Romish error has never had any strength except by its union with the secular arm; and its victories in the Old and in the New World are owing, even in our days, to state patronage. These things did not escape the piercing eye of Luther. He saw at once the weakness of the argument of the papist doctors and the power of Charles's arm. "You are waiting for your adversaries' answer," wrote he to his friends in Augsburg; "it is already written, and here it is: The Fathers, the Fathers, the Fathers; the Church, the Church, the Church; usage, custom; but of the Scriptures — nothing!" — "Then the emperor, supported by the testimony of these arbiters, will pronounce against you; and then will you hear boastings from all sides that will ascend up to heaven, and threats that will descend even to hell." Thus changed the situation of the Reform. Charles was obliged to acknowledge his weakness; and, to save the appearance of his power, he took a decisive part with the enemies of Luther. The

emperor’s impartiality disappeared: the state turned against the Gospel, and there remained for it no other saviour than God.

At first many gave way to extreme dejection: above all, Melancthon, who had a nearer view of the cabals of the adversaries, exhausted moreover by long vigils, fell almost into despair. “In the presence of these formidable evils,” cried he, “I see no more hope.” And then, however, he added — “Except the help of God.” The legate immediately set all his batteries to work. Already had Charles several times sent for the elector and the landgrave, and had used every exertion to detach them from the Evangelical Confession. Melancthon, uneasy at these secret conferences, reduced the Confession to its minimum, and entreated the elector to demand only the two kinds in the Eucharist and the marriage of priests. “To interdict the former of these points,” said he, “would be to alienate a great number of Christians from the communion; and to forbid the second would be depriving the Church of all the pastors capable of edifying it. Will they destroy religion and kindle civil war, rather than

apply to these purely ecclesiastical constitutions a mitigation that is neither contrary to sound morals nor to faith?” The protestant princes begged Melancthon to go himself and make these proposals to the legate. Melancthon agreed: he began to flatter himself with success; and, in truth, there were, even among the papists, individuals who were favorable to the Reformation. There had recently arrived at Augsburg, from beyond the Alps, certain propositions tolerably Lutheran, and one of the emperor’s confessors boldly professed the doctrine of justification by faith, cursing “those asses of Germans,” said he, “who are incessantly braying against this truth.” One of Charles’s chaplains approved even the whole of the confession. There was something farther still: Charles the Fifth having consulted the grandees of Spain, who were famous for their orthodoxy: “If the opinions of the Protestants are contrary to the articles of the faith,” they had replied, “let your majesty employ all his power to destroy this faction; but if it is a question merely of certain changes in human ordinances and external usages, let all violence be avoided.” “Admirable reply!”

exclaimed Melancthon, who persuaded himself that the Romish doctrine was at the bottom in accordance with the Gospel.

The Reformation found defenders in even still higher stations. Mary, sister of Charles the Fifth, and widow of King Louis of Hungary, arriving at Augsburg three days after the reading of the Confession, with her sister-inlaw the Queen of Bohemia, Ferdinand's wife, assiduously studied the Holy Scriptures; she carried them with her to the hunting parties, in which she found little pleasure, and had discovered therein the jewel of the Reform, — the doctrine of gratuitous salvation. This pious princess made her chaplain read evangelical sermons to her, and often endeavored, although with prudence, to appease her brother Charles with regard to the Protestants. Melancthon, encouraged by these demonstrations, and at the same time alarmed by the threats of war that the adversaries did not cease from uttering, thought it his duty to purchase peace at any cost, and resolved in consequence to descend in his propositions as low as possible. He therefore demanded an

interview with the legate in a letter whose authenticity has been unreasonably doubted. At the decisive moment the heart of the reform champion fails, — his head turns — he staggers — he falls; and in his fall he runs the risk of dragging with him the cause which martyrs have already watered with their blood.

Thus speaks the representative of the Reformation to the representative of the papacy: — “There is no doctrine in which we differ from the Roman Church; we venerate the universal authority of the Roman Pontiff, and we are ready to obey him, provided he does not reject us, and that of his clemency, which he is accustomed to show towards all nations, he will kindly pardon or approve certain little things that it is no longer possible for us to change.....Now then, will you reject those who appear as suppliants before you? Will you pursue them with fire and sword?.....Alas! nothing draws upon us in Germany so much hatred, as the unshaken firmness with which we maintain the doctrines of the Roman Church. But with the aid of God, we will remain faithful, even unto death, to

Christ and to the Roman Church, although you should reject us." Thus did Melancthon humble himself. God permitted this fall, that future ages might clearly see how low the Reformation was willing to descend in order to maintain unity, and that no one might doubt that the schism had come from Rome; but also, assuredly, that they might learn how great, in every important work, is the weakness of the noblest instruments.

Fortunately there was then another man who upheld the honor of the Reformation. At this very time Luther wrote to Melancthon: "There can be no concord between Christ and Belial. As far as regards me, I will not yield a hair's breadth. Sooner than yield, I should prefer suffering everything, even the most terrible evils. Concede so much the less, as your adversaries require the more. God will not aid us until we are abandoned by all." And fearing some weakness on the part of his friends, Luther added: "If it were not tempting God, you would long ago have seen me at your side!" Never, in fact, had Luther's presence been so necessary, for the legate had consented to an interview, and

Melancthon was about to pay court to Campeggio. The 8th of July was the day appointed by the legate. His letter inspired Philip with the most sanguine hopes. “The cardinal assures me that he will accede the usage of the two kinds, and the marriage of priests,” said he; “I am eager to visit him!” This visit might decide the destiny of the Church. If the legate accepted Philip’s ultimatum, the evangelical countries would be replaced under the power of the Romish bishops, and all would have been over with the Reformation; but it was saved through the pride and blindness of Rome.

The Papists, believing it on the brink of the abyss, thought that a last blow would settle it, and resolved, like Luther, to concede nothing, “not even a hair’s breadth.” The legate, however, even while refusing, assumed an air of kindness, and of yielding to foreign influence. “I might have the power of making certain concessions, but it would not be prudent to use it without the consent of the German princes; their will must be done; one of them in particular conjures the emperor to prevent us from yielding the least thing. I can grant

nothing.” The Roman prince, with the most amiable smile, then did all he could to gain the chief of the protestant teacher.

Melancthon retired filled with shame at the advances he had made, but still deceived by Campeggio. “No doubt,” said he, “Eck and Cochloeus have been beforehand with me at the legate’s.” Luther entertained a different opinion. “I do not trust to any of these Italians,” said he; “they are scoundrels. When an Italian is good, he is very good; but then he is a black swan.” It was truly the Italians who were concerned. Shortly after the 12th of July arrived the pope’s instructions. He had received the Confession by express, and sixteen days had sufficed for the transmission, the deliberation, and the return. Clement would hear no mention either of discussions or of council. Charles was to march straight to the mark, to send an army into Germany, and stifle the Reformation by force. At Augsburg, however, it was thought best not to go so quickly to work, and recourse was had to other means.

“Be quiet; we have them,” said the Romish doctors. Sensible of the reproach that had been made against them, of having misrepresented the Reformation, they accused the Protestants themselves of being the cause.

“These it is,” they said, “who, to give themselves an air of being in accord with us, now dissemble their heresy; but we will catch them in their own nets. If they confess to not having inserted in their Confession all that they reject, it will be proved that they are trifling with us. If, on the contrary, they pretend to have said everything, they will by that very circumstance be compelled to admit all that they have not condemned.” The protestant princes were therefore called together, and they were asked if the Reformation was confined to the doctrines indicated in the Apology, or if there was something more. The snare was skillfully laid. The papacy had not even been mentioned in Melancthon’s Confession; other errors besides had been omitted, and Luther himself complained of it aloud. “Satan sees clearly,” said he, “that your Apology has passed

lightly over the articles of purgatory, the worship of saints, and, above all, of the Pope and of Antichrist." The princes requested to confer with their allies of the towns; and all the Protestants assembled to deliberate on this momentous incident.

They looked for Melancthon's explanation, who did not decline the responsibility of the affair. Easily dejected through his own anxiety, he became bold whenever he was directly attacked. "All the essential doctrines," said he, "have been set forth in the Confession, and every error and abuse that is opposed to them has been pointed out. But was it necessary to plunge into all those questions so full of contention and animosity, that are discussed in our universities? Was it necessary to ask if all Christians are priests, if the primacy of the pope is of right divine, if there can be indulgences, if every good work is a deadly sin, if there are more than seven sacraments, if they may be administered by a layman, if divine election has any foundation in our own merits, if sacerdotal consecration impresses an indelible character, if

auricular confession is necessary to salvation?.....No, no! all these things are in the province of the schools, and by no means essential to faith.” It cannot be denied that in the questions thus pointed out by Melancthon there were important points. However that may be, the evangelical committee were soon agreed, and on the morrow they gave an answer to Charles’s ministers, drawn up with as much frankness as firmness, in which they said “that the Protestants, desirous of arriving at a cordial understanding, had not wished to complicate their situation, and had proposed not to specify all the errors that had been introduced into the Church, but to confess all the doctrines that were essential to salvation; that if, nevertheless, the adverse party felt itself urged to maintain certain abuses, or to put forward any point not mentioned in the Confession, the Protestants declared themselves ready to reply in conformity with the Word of God.” The tone of this answer showed pretty clearly that the evangelical Christians did not fear to follow their adversaries wherever the latter should call them. Accordingly the Roman party said no more on this business.

Chapter 9

The Refutation

The commission charged to refute the Confession met twice a-day, and each of the theologians who composed it added to it his refutations and his hatred.

On the 13th July the work was finished. “Eck with his band, said Melancthon, “transmitted it to the emperor.” Great was the astonishment of this prince and of his ministers at seeing a work of two hundred and eighty pages filled with abuse. “Bad workmen waste much wood,” said Luther, “and impious writers soil much paper.” This was not all: to the Refutation were subjoined eight appendices on the heresies that Melancthon had dissembled (as they said), and wherein they exposed the contradictions and “the horrible sects” to which Lutheranism had given birth. Lastly, not confining themselves to this official answer, the Romish theologians, who saw the sun of power shining upon them, filled Augsburg with insolent and

abusive pamphlets.

There was but one opinion on the Papist Refutation; it was found confused, violent, thirsting for blood. Charles the Fifth had too much good taste not to perceive the difference that existed between this coarse work and the noble dignity of Melancthon’s Confession. He rolled, handled, crushed, and so damaged the two hundred and eighty pages of his doctors, that when he returned them two days after, says Spalatin, there were not more than twelve entire. Charles would have been ashamed to have such a pamphlet read in the diet, and he required, in consequence, that it should be drawn up anew, shorter and in more moderate language. That was not easy, “for the adversaries, confused and stupified,” says Brentz, “by the noble simplicity of the evangelical Confession, neither knew where to begin nor where to end; they accordingly took nearly three weeks to do their work over again.” Charles and his ministers had great doubts of its success; leaving, therefore, the theologians for a moment, they imagined another manoeuvre. “Let us take each of the protestant

princes separately," said they: "isolated, they will not resist." Accordingly, on the 15th July, the Margrave of Brandenburg was visited by his two cousins, the Electors of Mentz and of Brandenburg, and by his two brothers the Margraves Frederick and John Albert. "Abandon this new faith," said they to him, "and return to that which existed a century ago. If you do so, there are no favors that you may not expect from the emperor; if not, dread his anger." Shortly after, the Duke Frederick of Bavaria, the Count of Nassau, De Rogendorf, and Truchses were announced to the Elector on the part of Charles. "You have solicited the emperor," said they, "to confirm the marriage of your son with the Princess of Juliers, and to invest you with the electoral dignity; but his majesty declares, that if you do not renounce the heresy of Luther, of which you are the principal abettor, he cannot accede to your demand." At the same time the Duke of Bavaria, employing the most urgent solicitations, accompanied with the most animated gestures and the most sinister threats, called upon the elector to abandon his faith. "It is asserted," added Charles's envoys, "that you have made an alliance with the

Swiss. The emperor cannot believe it; and he orders you to let him know the truth." The Swiss! it was the same thing as rebellion. This alliance was the phantom incessantly invoked at Augsburg to alarm Charles the Fifth. And in reality deputies or at least friends of the Swiss, had already appeared in that city, and thus rendered the position still more serious.

