

# History

## of the Church of God

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### Chapter XVI

#### SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

**T**HE sixteenth century was the century of the dim, early, stormy morning, when the true white light of the unrisen sun shot athwart the mediaeval night of Roman Catholic Europe, but was soon greatly, and in Southern Europe almost totally, obscured by the regathered masses of heavy and tempestuous clouds, reddened by the infernal glare of the rekindled fires of persecution.

The sixteenth century was the period of the fixed and executed purpose of the popes to build at Rome a religious structure to be known as "St. Peter's," designed to eclipse in costly and colossal magnificence all the other temples of earth; and, though intended by the popes to be a grand perpetual monument of Roman Catholic glory, yet designed by Providence to be a grand perpetual monument of Roman Catholic shame, proclaiming forever to the world the bottomless abyss of corruption into which an organization calling itself the "Holy Catholic Church" had descended to offer in the public marts of Europe *the unblushing sale for gold of unlimited indulgences for past, present and future sins—the declared object of the popes being to devote the gold to the erection of the cathedral of "St. Peter's;"* against which tremendous and unparalleled abomination Martin Lutheri[2]ii was raised up by the Holy Spirit to utter a mighty trumpet-blast of God's absolute and eternal predestination of His people to everlasting life, of justification by faith alone, and salvation by grace alone, which

reverberated all over Roman Catholic Europe, aroused sleeping millions from their nocturnal slumbers, and shook to its center the Kingdom of Mystical Babylon. The sixteenth was the century, too, of the great counter-blast against Luther and Protestantism<sup>iii</sup>**[3]**<sup>iv</sup> in the necessitated external reformation of Catholic morals; in the perpetration of terrific massacres, and the waging of protracted, desolating and bloody wars; in the revivification and intensification of the horrors of the Reformed Inquisition; in the permanent petrification, in the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, of the mediaeval Catholic heretical doctrines of tradition, free-will, Semi-Pelagianism, falling from grace, meritoriousness of good works, transubstantiation, baptismal regeneration, sacerdotalism, Roman apostolical (or, as it should be called, apostatical) images, and indulgences; and in the establishment of the Society of Jesuits, with their Pelagianism, probabilism, and cunning casuistry, their absolute devotion, in both body and soul, to the papacy, their perverted education of European youth, and their accommodating, compromising, mongrel, and therefore "very successful missions" to India, Japan, China, and North and South America. In reference to their Chinese mission, the Schaff-Herzog "Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge" remarks (as, indeed, might well be remarked of all the other Jesuit missions): "It seemed doubtful whether it was the Jesuits who had converted the Chinese, or the Chinese who had converted the Jesuits, to such an extent had the missionaries modified Christianity, and amalgamated it with heathen elements."

The sixteenth was the century of the birth, from Roman Catholicism, of Lutheranism, Episcopalianism and Presbyterianism—High Church Episcopalianism departing least, and Presbyterianism, the youngest daughter, departing most, from the principles of their old mother.

The sixteenth, also, was the century of the almost universal advocacy and practice, by the Protestants, of religious intolerance and persecution of one another and of the Roman Catholics—a principle inherited by the Protestants and Catholics, like Pilate and Herod, though at enmity on most other subjects, heartily agreed in inflicting the most dreadful persecutions upon those poor inoffensive lovers of the truth stigmatized as "Anabaptists" or "Re-baptizers," who fellowshipped neither Rome nor any of her daughters,

and who had inherited their fundamental principle of a pure, spiritual church membership, through the Waldenses, Cathari, Paulicians, Novatians and Montanists, from the apostolic church as plainly characterized in the New Testament. Like the Catholics, so the Protestants, in this century, almost everywhere blended and identified the interests of religion and politics; and so deep and intense was the ecclesiastical and political oppression of the down-trodden peasant-serfs of Germany (as related under the head of the fifteenth century) that even some called Anabaptists, crazed with excitement in those dark, rough, troubled times, confounded political with religious rights, and, in connection with Papist and Lutheran serfs, assumed the weapons of carnal warfare, sought to establish temporal kingdoms, and some proceeded to great extravagances and excesses, and justly perished in their folly. "It is the greatest injustice," says Prof. Philip Schaff, "to make the Anabaptists as such responsible for the extravagances that led to the tragedy at Munster. *Their original and final tendencies were orderly and peaceful.* They disowned the wild fanaticism of Thomas Munzer, John Bockelsohn, and Knipperdolling. They were opposed to war and violence."