Bucer had arrived two days before the reading of the Confession, and Capito on the day subsequent to it. There was even a report that Zwingle would join them. But for a long time all in Augsburg, except the Strasburg deputation, were ignorant of the presence of these doctors.

It was only twenty-one days after their arrival that Melancthon learned it positively, so great was the mystery in which the Zwinglians were forced to enshroud themselves. This was not without reason: a conference with Melancthon having been requested by them: "Let them write," replied he; "I should compromise our cause by an interview with them." Bucer and Capito in their retreat, which was

like a prison to them, had taken advantage of their leisure to draw up the Tetrapolitan Confession, or the confession of the four cities. The deputies of Strasburg, Constance, Memmingen, and Lindau, presented it to the emperor. These cities purged themselves from the reproach of war and revolt that had been continually objected against them. They declared that their only motive was Christ's glory, and professed the truth "freely, boldly, but without insolence and without scurrility." Zwingle about the same time caused a private confession to be communicated to Charles, which excited a general uproar. "Does he not dare to say," exclaimed the Romanists, "that the mitred and withered race (by which he means the bishops) is in the Church what hump-backs and the scrofula are in the body?" — "Does he not insinuate," said the Lutherans; "that we are beginning to look back after the onions and garlic of Egypt?" — "One might say with great truth that he had lost his senses," exclaimed Melancthon. "All ceremonies, according to him, ought to be abolished; all the bishops ought to be suppressed. In a word, all is perfectly Helvetic, that is to say, supremely

barbarous.” One man formed an exception to this concert of reproaches, and this was Luther. “Zwingle pleases me tolerably,” wrote he to Jonas, “as well as Bucer.” By Bucer, he meant no doubt the Tetrapolitan Confession: this expression should be noted.

Thus three Confessions, laid at the feet of Charles the Fifth, attested the divisions that were rending Protestantism. In vain did Bucer and Capito endeavor to come to an understanding with Melancthon, and write to him: “We will meet where you will, and when you will; we will bring Sturm alone with us, and if you desire it, we will not even bring him.” All was unavailing. It is not enough for a Christian to confess Christ; one disciple should confess another disciple, even if the latter lies under the shame of the world; but they did not then comprehend this duty. “Schism is in the schism,” said the Romanists, and the emperor flattered himself with an easy victory. “Return to the Church,” was the cry from every side, “which means,” interrupted the Strasburgers, “let us put the bit in your mouths, that we may lead you as we

please.” All these things deeply afflicted the elector, who was besides still under the burden of Charles’s demands and threats. The emperor had not once spoken to him, and it was everywhere said that his cousin George of Saxony would be proclaimed elector in his stead.

On the 28th July, there was a great festival at the court. Charles, robed in his imperial garments, whose value was said to exceed 200,000 gold ducats, and displaying an air of majesty which impressed respect and fear, conferred on many princes the investiture of their dignities; the elector alone was excluded from these favors. Erelong he was made to understand more plainly what was reserved for him, and it was insinuated, that if he did not submit, the emperor would expel him from his states, and inflict upon him the severest punishment.” The elector turned pale, for he doubted not that such would certainly be the termination. How with his small territory could he resist that powerful monarch who had just vanquished France and Italy, and now saw Germany at his feet? And besides, if he could do it,

had he the right?

Frightful nightmares pursued John in his dreams. He beheld himself stretched beneath an immense mountain under which he lay painfully struggling, while his cousin George of Saxony stood on the summit and seemed to brave him.

John at length came forth from this furnace. “I must either renounce God or the world,” said he. “Well! my choice is not doubtful. It is God who made me elector, — me, who was not worthy of it. I fling myself into his arms, and let him do with me what shall seem good to him.” Thus the elector by faith stopped the mouths of lions and subdued kingdoms. All evangelical Christendom had taken part in the struggle of John the Persevering. It was seen that if he should now fall, all would fall with him; and they endeavored to support him. “Fear not,” cried the Christians of Magdeburg, “for your highness is under Christ’s banner.” “Italy is in expectation,” wrote they from Venice; “if for Christ’s glory you must die, fear nothing.” But it was from a higher source that John’s courage was

derived. “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,” said his Master. The elector, in like manner, beheld in his dreams George fall from the top of the mountain, and lie dashed in pieces at his feet.

Once resolved to lose everything, John, free, happy, and tranquil, assembled his theologians. These generous men desired to save their master. “Gracious lord,” said Spalatin, “recollect that the Word of God, being the sword of the Spirit, must be upheld, not by the secular power, but by the hand of the Almighty.” — “Yes!” said all the doctors, “we do not wish that, to save us, you should risk your children, your subjects, your states, your crown.....We will rather give ourselves into the hands of the enemy, and conjure him to be satisfied with our blood.” John, touched by this language, refused, however, their solicitations, and firmly repeated these words, which had become his device: “I also desire to confess my Savior.” It was on the 20th July that he replied to the pressing arguments by which Charles had endeavored to shake him. He proved to the emperor that, being

his brother's legitimate heir, he could not refuse him the investiture, which, besides, the Diet of Worms had secured to him. He added, that he did not blindly believe what his doctors said, but that, having recognized the Word of God to be the foundation of their teaching, he confessed anew, and without any hesitation, all the articles of the Apology. "I therefore entreat your majesty," continued he, "to permit me and mine to render an account to God alone of what concerns the salvation of our souls." The Margrave of Brandenburg made the same reply. Thus failed this skillful manoeuvre, by which the Romanists had hoped to break the strength of the Reformation.

Six weeks had elapsed since the Confession, and as yet there was no reply.

"The Papists, from the moment they heard the Apology," it was said, "suddenly lost their voice." At length the Romish theologians handed their revised and corrected performance to the emperor, and persuaded this prince to present it in his own name. The mantle of the state seemed to them

admirably adapted to the movements of Rome. “These sycophants,” said Melancthon, “have desired to clothe themselves with the lion’s skin, to appear to us so much the more terrible.” All the states of the empire were convoked for the next day but one.

On Wednesday, 3rd August, at two o’clock in the afternoon, the emperor, sitting on his throne in the chapel of the Palatinate Palace, attended by his brother, with the electors, princes, and deputies, the Elector of Saxony and his allies were introduced, and the count-palatine, who was called “Charles’s mouthpiece,” said to them: “His majesty having handed your Confession to several doctors of different nations, illustrious by their knowledge, their morals, and their impartiality, has read their reply with the greatest care, and submits it to you as his own.” Alexander Schweiss then took the papers and read the Refutation. The Roman party approved some articles of the Confession, condemned others, and in certain less salient passages, it distinguished between what must be rejected and what accepted.

It gave way on an important point; the opus operatum. The Protestants having said in their 13th Article that faith was necessary in the sacrament, the Romish party assented to it; thus abandoning an error which the papacy had so earnestly defended against Luther in that very city of Augsburg, by the mouth of Cajetan.

Moreover, they recognized as truly christian the evangelical doctrine on the Trinity, on Christ, on baptism, on eternal punishment, and on the origin of evil.

But on all the other points, Charles, his princes, and his theologians, declared themselves immovable. They maintained that men are born with the fear of God, that good works are meritorious, and that they justify in union with faith. They upheld the seven sacraments, the mass, transubstantiation, the withdrawal of the cup, the celibacy of priests, the invocation of saints, and denied that the Church was an assembly of the saints.

This Refutation was skillful in some respects, and, above all, in what concerned the doctrine of works and of faith. But on other points, in particular on the withdrawal of the cup and the celibacy of priests, its arguments were lamentably weak, and contrary to the well known facts of history.

While the Protestants had taken their stand on the Scriptures, their adversaries supported the divine origin of the hierarchy, and laid down absolute submission to its laws. Thus, the essential character, which still distinguishes Rome from the Reformation, stood prominently forth in this first combat.

Among the auditors who filled the chapel of the Palatinate Palace, concealed in the midst of the deputies of Nuremberg, was Joachim Camerarius, who, while Schweiss was reading, leaned over his tablets and carefully noted down all he could collect. At the same time others of the Protestants, speaking to one another, were indignant, and even

laughed, as one of their opponents assures us. “Really,” said they with one consent, “the whole of this Refutation is worthy of Eck, Faber, and Cochloeus!” As for Charles, little pleased with these theological dissertations, he slept during the reading; but he awoke when Schweiss had finished, and his awakening was that of a lion.

The count-palatine then declared that his majesty found the articles of this Refutation orthodox, catholic, and conformable to the Gospel; that he therefore required the Protestants to abandon their Confession, now refuted, and to adhere to all the articles which had just been set forth; that, if they refused, the emperor would remember his office, and would know how to show himself the advocate and defender of the Roman Church.

This language was clear enough: the adversaries imagined they had refuted the Protestants by commanding the latter to consider themselves beaten.

Violence — arms — war — were all contained in these cruel words of Charles's minister. The princes represented that, as the Refutation adopted some of their articles and rejected others, it required a careful examination, and they consequently begged a copy should be given them.

The Romish party had a long conference on this demand: night was at hand; the count-palatine replied that, considering the late hour and the importance of this affair, the emperor would make known his pleasure somewhat later. The diet separated, and Charles the Fifth, exasperated at the audacity of the evangelical princes, says Cochloeus, returned in illhumor to his apartments. The Protestants, on the contrary, withdrew full of peace; the reading of the Refutation having given them as much confidence as that of the Confession itself. They saw in their adversaries a strong attachment to the hierarchy, but a great ignorance of the Gospel — a characteristic feature of the Romish party; and this thought encouraged them. "Certainly," said they, "the Church cannot be where there is no knowledge of Christ."

Melancthon alone was still alarmed: he walked by sight and not by faith, and, remembering the legate's smiles, he had another interview with him, as early as the 4th August, still demanding the cup for the laity, and lawful wives for the priests. "Then," said he, "our pastors will place themselves again under the government of bishops, and we shall be able to prevent those innumerable sects with which posterity is threatened." Melancthon's glance into the future is remarkable: it does not, however, mean that he, like many others, preferred a dead unity to a living diversity.

Campeggio, now certain of triumphing by the sword, disdainfully handed this paper to Cochloeus, who hastened to refute it. It is hard to say whether Melancthon or Campeggio was the more infatuated. God did not permit an arrangement that would have enslaved his Church.

Charles passed the whole of the 4th and the morning of the 5th August in consultation with the Ultramontane party. "It will never be by discussion that we shall come to an understanding," said

some; “and if the Protestants do not submit voluntarily, it only remains for us to compel them.” They nevertheless decided, on account of the Refutation, to adopt a middle course. During the whole of the diet, Charles pursued a skillful policy. At first he refused everything, hoping to lead away the princes by violence; then he conceded a few unimportant points, under the impression that the Protestants, having lost all hope, would esteem so much the more the little he yielded to them. This was what he did again under the present circumstances. In the afternoon of the 5th, the count-palatine announced that the emperor would give them a copy of the Refutation, but on these conditions; namely, that the Protestants should not reply, that they should speedily agree with the emperor, and that they would not print or communicate to any one the Refutation that should be confided to them.