A full narrative of the important religious events of this stirring century would fill a large volume; but my treatment of the subject will necessarily be brief.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century Antichristian Rome had apparently slain nearly all her enemies, whose dead bodies lay unburied "in the streets of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt," not yet restored to life by the voice from Heaven; and she seemed, no doubt, to herself to "sit as a queen, who should see no sorrow." Pope Julius II, (1503-1513) was a bold, unscrupulous politician and warrior, who devoted his administration to intriguing and fighting for his own aggrandizement. In 1506, changing the plans of Nicholas V, he laid the foundation-stone of the present cathedral of "St. Peters," which was finished in 1644 at a cost of sixty million dollars. The "elegant heathen Pope" Leo X (1513-1521), having exhausted his treasury in lavish expenditures, and yet desiring to immortalize his administration by the completion of "St. Peter's," commissioned and sent out a number of Dominican monks to sell indulgences or pardons for sins in order to raise money for this purpose.

John Tetzel, one of these monks, went to Juterboch, four miles from Wittenberg, in Saxony, and, with unequalled exaggerations and shamelessness, "sold grace for gold as dear or cheap as he could." He had a price for every sin, and so deluded the people that money poured into his coffers from men, women and children, rich and poor, even from beggars; and he boasted that he had saved more souls by his indulgences than the Apostle Peter had saved by his sermons, and that the red cross he carried had as much efficacy as the cross of Christ. He declared that Christ since His ascension had nothing more to do with the church till the last day, but had entrusted all to the pope, His vicar and vice-regent. Tetzel had, years before, been convicted of infamous crimes; and now he and his associates squandered large amounts of their iniquitous gains in the most abominable dissipations.

The cup of Rome's iniquity seemed indeed, to be full. God no longer suffered this diabolical mockery of His holy religion to proceed unrebuked and unrestrained. Foreknowing all things, He had for thirty-three years been preparing, in the heart of Germany and in the bosom even of the Roman communion, a man qualified by his experience and by the Divine Spirit to meet this very emergency.

Martin Luther, the Elijah of the Protestant Reformation, the ablest man of the sixteenth century, the greatest of all Germans, and one of the grandest characters of all time, the founder of the German language and of modern public schools, the typical hero of the German race, the author of the best German hymns, and the translator of the best German Bible, was born at Eisleben, in the county of Mansfield, in Thuringia, a central district of Germany, November 10th, 1483. His parents, like their ancestors, were poor but free peasants. The day after his birth he was "baptized in the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul." His parents and teachers exercised the most rigid discipline toward him, his mother once whipping him so hard that the blood flowed; his father flogging him so severely that he ran away for awhile; and his teacher lashing him fifteen times in a single morning because he did not know what had not been taught him. In his days "children were martyrs," he says; "the schoolmasters were tyrants and executioners; the schools, jails and hells; and in spite of fear and misery, floggings and tremblings, scarcely

anything was learned." Luther was taught "the Psalter, and the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, and Latin and German hymns." He was so trained that "he paled and trembled at the mere mention of the name of Christ, whom he had been taught to regard as a severe and angry law giver and judge, a second Moses, more rigorous than the ancient of national Israel." His father designed to make a lawyer of him, and sent him off to school at Magdeburg a year, and then to Eisenach four years, where he formed on of the poor "bread-choirs," going round from house to house, and singing hymns and begging his bread. In 1501, at the age of eighteen, his parents sent him to the University of Erfurt, where he became a Bachelor of Philosophy in 1502, and a Master of Arts in 1505. His moral character was at all times unblemished. From early life he had serious religious impressions. These impressions were deepened by the sudden death of an intimate friend, and by his own narrow escape from death, first by a severe illness, and then by lightning. Vividly realizing the vanity of the world, he resolved to forsake it, and at that time knowing of no better way of doing so, he entered the Augustinian convent at Erfurt, July 17th, 1505. This was the best Roman Catholic Order, and traced its origin to Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, in North Africa, in the fifth century. Here Luther "subjected himself to the severest monastic discipline, and the humble services of sweeper, porter and beggar. His deep mental conflicts, penances and mortifications of the flesh seriously undermined his health and brought him to the brink of despair. He found a whole Bible and read it diligently, but it did not bring him peace." Deeply burdened with sin, and not satisfied with his infant "baptism" or any other Roman Catholic form, he invented continually new forms of penance; but "all the while head and heart told him that outward acts could never banish sin." "I tormented myself to death," he said, "to make my peace with God, but I was in darkness and found it not." He became a full monk in 1506; and his prayers, and vigils, and fasts, and castigations were so excessive that he says that all his fellow-monks will bear him witness that, if ever a monk entered Heaven through monkery, he also could thus have entered. He revered the "Fathers," and adored the pope, and sought zealously and heartily to obey their teachings; but no comfort came to his sin-sick soul. John Staupitz, a mystic, and the Vicar-General of the Augustinian Order in Germany, seemed to know something about the truth; he sympathized with Luther in his spiritual conflicts, and

said to him, "There is no true repentance other than that which flows from the love of God and His righteousness;" and an old monk referred Luther to the Apostle's declaration that man is justified through grace by faith. He searched the Scriptures, and found to his sweet joy that it was even so; and, whereas formerly there was no word in Scripture more bitter to him than repentance, there was now no other word that was sweeter. Day and night the Apostle's words concerning the forgiveness of sins by grace through faith occupied his mind; but he did not yet find full rest in Christ. In 1507 he was ordained a priest; and in 1508 he was appointed Professor of Philosophy in Wittenberg University. In 1509 he was made a Bachelor of Theology, and in 1513 a Doctor of Theology. In 1510 he visited Rome on business for the Augustinian Order; and there he saw something of the depth of the mystery of Roman Catholic iniquity, so that he afterwards said he would not take a hundred thousand florins instead of having seen Rome. While devoutly, on his knees, creeping up the *Scala Sancto*, or holy stairway, he seemed to hear an inward voice crying to him, "*The just shall live by faith*" (Rom. 1:17). Pondering these words on his homeward journey, at length their full meaning burst upon him. "Through the gospel that righteousness is revealed which avails before God—by which He, out of grace and mere compassion, justifies us through faith. Here I felt at once," he says, "that I was wholly born again, and that I had entered through open doors into paradise itself. That passage of Paul was truly to me the gate of paradise." His own experience had been strikingly similar to Paul's; that declaration of the Apostle henceforth became the central doctrine of his life and his theology; Paul, his favorite Apostle; and the epistles to the Romans and Galatians, his favorite Scriptures; the latter he styled, in his humorous way, his wife, his Catharine von Bora. A man with such a profound Pauline experience knew the difference between law and gospel—knew that men could not merit the forgiveness of their sins through their own works, or be justified before God through outward observances; and he could not help detesting the corrupt and corrupting legalism and Pharisaism of Rome. And when the monster Tetzl—fit tool for such Satanic business—came in four miles of Wittenberg, and, to make money for himself and the pope, hawked, with brazen impudence, the papal indulgences for sin, and when Luther learned in the confessional at Wittenberg that many of his townspeople had bought indulgences, and considered them a sufficient covering and atonement for