This communication excited murmurs among the Protestants. “These conditions,” said they all, “are inadmissible.” — “The Papists present us with their paper,” added the Chancellor Bruck, “as the

fox offered a thin broth to his gossip the stork." The savoury broth upon a plate by Reynard was served up, But Mistress Stork, with her long beak, she could not get a sup. "If the Refutation," continued he, "should come to be known without our participation (and how can we prevent it?), we shall be charged with it as a crime. Let us beware of accepting so perfidious an offer. We already possess in the notes of Camerarius several articles of this paper, and if we omit any point, no one will have the right to reproach us with it." On the next day (6th August), the Protestants declared to the diet that they preferred declining the copy thus offered to them, and appealed to God and to his majesty. They thus rejected all that the emperor proposed to them, even what he considered as a favor.

Agitation, anger, and affright were manifested on every bench of that august assembly. This reply of the evangelicals was war — was rebellion. George of Saxony, the Princes of Bavaria, all the violent adherents of Rome, trembled with indignation; there was a sudden, an impetuous

movement, an explosion of murmurs and of hatred; and it might have been feared that the two parties would have come to blows in the very presence of the emperor, if Archbishop Albert, the Elector of Brandenburg, and the Dukes of Brunswick, Pomerania, and Mecklenburg, rushing between them, had not conjured the Protestants to put an end to this deplorable combat, and not drive the emperor to extremities. The diet separated, their hearts filled with emotion, apprehension, and trouble.

Never had the diet proposed such fatal alternatives. The hopes of agreement, set forth in the edict of convocation, had only been a deceitful lure: now the mask was thrown aside; submission or the sword — such was the dilemma offered to the Reformation. All announced that the day of tentatives was passed, and that they were beginning one of violence.

In truth, on the 6th July, the pope had assembled the consistory of cardinals in his palace at Rome, and had made known to them the

protestant ultimatum; namely, the cup for the laity, the marriage of priests, the omission of the invocation of saints in the sacrifice of the mass, the use of ecclesiastical property already secularized, and for the rest, the convocation of a council. “These concessions,” said the cardinals, “are opposed to the religion, discipline, and laws of the Church. We reject them, and vote our thanks to the emperor for the zeal which he employs in bringing back the deserters.” The pope having thus decided, every attempt at conciliation became useless.

Campeggio, on his side, redoubled in zeal. He spoke as if in his person the pope himself were present at Augsburg. “Let the emperor and the right-thinking princes form a league,” said he to Charles; “and if these rebels, equally insensible to threats and promises, obstinately persist in their diabolical course, then let his majesty seize fire and sword, let him take possession of all the property of the heretics, and utterly eradicate these venomous plants. Then let him appoint holy inquisitors, who shall go on the track of the remnants of Reformation, and proceed against

them, as in Spain against the Moors. Let him put the university of Wittenberg under ban, burn the heretical books, and send back the fugitive monks to their convents. But this plan must be executed with courage." Thus the jurisprudence of Rome consisted, according to a prophecy uttered against the city which is seated on seven hills, in adorning itself with pearls that it had stolen, and in becoming drunk with the blood of the saints. While Charles was thus urged on with blind fury by the diet and the pope, the protestant princes, restrained by a mute indignation, did not open their mouths, and hence they seemed to betray a weakness of which the emperor was eager to profit. But there was also strength concealed under this weakness. "We have nothing left," exclaimed Melancthon, "but to embrace our Savior's knees." In this they labored earnestly. Melancthon begged for Luther's prayers; Brentz for those of his own church: a general cry of distress and of faith ran through evangelical Germany. "You shall have sheep," said Brentz, "if you will send us sheep: you know what I mean." The sheep that were to be offered in sacrifice were the prayers of the saints.

The Church was not wanting to itself. “Assembled every day,” wrote certain cities to the electors,” we beg for you strength, grace, and victory, — victory full of joy.” But the man of prayer and faith was especially Luther. A calm and sublime courage, in which firmness shines at the side of joy — a courage that rises and exults in proportion as the danger increases — is what Luther’s letters at this time present in every line. The most poetical images are pale beside those energetic expressions which issue in a boiling torrent from the reformer’s soul. “I have recently witnessed two miracles,” wrote he on the 5th August to Chancellor Bruck; “this is the first. As I was at my window, I saw the stars, and the sky, and that vast and magnificent firmament in which the Lord has placed them. I could nowhere discover the columns on which the Master has supported this immense vault, and yet the heavens did not fall.....

“And here is the second. I beheld thick clouds hanging above us like a vast sea. I could neither

perceive ground on which they reposed, nor cords by which they were suspended; and yet they did not fall upon us, but saluted us rapidly and fled away.

“God,” continued he, “will choose the manner, the time, and the place suitable for deliverance, and he will not linger. What the men of blood have begun, they have not yet finished.....Our rainbow is faint.....their clouds are threatening.....the enemy comes against us with frightful machines.....But at last it will be seen to whom belong the ballistae, and from what hands the javelins are launched.

It is no matter if Luther perishes: if Christ is conqueror, Luther is conqueror also.” The Roman party,who did not know what was the victory of faith, imagined themselves certain of success.

The doctors having refuted the Confession, the Protestants ought, they imagined, to declare themselves convinced, and all would then be restored to its ancient footing: such was the plan to

the emperor’s campaign. He therefore urged and called upon the Protestants; but instead of submitting, they announced a refutation of the Refutation. Upon this Charles looked at his sword, and all the princes who surrounded him did the same.

John of Saxony understood what that meant, but he remained firm. “The straight line,” said he (the axiom was familiar to him), “is the shortest road.” It is this indomitable firmness that has secured for him in history the name of John the Persevering. He was not alone: all those protestant princes who had grown up in the midst of courts, and who were habituated to pay an humble obedience to the emperor, at that time found in their faith a noble independence that confounded Charles the Fifth.

With the design of gaining the Marquis of Brandenburg, they opened to him the possibility of according him some possessions in Silesia on which he had claims. “If Christ is Christ,” replied he, “the doctrine that I have confessed is truth.” —

“But do you know,” quickly replied his cousin the Elector Joachim, “what is your stake?” — “Certainly,” replied the margrave, “it is said I shall be expelled from this country. Well! may God protect me!” One day Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt met Doctor Eck.

“Doctor,” said he, “you are exciting to war, but you will find those who will not be behindhand with you. I have broken many a lance for my friends in my time. My Lord Jesus Christ is assuredly worthy that I should do as much for him.” At the sight of this resolution, each one asked himself whether Charles, instead of curing the disease, was not augmenting it. Reflections, criticisms, jests, passed between the citizens; and the good sense of the people manifested in its own fashion what they thought of the folly of their chief.

We will adduce one instance.

It is said that one day, as the emperor was at table with several Romancatholic princes, he was

informed that some comedians begged permission (according to custom) to amuse their lordships. First appeared an old man wearing a mask, and dressed in a doctor’s robe, who advanced with difficulty carrying a bundle of sticks in his arms, some straight and some crooked. He approached the wide fireplace of the Gothic hall, threw down his load in disorder, and immediately withdrew. Charles and the courtiers read on his back the inscription — JOHN REUCHLIN. Then appeared another mask with an intelligent look, who made every exertion to pair the straight and the crooked pieces; but finding his labor useless, he shook his head, turned to the door, and disappeared. They read — ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM. Almost immediately after advanced a monk 1384 with bright eye and decided gait, carrying a brasier of lighted coals. He put the wood in order, set fire to it, blew and stirred it up, so that the flame rose bright and sparkling into the air. He then retired, and on his back were the words — MARTIN LUTHER.

Next approached a magnificent personage,

covered with all the imperial insignia, who, seeing the fire so bright, drew his sword, and endeavored by violent thrusts to extinguish it; but the more he struck, the fiercer burnt the flames, and at last he quitted the hall in indignation. His name, as it would seem, was not made known to the spectators, but all divined it. The general attention was soon attracted by a new character. A man, wearing a surplice and a mantle of red velvet, with an alb of white wool that reached to his heels, and having a stole around his neck, the ends ornamented with pearls, advanced majestically. Beholding the flames that already filled the hearth, he wrung his hands in terror, and looked around for something to extinguish them. He saw two vessels at he very extremity of the hall, one filled with water, and the other with oil. He rushed towards them, seized unwittingly on that containing the oil, and threw it on the fire. The flame then spread with such violence that the mask fled in alarm, raising his hands to heaven; on his back was read the name of LEO X.

The mystery was finished; but instead of

claiming their remuneration, the pretended actors had disappeared. No one asked the moral of this drama.

The lesson, however, proved useless; and the majority of the diet, assuming at the same time the part assigned to the emperor and the pope, began to prepare the means necessary for extinguishing the fire kindled by Luther. They negotiated in Italy with the Duke of Mantua, who engaged to send a few regiments of light cavalry across the Alps; and in England with Henry VIII, who had not forgotten Luther's reply, and who promised Charles, through his ambassador, an immense subsidy to destroy the heretics. At the same time frightful prodigies announced the gloomy future which threatened the Reform. At Spires fearful spectres, in the shape of monks with angry eyes and hasty steps, had appeared during the night. "What do you want?" they had been asked. — "We are going," they replied, "to the Diet of Augsburg!" The circumstance had been carefully investigated, and was found perfectly trustworthy. "The interpretation is not difficult," exclaimed

Melancthon: “Evil spirits are coming to Augsburg to counteract our exertions, and to destroy peace. They forebode horrible troubles to us.” No one doubted this. “Everything is advancing towards war,” said Erasmus. “The diet will not terminate,” wrote Brentz, “except by the destruction of all Germany.” “There will be a slaughter of the saints,” exclaimed Bucer, “which will be such that the massacres of Diocletian will scarcely come up to it.” War and blood! — this was the general cry.

Suddenly, on the night of Saturday, 6th August, a great disturbance broke out in the city of Augsburg. There was running to and fro in the streets; messengers from the emperor were galloping in every direction; the senate was called together and received an order to allow no one to pass the gates of the city. All were afoot in the imperial barracks; the soldiers got ready their arms; the regiments were drawn up, and at daybreak (about three o’clock on Sunday morning) the emperor’s troops, in opposition to the custom always observed in the diet, relieved the soldiers of the city and took possession of the gates. At the

same time it was reported that these gates would not be opened, and that Charles had given orders to keep a strict watch upon the elector and his allies. A terrible awakening for those who still flattered themselves with seeing the religious debates conclude peacefully! Might not these unheard-of measures be the commencement of wars and the signal of a frightful massacre?

Chapter 10

Philip of Hesse

Trouble and anger prevailed in the imperial palace, and it was the landgrave who had caused them. Firm as a rock in the midst of the tempest with which he was surrounded, Philip of Hesse had never bent his head to the blast. One day, in a public assembly, addressing the bishops, he had said to them, “My lords, give peace to the empire; we beg it of you. If you will not do so, and if I must fall, be sure that I will drag one or two of you along with me.” They saw it was necessary to employ milder means with him, and the emperor endeavored to gain him by showing a favorable disposition with respect to the county of Katzenellenbogen, about which he was at variance with Nassau, and to Wurtemberg, which he claimed for his cousin Ulric. On his side Duke George of Saxony, his father-in-law, had assured him that he would make him his heir if he would submit to the pope. “They carried him to an exceeding high mountain, whence they showed

him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof," says a chronicler, but the landgrave resisted the temptation.

One day he heard that the emperor had manifested a desire to speak to him. He leapt instantly on his horse and appeared before Charles. The latter, who had with him his secretary Schweiss and the Bishop of Constance, represented that he had four complaints against him; namely, of having violated the edict of Worms, of despising the mass, of having, during his absence, excited all kinds of revolt, and, finally, of having transmitted to him a book in which his sovereign rights were attacked. The landgrave justified himself; and the emperor said that he accepted his replies, except with regard to the faith, and begged him to show himself in that respect entirely submissive to his majesty. "What would you say," added Charles, in a winning tone, "if I elevated you to the regal dignity?

But, if you show yourself rebellious to my orders, then I shall behave as becomes a Roman

emperor.” These words exasperated the landgrave, but they did not move him. “I am in the flower of my age,” replied he, “and I do not pretend to despise the joys of life and the favor of the great; but to the deceitful goods of this world I shall always prefer the ineffable grace of my God.” Charles was stupified; he could not understand Philip.

From this time the landgrave had redoubled his exertions to unite the adherents of the Reformation. The Zwinglian cities felt that, whatever was the issue of the diet, they would be the first victims, unless the Saxons should give them their hand. But this there was some difficulty in obtaining.

“It does not appear to me useful to the public weal, or safe for the conscience,” wrote Melancthon to Bucer, “to load our princes with all the hatred your doctrine inspires.” The Strasburgers replied, that the real cause of the Papists’ hatred was not so much the doctrine of the eucharist as that of justification by faith. “All we, who desire to belong to Christ,” said they, “are one, and have

nothing to expect but death." This was true; but another motive besides checked Melancthon. If all the Protestants united, they would feel their strength, and war would be inevitable. Therefore, then, no union!

The landgrave, threatened by the emperor, rejected by the theologians, began to ask himself what he did at Augsburg. The cup was full. Charles's refusal to communicate the Romish Refutation, except on inadmissible conditions, made it run over. Philip of Hesse saw but one course to take — to quit the city.

Scarcely had the emperor made known the conditions which he placed on the communication of the reply, than on Friday evening, 5th August, the landgrave, going alone to the count-palatine, Charles's minister, had begged for an immediate audience with his majesty. Charles, who did not care to see him, pretended to be busy, and had put off Philip until the following Sunday. But the latter answered that he could not wait; that his wife, who was dangerously ill, entreated him to return to

Hesse without delay; and that, being one of the youngest princes, the meanest in understanding, and useless to Charles, he humbly begged his majesty would permit him to leave on the morrow. The emperor refused.

We may well understand the storms this refusal excited in Philip's mind: but he knew how to contain himself; never had he appeared more tranquil; during the whole of Saturday (6th August), he seemed occupied only with a magnificent tourney in honor of the emperor and of his brother Ferdinand. He prepared for it publicly; his servants went to and fro, but under that din of horses and of armor, Philip concealed very different designs. "The landgrave conducts himself with very great moderation," wrote Melancthon to Luther the same day. "He told me openly that, to preserve peace, he would submit to conditions still harder than those which the emperor imposes on us, and accept all that he could without dishonoring the Gospel." Yet Charles was not at ease. The landgrave's demand pursued him; all the Protestants might do the same, and even quit

Augsburg unexpectedly. The clue, that he had hitherto so skillfully held in his hands, was perhaps about to be broken: it was better to be violent than ridiculous. The emperor therefore resolved on striking a decisive blow. The elector, the princes, the deputies, were still in Augsburg: and he must at every risk prevent their leaving it. Such were the heavy thoughts that on the night of the 6th August, while the Protestants were calmly sleeping, banished repose from Charles's eyes; and which made him hastily arouse the councillors of Augsburg, and send his messengers and soldiers through the streets of the city.

The protestant princes were still slumbering, when they received, on the part of the emperor, the unexpected order to repair immediately to the Hall of the Chapter. It was eight o'clock when they arrived. They found there the Electors of Brandenburg and Mentz, the Dukes of Saxony, Brunswick, and Mecklenburg, the Bishops of Salzburg, Spires, and Strasburg, George Truchses, the Margrave of Baden's representative, Count Martin of Oelting, the Abbot of Weingarten, and

the Provost of Bamberg. These were the commissioners nominated by Charles to terminate this great affair.

It was the most decided among them, Joachim of Brandenburg, who began to speak. “You know,” said he to the Protestants, “with what mildness the emperor has endeavored to re-establish unity. If some abuses have crept into the Christian Church, he is ready to correct them, in conjunction with the pope. But how contrary to the Gospel are the sentiments you have adopted! Abandon then your errors, do not any longer remain separate from the Church, and sign the Refutation without delay. If you refuse, then through your fault how many souls will be lost, how much blood shed, what countries laid waste, what trouble in all the empire! And you,” said he, turning towards the elector, “your electorate, your life, all will be torn from you, and certain ruin will fall upon your subjects, and even upon their wives and children.” The elector remained motionless. At any time this language would have been alarming: it was still more so now that the city was almost in a state of siege. “We

now understand," said the Protestants to one another, "why the imperial guards occupy the gates of the city." It was evident, indeed, that the emperor intended violence. The Protestants were unanimous: surrounded with soldiers, at the very gates of the prison, and beneath the thousand swords of Charles, they remained firm. All these threats did not make them take one step backwards. It was important for them, however, to consider their reply. They begged for a few minutes' delay, and retired.

To submit voluntarily, or to be reduced by force, such was the dilemma Charles proposed to the evangelical Christians.

At the moment when each was anxious about the issue of this struggle, in which the destinies of Christianity were contending, an alarming rumor suddenly raised the agitation of all minds to its height.

The landgrave, in the midst of his preparations for the tournament, meditated the most serious

resolution. Excluded by Charles from every important deliberation, irritated at the treatment the Protestants had undergone during this diet, convinced that they had no more chance of peace, not doubting that their liberty was greatly endangered in Augsburg, and feeling unable to conceal under the appearance of moderation the indignation with which his soul was filled, being besides of a quick, prompt, and resolute character, Philip had decided on quitting the city and repairing to his states, in order to act freely, and to serve as a support to the Reformation.

But what mystery was required! If the landgrave was taken in the act, no doubt he would be put under arrest. This daring step might therefore become the signal of those extreme measures from which he longed to escape.

It was Saturday, the 6th August, the day for which Philip had requested the emperor’s leave of absence. He waits until the commencement of the night, and then, about eight o’clock, disguised in a foreign dress, without bidding farewell to any of

his friends, and taking every imaginable precaution, he makes for the gates of the city, about the time when they are usually closed. Five or six cavaliers follow him singly, and at a little distance. In so critical a moment will not these men-atarms attract attention? Philip traverses the streets without danger, approaches the gate, passes with a careless air through the midst of the guard, between the scattered soldiers; no one moves, all remain idly seated, as if nothing extraordinary was going on. Philip has passed without being recognized. His five or six horsemen come through in like manner.

Behold them all at lasts in the open country. The little troop immediately spur their horses, and flee with headlong speed far from the walls of the imperial city.

Yet Philip has taken his measures so well, that no one as yet suspects his departure. When during the night Charles occupies the gates with this own guards, he thinks the landgrave still in the city. When the Protestants were assembled at eight in the morning in the Chapter-hall, the princes of both

parties were a little astonished at the absence of Philip of Hesse.

They were accustomed, however, to see him keep aloof, and thought he might be out of humor. No one imagined he was between twelve and fifteen leagues from Augsburg.

After the termination of the conference, and as all were returning to their hotels, the Elector of Brandenburg and his friends on the one hand, elated at the speech they had delivered, the Elector of Saxony and his allies on the other, resolved to sacrifice everything, inquiries were made at the landgrave's lodgings as to the reason of his absence; they closely questioned Saltz, Nuszbicker, Mayer, and Schnepf. At last the Hessian councillors could no longer keep the secret. "The landgrave," said they, "has returned to Hesse." This news circulated immediately through all the city, and shook it like the explosion of a mine. Charles especially, who found himself mocked and frustrated in his expectations — Charles, who had not had the least suspicion, trembled, and was

enraged. The Protestants, whom the landgrave had not admitted to his secret, were as much astonished as the Roman-catholics themselves, and feared that this inconsiderate departure might be the immediate signal for a terrible persecution. There was only Luther, who, the moment he heard of Philip's proceeding, highly approved of it, and exclaimed: "Of a truth all these delays and indignities are enough to fatigue more than one landgrave." The Chancellor of Hesse gave the Elector of Saxony a letter that his master had left for him. Philip spoke in this ostensible document of his wife's health; but he had charged his ministers to inform the elector in private of the real causes of his departure. He announced, moreover, that he had given orders to his ministers to assist the Protestants in all things, and exhorted his allies to permit themselves in no manner to be turned aside from the Word of God. "As for me," said he, "I shall fight for the Word of God, at the risk of my goods, my states, my subjects, and my life." The effect of the landgrave's departure was instantaneous; a real revolution was then effected in the diet. The Elector of Mentz and the Bishops

of Franconia, Philip’s near neighbors, imagined they already saw him on their frontiers at the head of a powerful army, and replied to the Archbishop of Salzburg, who expressed astonishment at their alarm: “Ah! if you were in our place you would do the same.” Ferdinand, knowing the intimate relations of Philip with the Duke of Wurtemberg, trembled for the estates of this prince, at that time usurped by Austria; and Charles the Fifth, undeceived with regard to those princes whom he had believed so timid, and whom he had treated with so much arrogance, had no doubt that this sudden step of Philip’s had been maturely deliberated in the common council of the Protestants. All saw a declaration of war in the landgrave’s hasty departure. They called to mind that at the moment when they thought the least about it, they might see him appear at the head of his soldiers, on the frontiers of his enemies, and no one was ready; no one even wished to be ready! A thunderbolt had fallen in the midst of the diet.

They repeated the news to one another, with troubled eyes and affrighted looks. All was

confusion in Augsburg; and couriers bore afar, in every direction, astonishment and consternation.

This alarm immediately converted the enemies of the reform. The violence of Charles and of the princes was broken in this memorable night as if by enchantment; and the furious wolves were suddenly transformed into meek and docile lambs. It was still Sunday morning: Charles the Fifth immediately convoked the diet for the afternoon. “The landgrave has quitted Augsburg,” said Count Frederick from the emperor; “his majesty flatters himself that even the friends of that prince were ignorant of his departure. It is without the emperor’s knowledge, and even in defiance of his express prohibition, that Philip of Hesse has left, thus failing in all his duties. He has wished to put the diet out of joint. But the emperor conjures you not to permit yourselves to be led astray by him, and to contribute rather to the happy issue of this national assembly. His majesty’s gratitude will thus be secured to you.” The Protestants replied, that the departure of the landgrave had taken place without their knowledge; that they had heard of it with

pain, and that they would have dissuaded him. Nevertheless they did not doubt that this prince had solid reasons for such a step; besides he had left his councillors with full powers, and that, as for them, they were ready to do everything to conclude the diet in a becoming manner. Then, confident in their rights, and decided to resist Charles's arbitrary acts, they continued: "It is pretended that the gates were closed on our account. We beg your majesty to revoke this order, and to prevent any similar orders being given in future." Never was Charles the Fifth less at ease; he had just spoken as a father, and they remind him that a few hours back he had acted like a tyrant. Some subterfuge was requisite. "It is not on your account," replied the countpalatine, "that the emperor's soldiers occupy the gates.....Do not believe those who tell you so.....Yesterday there was a quarrel between two soldiers, and a mob was collected.....This is why the emperor took this step.

Besides, such things will not be done again without the Elector of Saxony, in his quality of marshal of the empire, being first informed of

them.” An order was given immediately to reopen the gates.

No exertions were now spared by the Roman party to convince the Protestants of their good will: there was an unaccustomed mildness in the language of the count-palatine and in the looks of Charles. The princes of the papal party, once so terrible, were similarly transformed. They had been hastily forced to speak out; if they desired war, they must begin it instantly.

But they shrunk back at this frightful prospect. How, with the enthusiasm that animated the Protestants, take up arms against them! Were not the abuses of the Church everywhere acknowledged, and could the Roman princes be sure of their own subjects? Besides, what would be the issue of a war but the increase of the emperor’s power? The Roman-catholic states, and the Duke of Bavaria in particular, would have been glad to see Charles at war with the Protestants, in the hope that he would thus consume his strength; but it was, on the contrary, with their own soldiers that

the emperor designed attacking the heretics. Henceforth they rejected the instrumentality of arms as eagerly as they had first desired it.