the grossest sins, the spirit of the God-taught professor, like Paul's at Athens, was deeply stirred within him, and he resolved to denounce the horrible abomination. Without consulting any man, and without considering the tremendous consequences, he prepared, and at noonday, Oct. 31st, 1517, he nailed to the door of the "Castle Church" in Wittenberg, ninety-five Theses or Propositions denouncing indulgences. The next day was the "Festival of All-Saints" at Wittenberg. Large numbers of people flocked to the city from all quarters, and were intensely excited by Luther's Theses, and many rejoiced, some from political and some from religious motives, that some one had been found bold enough at last to bell the great papal cat. Instead of taking back home with them indulgences for sin, they carried Luther's Theses; the newly invented printing presses rapidly reproduced them; and in two weeks Germany, and in four weeks, Christendom, was ablaze. The Protestant Reformation was begun. In his Theses and explanatory sermons Luther declared that "the inward spiritual facts of man's religious experience are of infinitely more value than their expression in stereotyped forms recognized by the church, and that in each a solemn thing as forgiveness of sin man can go to God directly without human mediation." During the Apostolic Age and every since, God's people had thus been going immediately to Him, humbly trusting in the merits of Christ for pardon and salvation. All the children of God are priests unto Him; and Christ is the only and all-sufficient High Priest mediating between them and the Father. "All the scaffolding that impudent priests had raised to their profit between God and the soul of man was thrown down by the scriptural truth proclaimed by Luther, and man was brought face to face with his God. The word of forgiveness descended pure from on high without passing through a passing through a thousand corrupting channels."—Luther for several years discovered and denounced more and more of the imposture, corruption and unscripturalness of Roman Catholicism. The pope at first affected to treat him with contempt; but, finding that the truth was everywhere gaining ground, and his dominion threatened, he in 1518 summoned Luther to appear at Rome; but, by the friendly intervention of the Prince Elector of Saxony, it was arranged that Luther should meet the pope's legate, Cajetan, at Augsburg, in 1518, and also another papal legate, Miltitz, at Altenburg, in 1519. During the latter year he also had a public controversy with John Eck, at Leipsic, on the subject of indulgences and

penance, and the authority of the Roman "Church" and of the pope. Leo X, feeling that he could endure this dangerous opposition no longer, in 1520 excommunicated Luther; and the latter, a few months afterwards, boldly burned the papal bull, together with the Catholic Canon Law and False Decretals, and thus declared open war with the Roman Antichrist.

Summoned by Charles V, the Catholic King of Spain and Emperor of Germany, the most powerful monarch of his time, to appear before him at the Diet of Worms in 1521, Luther, to his friends who warned him that he would be burned there as Hus had been burned at Constance, replied: "Though they should kindle a fire as high as Heaven between Wittenberg and Worms, yet I will go and appear in the name of the Lord; yea, I will confess Christ in the very mouth of Behemoth." And, as he was nearing Worms, he said to a friend who warned him of his danger: "To Worms was I called, and to Worms must I go; and, were there as many devils there as tiles upon the roofs, yet would I enter into that city." Before the splendid and imposing assembly, composed of the emperor and more than two hundred princes and nobles, Bishops and archbishops, and five thousand people, April 18th, 1521, Luther calmly and boldly declared that unless his views were proved erroneous by some other authority than by pope or by Council, even by clear testimonies of Scripture or plain arguments, he could not and would not retract anything he had written; that his conscience would not permit him to recant; and he concluded his remarks with these undaunted words: "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise; God help me. Amen." In this, one of the sublimest scenes in history, Luther had been divinely gifted with the ability and boldness to assert the God-given right of freedom of conscience against all mere human authority. At this time it is said that Luther was in the habit of devoting three hours daily to earnest prayer to God. He was allowed by the emperor to leave Worms on a safe-conduct that gave him twenty-one days in which to return to Wittenberg; and May 8th the emperor issued an edict placing him under the ban of the empire, declaring him an outlaw, and forbidding all people to give him food or fire or shelter. The object of Charles V, in this iniquity was to conciliate the pope, and make the latter favorable to his driving the French out of Milan and Genoa; for on the same day, May 8th, a secret treaty of alliance was signed between the emperor and the pope, in which treaty the emperor promised to employ all his power against Luther, and the pope promised to