Everything had thus changed in Augsburg: the Romish party was paralyzed, disheartened, and even broken up. The sword already drawn was hastily thrust back into the sheath. Peace! peace! was the cry of all.

Chapter 11

The Mixed Commission

The diet now entered upon its third phasis, and as the time of tentatives had been followed by that of menaces; now that of arrangements was to succeed the period of threatenings. New and more formidable dangers were then to be encountered by the Reformation. Rome, beholding the sword torn from its grasp, had seized the net, and enlacing her adversaries with “cords of humanity and bands of love,” was endeavoring to drag them gently into the abyss.

At eight o’clock in the morning of the 16th August, a mixed commission was framed, which counted on each side two princes, two lawyers, and three theologians. In the Romish party, there were Duke Henry of Brunswick, the Bishop of Augsburg, the Chancellors of Baden and Cologne, with Eck, Cochloeus, and Wimpina; on the part of the Protestants, were the Margrave George of Brandenburg, the Prince Electoral of Saxony, the

Chancellors Bruck and Heller, with Melancthon, Brentz, and Schnepf. They agreed to take as basis the Confession of the evangelical states, and began to read it article by article. The Romish theologians displayed an unexpected condescension. Out of twentyone dogmatical articles, there were only six or seven to which they made any objection. Original Sin stopped them some time; at length they came to an understanding; the Protestants admitted that Baptism removed the guilt of the sin, and the Papists agreed that it did not wash away concupiscence. As for the 1395 Church, they granted that it contained sanctified men and sinners; they coincided also on Confession. The Protestants rejected especially as impossible the enumeration of all the sins prescribed by Rome. Dr. Eck yielded this point. There remained three doctrines only on which they differed.

The first was that of Penance. The Romish doctors taught that it contained three parts: contrition, confession, and satisfaction. The Protestants rejected the latter, and the Romanists clearly perceiving that with satisfaction would fall

indulgences, purgatory, and other of their doctrines and profits, vigorously maintained it. “We agree,” said they, “that the penance imposed by the priest does not procure remission of the guilt of sin: but we maintain that it is necessary to obtain remission of the penalty.” The second controverted point was the Invocation of Saints; and the third, and principal one, Justification by Faith. It was of the greatest importance for the Romanists to maintain the meritorious influence of works: all their system in reality was based on that. Eck therefore haughtily declared war on the assertion that faith alone justifies. “That word sole,” said he, “we cannot tolerate. It generates scandals, and renders men brutal and impious.

Let us send back the sole to the cobbler.” But the Protestants would not listen to such reasoning; and even when they put the question to each other, Shall we maintain that faith alone justifies us gratuitously? “Undoubtedly, undoubtedly,” exclaimed one of them with exaggeration, “gratuitously and uselessly.” They even adduced strange authorities: “ Plato,” said they, “declares

that it is not by external works, but by virtue that God is to be adored; and everyone knows these verses of Cato's: Si deus est animus, nobis ut carmina dicunt, Hic tibi praecipue pura sit mente colendus." "Certainly," resumed the Romish theologians: "it is only of works performed with grace that we speak; but we say that in such works there is something meritorious." The Protestants declared they could not grant it.

They had approximated however beyond all hope. The Roman theologians, clearly understanding their position, had purposed to appear agreed rather than be so in reality. Every one knew, for instance, that the Protestants rejected transubstantiation: but the article of the Confession on this point, being able to be taken in the Romish sense, the Papists had admitted it. Their triumph was only deferred. The general expressions that were used on the controverted points, would permit somewhat later a Romish interpretation to be given to the Confession; ecclesiastical authority would declare this the only true one; and Rome, thanks to a few moments of dissimulation, would thus

reascend the throne. Have we not seen in our own days the Thirty-nine Articles of the Anglican Church unfairly interpreted in accordance with the Council of Trent? There are causes in which falsehood is never wanting. This plot was as skillfully executed, as it was profoundly conceived.

The commissioners were on the best terms with one another, and concord seemed restored. One single uneasiness disturbed that happy moment: the idea of the landgrave: “Ignorant that we are almost agreed,” said they, “this young madbrain is doubtless already assembling his army; we must bring him back, and make him a witness of our cordial union.” On the morning of the 13th, one of the members of the Commission (Duke Henry of Brunswick), accompanied by a councillor of the emperor, set out to discharge this difficult mission. Duke George of Saxony supplied his place as arbitrator.

They now passed from the first part of the Confession to the second: from doctrines to abuses. Here the Romish theologians could not yield so

easily, for if they appeared to agree with the Protestants, it was all over with the honor and power of the hierarchy. It was accordingly for this period of the combat that they had reserved their cunning and their strength.

They began by approaching the Protestants as near as they could, for the more they granted, the more they might draw the Reform to them and stifle it. “We think,” said they, “that with the permission of his holiness, and the approbation of his majesty, we shall be able to permit, until the next council, the communion in both kinds, wherever it is practiced already; only, your ministers should preach at Easter, that it is not of divine institution, and that Christ is wholly in each kind. “Moreover, as for the married priest,” continued they, “desirous of sparing the poor women whom they have seduced, of providing for the maintenance of their innocent children, and of preventing every kind of scandal, we will tolerate them until the next council, and we shall then see if it will not be right to decree that married men may be admitted to holy orders, as was the case in the

primitive Church for many centuries. “Finally, we acknowledge that the sacrifice of the mass is a mystery, a representation, a sacrifice of commemoration, a memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ, accomplished on the cross.” This was yielding much: but the turn of the Protestants was come; for if Rome appeared to give, it was only to take in return.

The grand question was the Church, its maintenance and government: who should provide for it? They could see only two means: princes or bishops.

If they feared the bishops, they must decide for the princes: if they feared the princes, they must decide for the bishops. They were at that time too distant from the normal state to discover a third solution, and to perceive that the Church ought to be maintained by the Church itself — by the christian people. “Secular princes in the long-run will be defaulters to the government of the Church,” said the Saxon divines in the opinion they presented on the 18th August; “they are not fit to

execute it, and besides it would cost them too dear: the bishops, on the contrary, have property destined to provide for this charge." Thus the presumed incapacity of the state, and the fear they entertained of its indifference, threw the Protestants into the arms of the hierarchy.

They proposed, therefore, to restore to the bishops their jurisdiction, the maintenance of discipline, and the superintendence of the priests, provided they did not persecute the evangelical doctrine, or oppress the pastors with impious vows and burdens. "We may not," added they, "without strong reasons rend that order by which bishops are over priests, and which existed in the Church from the beginning. It is dangerous before the Lord to change the order of governments." Their argument is not founded upon the Bible, as may be seen, but upon ecclesiastical history.

The Protestant divines went even farther, and, taking a last step that seemed decisive, they consented to acknowledge the pope as being (but of human right) supreme bishop of Christendom.

“Although the pope is Antichrist, we may be under his government, as the Jews were under Pharaoh, and in later days under Caiaphas.” We must confess these two comparisons were not flattering to the pope. “Only,” added the doctors, “let sound doctrine be fully accorded to us.” The chancellor Bruck alone appears to have been conscious of the truth: he wrote on the margin with a firm hand: “We cannot acknowledge the pope, because we say he is Antichrist, and because he claims the primacy by divine right.” Finally, the Protestant theologians consented to agree with Rome as regards indifferent ceremonies, fasts, and forms of worship; and the elector engaged to put under sequestration the ecclesiastical property already secularized, until the decision of the next council.

Never was the conservative spirit of Lutheranism more clearly manifested.

“We have promised our adversaries to concede to them certain points of church government, that may be granted without wounding the conscience,” wrote Melancthon. But it began to be very doubtful

whether ecclesiastical concessions would not drag with them doctrinal concessions also. The Reform was drifting away.....still a few more fathoms, and it would be lost. Already disunion, trouble, and affright were spreading among its ranks. “Melancthon has become more childish than a child,” said one of his friends; and yet he was so excited, that the Chancellor of Luneburg having made some objections to these unprecedented concessions, the little master of arts proudly raised his head, and said with a sharp, harsh tone of voice: “He who dares assert that the means indicated are not christian is a liar and a scoundrel.” On which the chancellor immediately repaid him in his own coin. These expressions cannot, however, detract from Melancthon’s reputation for mildness. After so many useless efforts, he was exhausted, irritated, and his words cut the deeper, as they were the less expected from him. He was not the only one demoralized. Brentz appeared clumsy, rude, and uncivil; Chancellor Keller had misled the pious Margrave of Brandenburg, and transformed the courage of this prince into pusillanimity: no other human support remained to the elector than his

chancellor Bruck. And even this firm man began to grow alarmed at his isolation.

But he was not alone: the most earnest protests were received from without. “If it is true that you are making such concessions,” said their affrighted friends to the Saxon divines, “christian liberty is at an end. What is your pretended concord? a thick cloud that you raise in the air to eclipse the sun that was beginning to illumine the Church. Never will the christian people accept conditions so opposed to the Word of God; and your only gain will be furnishing the enemies of the Gospel with a specious pretext to butcher those who remain faithful to it.” Among the laymen these convictions were general. “Better die with Jesus Christ,” said all Augsburg, “than gain the favor of the whole world without him!” No one felt so much alarm as Luther when he saw the glorious edifice that God had raised by his hands on the point of falling to ruin in those of Melancthon. The day on which this news arrived, he wrote five letters, — to the elector, to Melancthon, to Spalatin, to Jonas, and to Brentz, all equally filled with courage and with

faith.

“I learn,” said he, “that you have begun a marvelous work, namely, to reconcile Luther and the pope; but the pope will not be reconciled, and Luther begs to be excused. And if, in despite of them, you succeed in this affair, then after your example I will bring together Christ and Belial.

“The world I know is full of wranglers who obscure the doctrine of justification by faith, and of fanatics who persecute it. Do not be astonished at it, but continue to defend it with courage, for it is the heel of the seed of the woman that shall bruise the head of the serpent. “Beware also of the jurisdiction of the bishops, for fear we should soon have to recommence a more terrible struggle than the first.

They will take our concessions widely, very widely, always more widely, and will give us theirs narrowly, very narrowly, and always more narrowly. All these negotiations are impossible, unless the pope should renounce his papacy.

“A pretty motive indeed our adversaries assign! They cannot, say they, restrain their subjects, if we do not publish everywhere that they have the truth on their side: as if God only taught his Word, that our enemies might at pleasure tyrannize over their people.

“They cry out that we condemn all the Church. No, we do not condemn it; but as for them, they condemn all the Word of God, and the Word of God is more than the Church.” This important declaration of the reformers decides the controversy between the evangelical Christians and the Papacy: unfortunately we have often seen Protestants return, on this fundamental point, to the error of Rome, and set the visible Church above the Word of God.

“I write to your now,” continues Luther, “to believe with all of us (and that through obedience to Jesus Christ), that Campeggio is a famous demon. I cannot tell how violently I am agitated by the conditions which you propose. The plan of

Campeggio and the pope had been to try us first by threats, and then, if these do not succeed, by stratagems; you have triumphed over the first attack, and sustained the terrible coming of Caesar: now, then, for the second. Act with courage, and yield nothing to the adversaries, except what can be proved with evidence from the very Word of God.

“But if, which Christ forbid! you do not put forward all the Gospel; if, on the contrary, you shut up that glorious eagle in a sack; Luther — doubt it not! — Luther will come and gloriously deliver the eagle. As certainly as Christ lives, that shall be done!” Thus spoke Luther, but in vain: everything in Augsburg was tending towards approaching ruin; Melancthon had a bandage over his eyes that nothing could tear off. He no longer listened to Luther, and cared not for popularity. “It does not become us,” said he, “to be moved by the clamors of the vulgar: we must think of peace and of posterity. If we repeal the episcopal jurisdiction, what will be the consequence to our descendants? The secular powers care nothing about the interests of religion. Besides, too much dissimilarity in the

churches is injurious to peace: we must unite with the bishops, lest the infamy of schism should overwhelm us for ever." The evangelicals too readily listened to Melancthon, and vigorously labored to bind to the papacy by the bonds of the hierarchy that Church which God had so wonderfully emancipated. Protestantism rushed blindfold into the nets of its enemies. Already serious voices announced the return of the Lutherans into the bosom of the Romish Church. "They are preparing their defection, and are passing over to the Papists," said Zwingle. The politic Charles the Fifth acted in such a manner that no haughty word should compromise the victory; but the Roman clergy could not master themselves: their pride and insolence increased every day. "One would never believe," said Melancthon, "the airs of triumph which the Papists give themselves." There was good reason! the agreement was on the verge of conclusion: yet one or two steps.....and then, woe to the Reformation!