help the emperor against the French. But Divine Providence defeated the wicked plans of those two political and ecclesiastical chiefs of "Christendom;" for they turned their arms against each other after the French had been conquered, and in 1527 Rome was sacked by a German army in the emperor's name, and more pitilessly pillaged than it had been a thousand years before by the Vandals, and the pope became a prisoner and a tool of his imperial master; and Luther lived twenty-five years after he was outlawed at Worms, and then died peacefully in his bed. The German Princes, at the Diet of Worms, presented a list of one hundred and one grievances of their nation against Rome, reciting the outrageous corruptions, extortions and oppressions perpetrated by the pope and his agents upon Germany; but the emperor and the pope, for their own selfish aggrandizement, refused to concede a peaceful reform of these grievances. This wicked refusal, says F. Seebohm, "involved ten generations in the turmoils of revolution, producing the Protestant Reformation, the Peasants' War and the Sack of Rome, the Revolt of the Netherlands, the Thirty Years' War, The Puritan Revolution in England under Oliver Cromwell, and the formation of the great independent American Republic, until the advancing tide of modern civilization came to a head and broke in all the terrors of the French Revolution. It is impossible not to see in the course of the events of this remarkable period an onward movement as irresistible and certain as that of the geological changes which have passed over the physical world. In view of the bloodshed and misery which, humanly speaking, might apparently have been spared, who can fail to be impressed with the terrible responsibility, in the eye of history, resting upon those by whom, in the sixteenth century, at the time of the crisis, the reform was refused? They were given utterly powerless, indeed, to stop the ultimate flow of the tide; but they had the terrible power to turn what might otherwise have been a steady and peaceful stream into a turbulent and devastating flood."—Luther was protected by the national feeling of Germany from attack; but Frederic, the Elector of Saxony, fearing the most able and famous of the professors in his new University of Wittenberg might fall victim to the emperor's ban, had him stopped, on his return from Worms, at Eisenach, by a band of armed masqued knights, and carried to the fortified castle of the Wartburg. Here he remained *incognito* ten months, and devoted his time to the best German translation of the New Testament that has ever been made—by far the most

important work that he was ever enabled to perform for the German people, and the instrument which, under Providence, contributed most to the permanence of the Reformation. His translation of the New Testament, almost entirely his own unaided work, was published in 1522; and his translation of the Old Testament, in which he was assisted by Melancthon, Bugenhagen and Cruciger, was published in 1534.—During the first and most glorious period of Luther's Christian life, ending about 1522, when, as Prof. T. M. Lindsay remarks in the Encyclopedia Britannica, he was "*raised above himself*," he came to be virtually almost a Bible Baptist. In his tract on the Sacrament of Baptism, published in 1519, he distinguishes carefully between the sign and the thing signified—the ordinance of baptism being the mere outward sign of the far more important spiritual reality within, the death to sin, the new birth, and a new life in Christ. He considered that there was no eternally saving virtue either in the literal water of baptism or in the literal bread and wine of the Lord's Supper; but that the true virtue lay in the living, spiritual, justifying faith within. From this simple scriptural view of the ordinances he made the first departure in his "Babylonian Captivity of the Church" published in 1520, wherein he adopted a view similar to Calvin's—that the ordinances are seals or pledges of the inward grace. But, after he came in contact with the "Anabaptists," he made a still farther departure from the symbolical view of the ordinances, because he thought that neither his first nor his second views would justify infant baptism; and, in his Sermon on Baptism, in 1535, his natural conservatism went far backwards towards his old Roman Catholic standpoint, mediaeval sacramentalism, substituting the outward ordinances for the efficacious atonement of Christ and the inward grace of justifying faith. From his favorite Apostle, in his favorite epistle, which has been called "the Magna Charta of Evangelical Protestantism," Luther ought to have learned not to imitate the foolish Judaizing Galatians, who, "having begun in the Spirit," thought to be "made perfect by the flesh" (Gal. 3:3).—In December, 1521, a party arose in Wittenberg who wished to carry out the Reformation at once to its consistent results, to make the Bible absolutely the only standard of faith and practice, and to return immediately, like the Taborites or Bohemian Brethren and some of the Waldenses, to the original simplicity of Divine worship. Some of the University students and citizens, and Carlstadt, one of

the professors of the University, joined earnestly in this movement. Urged on by some sincere but misguided men from Zwickau (new Bohemia), Storch, Marx and Stubner, who mixed some great errors with many important truths, and are described by historians as half-crazy, they not only taught the spirituality of true religion, and denounced the infant baptism and the multifarious idolatry of Roman Catholicism (which course was entirely scriptural), but they proceeded to such lengths as to enter the Catholic houses of worship, interrupt the services, destroy the pictures, statues and altars, and profess to be infallibly inspired and endowed with the gift of prophecy, so that all human learning, and, as some of them said, even the Scriptures, were useless. Luther, hearing of these proceedings, and feeling that the cause of the Reformation was greatly endangered by such violence, suddenly left the Wartburg and came to Wittenberg, at the risk of his life, and against the remonstrances of the Elector of Saxony, who told him that Duke George would instantly execute upon him the imperial edict of death; Luther replied that God would protect him, and that he would go even if it should rain Duke Georges for nine days, and each one of them were nine times more wrathful than the original. By Luther's powerful preaching, peace and order were soon restored, and the excitement subsided at Wittenberg. He now *prudently* declared that these Catholic forms were indifferent and permissible; though, afterwards, when he thought that his followers were prepared for the instruction, he taught them to discontinue many of these vanities.—The Peasants' War in Germany, in 1524 and 1525, has been described as the "terrible scream of oppressed humanity." "Their oppressions had gradually increased in severity as the nobles became more extravagant, and the clergy more sensual. The example of free Switzerland encouraged the hope of success, and from 1476 to 1517 there were risings here and there among the peasants of the south of Germany. The Reformation, by diffusing sentiments favorable to liberty, was not indeed the cause, but the occasion of the great insurrection of 1525; although Luther, Melanchthon, and the other leading reformers, while urging the nobles to justice and humanity, strongly reprobated the ultimate violent proceedings of the peasants." The Twelve Articles expressing the demands of the peasants are now almost universally commended for their moderation. They asked the right to choose their own pastors; agreed to pay, not small tithes, but tithes of corn for the support of the pastors and the poor; they asked for

freedom from serfdom; that wild game and fish should be free to all; that woods and forests, not yet purchased by the nobles, should be free to all for fuel; that the peasants should not render more services than had been required of their forefathers; that for additional services wages should be paid; that rent, when above the value of the land, should be properly valued and lowered; that definite punishments for crimes should be fixed; that common unpurchased land should be given up to common use; that death-gifts (that is, the right of the lord to take the best chattel of the deceased tenant) should be done away with; and the peasants, in conclusion, declared that any of these articles proved to be contrary to the Scriptures should be null and void. Warned by the terrible French Revolution at the close of the eighteenth century, Germany granted the most of these rights to her peasants early in the nineteenth century. But the German Princes of the sixteenth century were in no mood to grant them. Luther's exhortations to them had no effect in abating what he called their tyranny and insanity; nor did he succeed in inducing the peasants to cease their mad rebellion. "Had he thrown the weight of his influence into the peasants' scales," says Prof. Lindsay, "and brought the middle classes, who would certainly have followed him, to the side of the peasants, a peaceful solution would in all probability have been arrived at, and the horrors of the massacre averted. But Luther, bold enough against the pope or the emperor, never had courage to withstand that authority to which he was constantly accustomed, the German Princes. He trusted too much in fine language. His advice for the choice of arbiters came ten months too late. The bloody struggle came; the stream of rebellion and destruction rolled on to Thuringia and Saxony, and Luther apparently lost his head, and actually encouraged the nobles in their sanguinary suppression of the revolt, in his pamphlet entitled 'Against the Murdering Robbing Rats of Peasants,' where he hounds on the authorities to 'stab, kill and strangle!' The Princes leagued together, and routed the peasants everywhere," and butchered 50,000 of the; 100,000 perished during the war; and the survivors were subjected to greater oppression than ever. The guilt of the Peasants' War has been charged upon the "Anabaptists" by ill-informed and prejudiced writers; perhaps because the "Anabaptists" were known to be the friends of freedom, and because a leader of the peasants was Thomas Munzer, who has been generally called an "Anabaptist." He was a Master of Arts and a Doctor of Theology, a