Who could prevent this desolating ruin? It was Luther who pronounced the name towards which

all eyes should be turned: “Christ lives,” said he, “and He by whom the violence of our enemies has been conquered will give us strength to surmount their wiles.” This, which was in truth the only resource, did not disappoint the Reformation.

If the Roman hierarchy had been willing, under certain admissible conditions, to receive the Protestants who were ready to capitulate, all would have been over with them. When once it held them in its arms, it would have stifled them; but God blinded the Papacy, and thus saved his Church. “No concessions,” had declared the Romish senate; and Campeggio, elated with his victory, repeated, “No concessions!” He moved heaven and earth to inflame the Catholic zeal of Charles in this decisive moment. From the emperor he passed to the princes. “Celibacy, confession, the withdrawal of the cup, private masses!” exclaimed he: “all these are obligatory: we must have all.” This was saying to the evangelical Christians, as the Samnites to the ancient Romans: “Here are the Caudine Forks; pass through them!” The Protestants saw the yoke, and shuddered. God revived the courage of confessors

in their weakened hearts. They raised their heads, and rejected this humiliating capitulation. The commission was immediately dissolved.

This was a great deliverance; but soon appeared a fresh danger. The evangelical Christians ought immediately to have quitted Augsburg; but, said one of them, “Satan, disguised as an angel of light, blinded the eyes of their understanding.” They remained.

All was not yet lost for Rome, and the spirit of falsehood and of cunning might again renew its attacks.

It was believed at court that this disagreeable termination of the commission was to be ascribed to some wrong-headed individuals, and particularly to Duke George. They therefore resolved to name another, composed of six members only: on the one side, Eck, with the Chancellors of Cologne and Baden; on the other, Melancthon, with the Chancellors Bruck and Heller. The Protestants consented, and all was begun anew.

The alarm then increased among the most decided followers of the Reformation. “If we expose ourselves unceasingly to new dangers, must we not succumb at last?” The deputies of Nuremberg in particular declared that their city would never place itself again under the detested yoke of the bishops. “It is the advice of the undecided Erasmus that Melancthon follows,” said they. “Say rather of Ahithophel” (2 Samuel xv.), replied others. “However it may be,” added they; “if the pope had bought Melancthon, the latter could have done nothing better to secure the victory for him.” The landgrave was especially indignant at this cowardice. “Melancthon,” wrote he to Zwingle, “walks backwards like a crab.” From Friedwald, whither he had repaired after his flight from Augsburg, Philip of Hesse endeavored to check the fall of Protestantism. “When we begin to yield, we always yield more,” wrote he to his ministers at Augsburg. “Declare therefore to my allies that I reject these perfidious conciliations. If we are Christians, what we should pursue is, not our own advantage, but the consolation of so many

weary and afflicted consciences, for whom there is no salvation if we take away the Word of God. The bishops are not real bishops, for they speak not according to the Holy Scriptures. If we acknowledge them, what would follow? They would remove our ministers, silence the Gospel, re-establish ancient abuses, and the last state would be worse than the first. If the Papists will permit the free preaching of the pure Gospel, let us come to an understanding with them; for the truth will be the strongest, and will root out all the rest. But if not! — No. This is not the moment to yield, but to remain firm even to death. Bafile these fearful combinations of Melancthon, and tell the deputies of the cities, from me, to be men, and not women. Let us fear nothing: God is with us." Melancthon and his friends, thus attacked, sought to justify themselves: on the one hand, they maintained, that if they preserved the doctrine it would finally overthrow the hierarchy. But then why restore it? Was it not more than doubtful whether a doctrine so enfeebled would still retain strength sufficient to shake the Papacy? On the other hand, Melancthon and his friends pointed out two phantoms before

which they shrunk in affright. The first was war, which, in their opinion, was imminent. “It will not only,” said they, “bring numberless temporal evils with it, — the devastation of Germany, murder, violation, sacrilege, rapine; but it will produce spiritual evils more frightful still, and inevitably bring on the perturbation of all religion.” The second phantom was the supremacy of the state. Melancthon and his friends foresaw the dependence to which the princes would reduce the Church, the increasing secularization of its institutions and of its instruments, the spiritual death that would result, and shrank back with terror from the frightful prospect. “Good men do not think that the court should regulate the ministry of the Church,” said Brentz. “Have you not yourselves experienced,” added he ironically, “with what wisdom and mildness these boors (‘tis thus I denominate the officials and prefects of the princes) treat the ministers of the Church, and the Church itself. Rather die seven times!” — “I see,” exclaimed Melancthon, “what a Church we shall have if the ecclesiastical government is abolished.

I discover in the future a tyranny far more intolerable than that which has existed to this day.” Then, bowed down by the accusations that poured upon him from every side, the unhappy Philip exclaimed: “If it is I who have aroused this tempest, I pray his majesty to throw me, like Jonas, into the sea, and to drag me out only to give me up to torture and to the stake.” If the Romish episcopacy were once recognized, all seemed easy. In the Commission of Six, they conceded the cup to the laity, marriage to the pastors, and the article of prayer to saints appeared of little importance.

But they stopped at three doctrines which the evangelicals could not yield.

The first was the necessity of human satisfaction for the remission of the penalties of sin; the second, the idea of something meritorious in every good work; the third, the utility of private masses. “Ah!” quickly replied Campeggio to Charles the Fifth, “I would rather be cut in pieces than concede anything about masses.” “What!” replied the politicians, “when you agree on all the

great doctrines of salvation, will you for ever rend the unity of the Church for three such trivial articles? Let the theologians make a last effort, and we shall wee the two parties unite, and Rome embrace Wittenberg." It was not so: under these three points was concealed a whole system. On the Roman side, they entertained the idea that certain works gain the Divine favor, independently of the disposition of him who performs them, and by virtue of the will of the Church. On the evangelical side, on the contrary, they felt a conviction that these external ordinances were mere human traditions, and that the only thing which procured man the Divine favor was the work that God accomplished by Christ on the cross; while the only thing that put him in possession of this favor was the work of regeneration that Christ accomplishes by his Spirit in the heart of the sinner. The Romanists, by maintaining their three articles, said: "The Church saves," which is the essential doctrine of Rome; the evangelicals, by rejecting them, said: "Jesus Christ alone saves," which is Christianity itself. This is the great antithesis which then existed, and which still

separates the two Churches. With these three points, which placed souls under her dependence, Rome justly expected to recover everything; and she showed by her perseverance that she understood her position. But the evangelicals were not disposed to abandon theirs. The christian principle was maintained against the ecclesiastical principle which aspired to swallow it up: Jesus Christ stood firm in presence of the Church, and it was seen that henceforward all conferences were superfluous.

Time pressed: for two months and a half Charles the Fifth had been laboring in Augsburg, and his pride suffered because four or five theologians checked the triumphal progress of the conqueror of Pavia.

“What!” said they to him, “a few days sufficed to overthrow the King of France and the pope, and you cannot succeed with these gospellers!” They determined on breaking off the conferences. Eck, irritated because neither stratagem nor terror had been effectual, could not master himself in the

presence of the Protestants. “Ah!” exclaimed he, at the moment of separation, “why did not the emperor, when he entered Germany, make a general inquest about the Lutherans? He would then have heard arrogant answers, witnessed monsters of heresy, and his zeal suddenly taking fire, would have led him to destroy all this faction. But now Bruck’s mild language and Melancthon’s concessions prevent him from getting so angry as the cause requires.” Eck said these words with a smile; but they expressed all his thoughts. The colloquy terminated on the 30th August.

The Romish states made their report to the emperor. They were face to face, three steps only from each other, without either side being able to approach nearer, even by a hair’s breadth.

Thus, then, Melancthon had failed; and his enormous concessions were found useless. From a false love of peace, he had set his heart on an impossibility. Melancthon was at the bottom a really christian soul. God preserved him from his great weakness, and broke the clue that was about

to lead him to destruction. Nothing could have been more fortunate for the Reformation than Melancthon’s failure; but nothing could, at the same time, have been more fortunate for himself. His friends saw that though he was willing to yield much, he could not go so far as to yield Christ himself, and his defeat justified him in the eyes of the Protestants.

The Elector of Saxony and the Margrave of Brandenburg sent to beg Charles’s leave to depart. The latter refused at first rather rudely, but at last he began to conjure the princes not to create by their departure new obstacles to the arrangements they soon hoped to be able to conclude. We shall see what was the nature of these arrangements.

The Romanists appeared to redouble their exertions. If they now let the clue slip, it is lost for ever: they labored accordingly to reunite the two ends. There were conferences in the gardens, conferences in the churches, at St. George’s, at St. Maurice’s, between the Duke of Brunswick and John Frederick the elector’s son, the Chancellors of

Baden and of Saxony, the Chancellor of Liege and Melancthon; but all these attempts were unavailing. It was to other means they were going to have recourse.

Charles the Fifth had resolved to take the affair in hand, and to cut the Gordian knot, which neither doctors nor princes could untie. Irritated at seeing his advances spurned and his authority compromised, he thought that the moment was come for drawing the sword. On the 4th September, the members of the Roman party, who were still endeavoring to gain over the Protestants, whispered these frightful intentions in Melancthon's ears.

"We scarcely dare mention it," said they: "the sword is already in the emperor's hands, and certain people exasperate him more and more. He is not easily enraged, but once angry, it is impossible to quiet him." Charles had reason to appear exacting and terrible. He had at length obtained from Rome an unexpected concession — a council. Clement VII had laid the emperor's

request before a congregation: “How will men who reject the ancient councils submit to a new one?” they had replied. Clement himself had no wish for an assembly, which he dreaded alike on account of his birth and conduct. However, his promises at the Castle of St.

Angelo and at Bologna rendered it impossible for him to give a decided refusal. He answered, therefore, that “the remedy would be worse than the disease; but that if the emperor, who was so good a Catholic, judged a council absolutely necessary, he would consent to it, under the express condition, however, that the Protestants should submit in the meanwhile to the doctrines and rites of the Church.” Then as the place of meeting he appointed Rome!

Scarcely had news of this concession spread abroad, than the fear of a Reformation froze the papal court. The public charges of the Papacy, which were altogether venal, immediately fell, says a cardinal, and were offered at the lowest price, without even being able to find purchasers.

The Papacy was compromised; its merchandise was endangered; and the price current immediately declined on the Roman exchange.

On Wednesday, 7th September, at two in the afternoon, the protestant princes and deputies having been introduced into the chamber of Charles the Fifth, the count-palatine said to them, “that the emperor, considering their small number, had not expected they would uphold new sects against the ancient usages of the Universal Church; that, nevertheless, being desirous of appearing to the last full of kindness, he would require of his holiness the convocation of a council; but that in the meanwhile they 1407 should return immediately into the bosom of the Catholic Church, and restore everything to its ancient footing.” The Protestants replied on the morrow, the 8th September, that they had not stirred up new sects contrary to the Holy Scriptures: that, quite the reverse, if they had not agreed with their adversaries, it was because they had desired to remain faithful to the Word of God; that, by

convoking in Germany a general, free, and christian council, it would only be doing what preceding diets had promised; but that nothing should compel them to re-establish in their churches an order of things opposed to the commandments of God." It was eight in the evening when, after a long deliberation, the Protestants were again called in. "His majesty," said George Truschses to them, "is equally astonished, both that the catholic members of the commissions have accorded so much, and that the protestant members have refused everything. What is your party in the presence of his imperial majesty, of his papal holiness, of the electors, princes, estates of the empire, and other kings, rulers, and potentates of Christendom? It is but just that the minority should yield to the majority. Do you desire the means of conciliation to be protracted, or do you persist in your answer? Speak frankly; for if you persist, the emperor will immediately see to the defense of the Church. Tomorrow at one o'clock you will bring your final decision." Never had such threatening words issued from Charles's mouth. It was evident he wished to

subdue the Protestants by terror; but this end was not attained. They replied the next day but one — a day more having been accorded them — that new attempts at conciliation would only fatigue the emperor and the diet; that they only required regulations to maintain political peace until the assembling of the council. “Enough,” replied the redoubtable emperor; “I will reflect upon it; but in the mean time let no one quit Augsburg.” Charles the Fifth was embarrassed in a labyrinth from which he knew not how to escape. The State had resolved to interfere with the Church, and saw itself compelled to have immediate recourse to its ultima ratio — the sword. Charles did not desire war, and yet how could he now avoid it? If he did not execute his threats, his dignity was compromised, and his authority rendered contemptible. He sought an outlet on one side or the other, but could find none. It therefore only remained for him to close his eyes, and rush forward heedless of the consequences. These thoughts disturbed him: these cares preyed upon him; he was utterly confounded.

It was now that the elector sent to beg Charles would not be offended if he left Augsburg. “Let him await my answer,” abruptly replied the emperor: and the elector having rejoined that he would send his ministers to explain his motives to his majesty: “Not so many speeches,” resumed Charles, with irritation; “let the elector say whether he will stay or not!” A rumor of the altercation between these two powerful princes having spread abroad, the alarm became universal; it was thought war would break out immediately, and there was a great disturbance in Augsburg. It was evening: men were running to and fro; they rushed into the hotels of the princes and of the protestant deputies, and addressed them with the severest reproaches. “His imperial majesty,” said they, “is about to have recourse to the most energetic measures!” They even declared that hostilities had begun: it was whispered that the commander of Horneck (Walter of Kronberg), elected by the emperor grand-master of the Teutonic order, was about to enter Prussia with an army, and dispossess Duke Albert, converted by Luther. Two nights successively the same tumult was repeated. They shouted, they

quarrelled, they fought, particularly in and before the mansions of the princes: the war was nearly commencing in Augsburg.

At that crisis (12th September), John Frederick, prince-electoral of Saxony, quitted the city.

On the same day, or on the morrow, Jerome Wehe, chancellor of Baden, and Count Truchses on the one side; Chancellor Bruck and Melancthon on the other, met at six in the morning in the church of St. Maurice. Charles, notwithstanding his threats, could not decide on employing force.

He might no doubt by a single word to his Spanish bands or to his German lansquenets have seized on these inflexible men, and treated them like Moors. But how could Charles, a Netherlander, a Spaniard, who had been ten years absent from the empire, dare, without raising all Germany, offer violence to the favorites of the nation? Would not the Roman-catholic princes themselves see in this act an infringement of their privileges?

War was unseasonable. “Lutheranism is extending already from the Baltic to the Alps,” wrote Erasmus to the legate: “You have but one thing to do: tolerate it.” The negotiation begun in the church of St. Maurice was continued between the Margrave of Brandenburg and Count Truchses. The Roman party only sought to save appearances, and did not hesitate, besides, to sacrifice everything. It asked merely for a few theatrical decorations — that the mass should be celebrated in the sacerdotal garment, with chanting, reading, ceremonies, and its two canons. All the rest was referred to the next council, and the Protestants, till then, should conduct themselves so as to render account to God, to the council, and to his majesty.

But on the side of the Protestants the wind had also changed. Now they no longer desired peace with Rome: the scales had at last fallen from their eyes, and they discovered with affright the abyss into which they had so nearly plunged. Jonas, Spalatin, and even Melancthon were agreed. “We have hitherto obeyed the commandment of St.

Paul, Be at peace with all men," said they; "now we must obey this commandment of Christ, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. On the side of our adversaries is nothing but cunning and perfidy, and their only aim is to stifle our doctrine, which is truth itself. They hope to save the abominable articles of purgatory, indulgences, and the Papacy, because we have passed them by in silence. Let us beware of betraying Christ and his Word in order to please Antichrist and the devil." Luther at the same time redoubled his entreaties to withdraw his friends from Augsburg. "Return, return," cried he to them; "return, even if it must be so, cursed by the pope and the emperor. You have confessed Jesus Christ, offered peace, obeyed Charles, supported insults, and endured blasphemies. I will canonize you, I, as faithful members of Jesus Christ.

You have done enough, and more than enough: now it is for the Lord to act, and he will act! They have our Confession, they have the Gospel; let them receive it, if they will; and if they will not, let them go — — . If a war should come, let it come!

We have prayed enough; we have discussed enough. The Lord is preparing our adversaries as the victim for the sacrifice; he will destroy their magnificence, and deliver his people. Yes! he will preserve us even from Babylon, and from her burning walls.”

Chapter 12

The Elector’s Preparatives and Indignation

Luther gave the signal of departure. They replied to the reformer’s appeal, and all prepared to quit Augsburg on Saturday, 17th September.

At ten at night, Duke Ernest of Luneburg assembled the deputies of Nuremburg and the ministers of the landgrave in his hotel, and announced to them that the elector was determined to leave the next morning, without informing any one, and that he would accompany him. “Keep the secret,” said he to them, “and know that if peace cannot be preserved, it will be a trifling matter for me to lose, combating with you, all that God has given me.” The elector’s preparations betrayed his intentions. In the middle of the night Duke Henry of Brunswick arrived hastily at his hotel, beseeching him to wait; and towards morning Counts Truchses and Mansfeldt announced that, on

the morrow between seven and eight, the emperor would give him his conge.

On Monday, 19th September, the elector purposing to leave Augsburg immediately after his audience with Charles, breakfasted at seven o'clock, then sent off his baggage and his cooks, and ordered his officers to be ready at ten o'clock. At the moment when John quitted the hotel to wait upon the emperor, all the members of his household were drawn up on each side booted and spurred; but, having been introduced to Charles, he was requested to wait two, four, or six days longer.

As soon as the elector was alone with his allies, his indignation burst forth, and he even became violent. "This new delay will end in nothing," he said; "I am resolved to set out, happen what may. It seems to me, from the manner in which things are arranged, that I have now completely the air of a prisoner." The Margrave of Brandenburg begged him to be calm. "I shall go," the elector still replied. At last he yielded, and having appeared again before Charles the Fifth, he said, "I will wait

until Friday next; and, if nothing is done by that time, I shall leave forthwith.” Great was the anxiety of the Protestants during these four days of expectation. Most of them doubted not that, by acceding to Charles’s prayers, they had delivered themselves into the hands of their enemies.

“The emperor is deliberating whether he ought to hang us or let us live,” wrote Brentz. Fresh negotiations of Truchses were without success.

All that now remained for the emperor was to draw up in common with the Romish states, the recess of the diet. This was done; and that the Protestants might not complain of its having been prepared without their knowledge, he assembled them in his palace on Thursday, 22nd September, the day previous to that fixed for the elector’s departure, and had his project read to them by the countpalatine. This project was insult and war. The emperor granted to the elector, the five princes, and the six cities, a delay of six months, until the 15th April next year, to come to an arrangement with the Church, the Pope, the Emperor, and all the

princes and monarchs of Christendom. This was clearly announcing to them that the Romanists were very willing to delay until the usual period for bringing armies into the field.

Nor was this all: the delay was granted only on the express condition that the Protestants should immediately join the emperor in reducing the Anabaptists, and all those who opposed the holy sacrament, by which were meant the Zwinglian cities. He wished by this means to tie the hands of the Protestants, and prevent the two families of the Reformation from uniting during the winter.

Finally, the Protestants were forbidden to make any innovations, to print or sell anything on the objects of faith, or to draw any one whatever to their sect, “since the Confession had been soundly refuted by the Holy Scriptures.” Thus the Reformation was officially proclaimed a sect, and a sect contrary to the Word of God.

Nothing was more calculated to displease the friends of the Gospel, who remained in Charles’s

presence astonished, alarmed, and indignant. This had been foreseen; and, at the moment when the Protestants were about to enter the emperor's chamber, Truchses and Wehe, making signs to them, mysteriously slipped a paper into their hands, containing a promise that if, on the 15th April, the Protestants required a prolongation of the delay, their request would certainly be granted. But Bruck, to whom the paper was given, was not deceived. "A subtle ambuscade," said he; "a masterpiece of knavery! God will save his own, and will not permit them to fall into the snare." This trick, in fact, served only still more to increase the courage of the Protestants.

Bruck, without discussing the recess in a political point of view, confined himself to what was principally at stake, the Word of God. "We maintain," said he, "that our Confession is so based on the holy Word of God, that it is impossible to refute it. We consider it as the very truth of God, and we hope by it to stand one day before the judgment-seat of the Lord." He then announced that the Protestants had refuted the Refutation of

the Romish theologians, and holding in his hand the famous Apology of the Confession of Augsburg written by Melancthon, he stepped forward, and offered it to Charles the Fifth. The count-palatine took it, and the emperor was already stretching out his hand, when Ferdinand having whispered a few words, he beckoned to the count, who immediately returned the Apology to Doctor Bruck. This paper, and the “Commonplaces,” are the reformer’s masterpieces. The embarrassed emperor told the Protestants to come again at eight the next morning.

Charles the Fifth, resolving to employ every means to get his decree accepted, began by entreaties; and scarcely was the Margrave of Brandenburg seated to take his evening repast, when Truchses and Wehe appeared before him, using every kind of discourse and argument, but without success. The next day (Friday, 23rd September), the evangelical princes and the deputies of the cities assembled at five in the morning at the margrave’s hotel, where the recess was again read in the presence of Truchses and

Wehe, Chancellor Bruck assigning seven reasons for its rejection. “I undertake,” said Wehe, “to translate the recess into German in such a manner that you can accept it. As for the word sect, in particular, it is the clerk who placed it there by mistake.” The mediators retired in haste to communicate to Charles the complaints of the Protestants.

Charles and his ministers gave up every idea of reconciliation, and hoped for nothing except through fear. The Protestants having reached the imperial palace at eight o’clock, they were made to wait an hour; the Elector of Brandenburg then said to them in Charles’s name: “His majesty is astonished beyond measure that you still maintain your doctrine to be based on the Holy Scriptures. If you say the truth, his majesty’s ancestors, so many kings and emperors, and even the ancestors of the Elector of Saxony, were heretics! There is no Gospel, there is no Scripture, that imposes on us the obligation of seizing by violence the goods of another, and of then saying that we cannot conscientiously restore them. It is for this reason,”

added Joachim, after these words, which he accompanied with a sardonic smile, “I am commissioned to inform you, that if you refuse the recess, all the Germanic states will place their lives and their property at the emperor’s disposal, and his majesty himself will employ the resources of all his kingdoms to complete this affair before leaving the empire.” “We do not accept it,” replied the Protestants firmly. “His majesty also has a conscience,” then resumed the Elector of Brandenburg, in a harsh tone; “and if you do not submit, he will concert with the pope and the other potentates on the best means of extirpating this sect and its new errors.” But in vain did they add threat to threat: the Protestants remained calm, respectful, and unshaken. “Our enemies, destitute of all confidence in God,” said they, “would shake like a reed in presence of the emperor’s anger, and they imagine that we should tremble in like manner; but we have called unto God, and he will keep us faithful to his truth.” The Protestants then prepared to take their final leave of the emperor.

This prince, whose patience had been put to a

severe trial, approached to shake hands according to custom; and beginning with the Elector of Saxony, he said to him in a low voice: “Uncle, uncle! I should never have expected this of you.” The elector was deeply affected: his eyes filled with tears: but, firm and resolute, he bent his head and quitted Charles without reply. It was now two in the afternoon.

While the Protestants were returning to their hotels, calm and happy, the Romish princes retired to theirs, confused and dispirited, uneasy and divided. They doubted not that the conge which had just been granted to the Protestants would be regarded by them as a declaration of war, and that on quitting Augsburg, they would rush to arms. This thought terrified them. Accordingly, the Elector of Saxony had hardly reached his palace, when he saw Dr. Ruhel, councillor of the Elector of Mentz, hastening towards him, commissioned by his master to deliver this message: “Although my brother the elector (Joachim of Brandenburg) has declared that the states of the empire are ready to support the emperor against you, know that both

myself and the ministers of the elector-palatine and of the Elector of Treves immediately declared to his majesty that we did not adhere to this declaration, seeing that we thought very favorably of you.

I intended saying this to the emperor in your presence, but you left so precipitately, that I was unable." Thus spoke the primate of the German Church, and even the choice of his messenger was significant: Dr. Ruhel was Luther's brother-in-law. John begged him to thank his master.

As this envoy retired, there arrived one of the gentlemen of Duke Henry of Brunswick, a zealous Romanist. He was at first refused admittance on account of the departure, but returned hastily, just as Bruck's carriage was leaving the courtyard of the hotel. Approaching the carriage-door, he said: "The duke informs the elector that he will endeavor to put things in a better train, and will come this winter to kill a wild boar with him." Shortly after, the terrible Ferdinand himself declared that he would seek every means of preventing an outbreak.

All these manifestations of the affrighted Romancatholics showed on which side was the real strength.

At three o'clock in the afternoon the Elector of Saxony, accompanied by the Dukes of Luneburg and the Princes of Anhalt, quitted the walls of Augsburg. "God be praised," said Luther, "that our dear prince is at last out of hell!" As he saw these intrepid princes thus escaping from his hands, Charles the Fifth gave way to a violence that was not usual with him. "They want to teach me a new faith," cried he; "but it is not with the doctrine that we shall finish this matter: we must draw the sword, and then shall we see who is the strongest." All around him gave way to their indignation.

They were astonished at the audacity of Bruck, who had dared call the Romanists — heretics! But nothing irritated them so much as the spirit of proselytism which in those glorious days characterized evangelical Germany; and the anger of the Papists was particularly directed against the Chancellor of Luneburg, "who," said they, "had

sent more than a hundred ministers into different places to preach the new doctrine, and who had even publicly boasted of it." — "Our adversaries thirst for our blood," wrote, as they heard these complaints, the deputies of Nuremburg, who remained almost alone at Augsburg.

On the 4th October, Charles the Fifth wrote to the pope; for it was from Rome that the new crusade was to set out: "The negotiations are broken off; our adversaries are more obstinate than ever; and I am resolved to employ my strength and my person in combating them. For this reason I beg your holiness will demand the support of all christian princes." The enterprise began in Augsburg itself. The day on which he wrote to the pope, Charles, in honor of St. Francis of Assisi, whose feast it was, reestablished the Cordeliers in that city, and a monk ascending the pulpit said: "All those who preach that Jesus Christ alone has made satisfaction for our sins, and that God saves us without regard to our works, are thorough scoundrels. There are, on the contrary, two roads to salvation: the common road, namely, the

observance of the commandments; and the perfect road, namely, the ecclesiastical state." Scarcely was the sermon finished ere the congregation began to remove the benches placed in the church for the evangelical preaching, breaking them violently (for they were fixed with chains), and throwing them one upon another. Within these consecrated walls two monks, in particular, armed with hammers and pincers, tossed their arms, and shouted like men possessed. "From their frightful uproar," exclaimed some, "one would imagine they were pulling down a house. It was in truth the house of God they wished to begin destroying.

After the tumult was appeased, they sang mass. As soon as this was concluded, a Spaniard desired to recommence breaking he benches, and on being prevented by one of the citizens, they began to hurl chairs at each other; one of the monks, leaving the choir, ran up to them and was soon dragged into the fray; at length the captain of police arrived with his men, who distributed their well directed blows on every side. Thus began in Germany the restoration of Roman-catholicism: popular violence

has often been one of its most powerful allies.

On the 13th October the recess was read to all the Romish states, and on the same day they concluded a Roman league. Two cities had signed the Confession, and two others had assented to it; the imperialists hoped, however, that these powerless municipalities, affrighted at the imperial authority, would withdraw from the protestant union. But on the 17th October, instead of two or four cities, sixteen imperial towns, among which were the most important in Germany, declared it was impossible to grant any support against the Turks, so long as public peace was not secured in Germany itself. An event more formidable to Charles had just taken place. The unity of the Reformation had prevailed. “We are one in the fundamental articles of faith,” had said the Zwinglian cities, “and in particular (notwithstanding some disputes about words among our theologians), we are one in the doctrine of the communion in the body and blood of our Lord. Receive us.” The Saxon deputies immediately gave their hands. Nothing unites the

children of God so much as the violence of their adversaries. “Let us unite,” said all, “for the consolation of our brethren and the terror of our enemies.” In vain did Charles, who was intent on keeping up division among the Protestants, convoke the deputies of the Zwinglian cities; in vain, desiring to render them odious, had he accused them of fastening a consecrated wafer to a wall and firing bullets at it; in vain did he overwhelm them with fierce threats; — all his efforts were useless. At length the evangelical party was one.

The alarm increased among the Roman party, who resolved on fresh concessions. “The Protestants call for public peace,” said they; “well then, let us draw up articles of peace.” But, on the 29th October, the Protestants refused these offers, because the emperor enjoined peace to all the world, without binding himself. “An emperor has the right to command peace to his subjects,” haughtily answered Charles; “but it has never been heard that he commanded it to himself.” Nothing remained but to draw the sword; and for that

Charles made every preparation. On the 25th October, he wrote to the cardinals at Rome: “We inform you that we shall spare neither kingdoms nor lordships; and that we shall venture even our soul and our body to complete such necessary matters.” Scarcely had Charles’s letter been received, before his major-domo, Pedro de la Cueva, arrived in Rome by express. “The season is now too far advanced to attack the Lutherans immediately,” said he to the pope; “but prepare everything for this enterprise. His majesty thinks it his duty to prefer before all things the accomplishment of your designs.” Thus Clement and the emperor were also united, and both sides began to concentrate their forces.

On the evening of the 11th November, the recess was read to the protestant deputies, and on the 12th they rejected it, declaring that they did not acknowledge the emperor’s power to command in matters of faith.

The deputies of Hesse and of Saxony departed immediately after, and on the 19th November the

recess was solemnly read in the presence of Charles the Fifth, and of the princes and deputies who were still in Augsburg. This report was more hostile than the project communicated to the Protestants. It bore, among other things (and this is only a sample of the urbanity of this official doctrine), that “to deny free will was the error not of man, but of a brute.” — “We beg his majesty,” said the Elector Joachim, after it was read, “not to leave Germany, until by his cares one sole and same faith be reestablished in all the empire.” The emperor replied, that he would not go farther than his states of the Low Countries. They desired that deeds should follow close upon words.

It was then nearly seven in the evening; a few torches, lighted up here and there by the ushers, and casting a pale light, alone illuminated this assembly: they separated without seeing each other; and thus ended, as it were by stealth, that diet so pompously announced to the christian world.

On the 22nd November, the recess was made

public, and two days after Charles the Fifth set out for Cologne. The ruler of two worlds had seen all his influence baffled by a few Christians; and he who had entered the imperial city in triumph, now quitted it gloomy, silent, and dispirited. The mightiest power of the earth was broken against the power of God.

But the emperor’s ministers and officers, excited by the pope, displayed so much the more energy. The states of the empire were bound to furnish Charles, for three years, 40,000 foot, 8000 horse, and a considerable sum of money; the Margrave Henry of Zenete, the Count of Nassau, and other nobles, made considerable levies on the side of the Rhine; a captain going through the Black Forest called its rude inhabitants to his standard, and there enrolled six companies of lansquenets; King Ferdinand had written to all the knights of the Tyrol and of Wurtemburg to gird on their cuirasses and take down their swords; Joachim of Talheim collected the Spanish bands in the Low Countries, and ordered them towards the Rhine; Peter Scher solicited from the Duke of

Lorraine the aid of his arms; and another chief hastily moved the Spanish army of Florence in the direction of the Alps. There was every reason to fear that the Germans, even the Roman-catholics, would take Luther's part; and hence principally foreign troops were levied. Nothing but war was talked of in Augsburg.

On a sudden a strange rumor was heard. The signal is given, said everyone. A free city, lying on the confines of the Germanic and Roman world, — a city at war with its bishop, in alliance with the Protestants, and which passed for reformed even before really being so, had been suddenly attacked. A courier from Strasburg brought this news to Augsburg, and it circulated through the town with the rapidity of lightning.

Three days after Michaelmas, some armed men, sent by the Duke of Savoy, pillaged the suburbs of Geneva, and threatened to take possession of the city, and put all to the edge of the sword. Every one in Augsburg was amazed. "Ho!" exclaimed Charles the Fifth, in French, "the Duke

of Savoy has begun too soon.” It was reported that Magaret, governor of the Low Countries, the pope, the Dukes of Lorraine and Gueldres, and even the King of France, were directing their troops against Geneva. It was there that the army of Rome intended fixing its point d’appui. The avalanche was gathering on the first slopes of the Alps, whence it would rush over all Switzerland, and then roll into Germany, burying the Gospel and the Reformation under its huge mass. This sacred cause appeared to be in great danger, and never in reality had it gained so noble a triumph. The coup de main attempted on those hills, where six years later Calvin was to take his station, and plant the standard of Augsburg and of Nazareth, having failed, all fears were dispelled, and the victory of the confessors of Christ, for an instant obscured, shone forth anew in all its splendor.

While the Emperor Charles, surrounded by a numerous train of princes, was approaching the banks of the Rhine sad and dispirited, the evangelical Christians were returning in triumph to their homes. Luther was the herald of the victory

gained at Augsburg by Faith. “Though our enemies should have around them, beside them, with them, not only that puissant Roman emperor, Charles, but still more the emperor of the Turks and his Mahomet,” said he, “they could not intimidate, they could not frighten me.

It is I who in the strength of God am resolved to frighten and overthrow them. They shall yield to me — they shall fall! and I shall remain upright and firm. My life shall be their headsman, and my death their hell!

.....God blinds them and hardens their hearts; he is driving them towards the Red Sea: all the horses of Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen, cannot escape their inevitable destiny. Let them go then, let them perish, since they will it so! As for us, the Lord is with us.” Thus the Diet of Augsburg, destined to crush the Reformation, was what strengthened it for ever. It has been usual to consider the peace of Augsburg (1555) as the period when the Reform was definitely established. That is the date of legal Protestantism; evangelical

Christianity has another — the autumn of 1530. In 1555 was the victory of the sword and of diplomacy; in 1530 was that of the Word of God and of Faith; and this latter victory is in our eyes the truest and the surest. The evangelical history of the Reformation in Germany is nearly finished at the epoch we have reached, and the diplomatic history of legal Protestantism begins.

Whatever may now be done, whatever may be said, the Church of the first ages has reappeared; and it has reappeared strong enough to show that it will live. There will still be conferences and discussions; there will still be leagues and combats; there will even be deplorable defeats; but all these are a secondary movement. The great movement in accomplished: the cause of faith is won by faith. The effort has been made: the evangelical doctrine has taken root in the world and neither the storms of men nor the powers of hell will ever be able to tear it up.