religious mystic and visionary adventurer, who became a disciple of Storch, and advocated some Baptist sentiments, but who himself never had any "baptism" except in infancy, and never practiced the "rebaptism" of those who had been "baptized" in infancy. He was, therefore, a practical Pedobaptist, though he had many spiritual views of the Scripture. It is said that his father had been killed in a quarrel with a feudal lord; and that he himself, because of his spiritual sentiments was driven from city to city. He finally betook himself to the peasants, and espoused their cause, and became their leader. At first disinclined to war, he was, by the alleged inspiration of one Pfeiffer, inducted to resort to arms. Losing his senses, he fiercely incited his followers to the wildest excesses and signed his addresses "Thomas Munzer, with the sword of Gideon." Escaping from the massacre of his undisciplined army to Frankenhäusen, he was captured and beheaded, with Pfeiffer, at Muhlhausen, in May, 1525. "*The adherents of Munzer,*" says the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, "*did not practice rebaptism, and did not form a congregation.*" These settled facts should forever silence the slander unjustly heaped upon the "Anabaptists" as the pretended authors of the Peasants' War. Luther never advocated the propagation of religion by the sword, and, except against the insurgent peasants, never advised a resort to the weapons of carnal warfare; and he never recovered from the shock produced by the effects of this advice, which crushed for centuries the rights and hopes of the laborers. He vainly deplored the injustice, tyranny and cruelty of the Princes.—To show his decided opposition to the Roman Catholic prohibition of the marriage of priests and nuns (a doctrine of the devils, according to Paul), Luther, in June, 1525, married Catherine von Bora, a nun who, with eight others, had left her convent to worship Christ without the oppression of endless ceremonies. "His marriage was a happy one, and was blessed with six children. He was a tender husband and the most loving of fathers."

One of the most interesting events of the sixteenth century was the controversy between Desiderius Erasmus, of Rotterdam, and Luther, on the Freedom or the Bondage of the Will. Erasmus' book, *De Libero Arbitrio* (Of Free Will), was published Sept., 1524; and Luther's reply, *De Servo Arbitrio* (Of the Bondage of the Will), was published Dec., 1525. Erasmus (born 1466, died 1536) was the finest scholar and critic of his age, the chief of the

Humanists, the literary precursor and then the cowardly deserter of the Protestant Reformation. He published, in 1516, the first complete edition of the Greek New Testament, from which Luther and Tyndall made their vernacular versions, which became the most powerful levers of the Reformation in Germany and England. In his *Praise of Folly* (1510) he heavily satirized the superstitions, follies and vices of the monks and schoolmen; but, when the Beast of Rome showed his teeth, he sarcastically confessed that he was not the stuff that martyrs are made of, and he said that he was willing to accept any doctrine that the "church" received. He seems to have been an utter stranger to a genuine spiritual Christian experience; and he died at last in bitterness and darkness. His defense of Free Will, which contains the usual arguments of conditionalism, is admitted to be the weakest of his writings, and is really *Pelagian* in its nature; as may be seen from his defining free will to be "a power in the human will, by which a man may apply himself to those things which lead unto eternal salvation, or turn away from the same." "In attacking Luther," says M. D'Aubigny, "Erasmus selected the point where Romanism is lost in Rationalism,—the doctrine of free will, or the natural power of man." "I must acknowledge," said Luther, "that in this controversy you are the only man that has gone to the root of the matter; for I would rather be occupied with this subject than with all those secondary questions about the pope, purgatory and indulgences, with which the enemies of the gospel have hitherto pestered me." Erasmus's treatise was so weak that Luther hesitated at first to reply to it. "What! So much eloquence in so bad a cause!" said he; "it is as if a man were to serve up mud and filth in dishes of silver and gold. One can not lay hold of you. You are like an eel that slips through the fingers; or like the fabulous Proteus who changes his form in the very arms of those who wish to grasp him." Luther's book is one of the most powerful of his writings, and one of the two (the other being his Catechism) that he never regretted. An English translation of it was published by Elder James Osbourn, at Baltimore, in 1837. In the preface to this edition, Elder Osbourn truly remarks: "From the early part of the sixteenth century, the church of Christ has derived manifold blessings from the pious labors of this distinguished servant of the Lord." This work of Luther, and Jonathan Edwards's "Careful and Strict Inquiry into the Modern Prevailing Notions of the Freedom of the Will," present an array of solid arguments, from

Scripture, reason and fact, in proof of the particularity and efficacy of Divine grace, and of the goodness and holiness of God, which no rationalist, either in or out of any religious organization, has ever been able to answer. Upon an unprejudiced man who admits the perfect inspiration of the Scriptures, or who even admits that there is a God, and that He is omniscient and omnipotent, the effect of these arguments is simply overwhelming. Erasmus, both in his first and his second work. (*Hyperaspistes*, published in 1526), "treats the dispute entirely from the outside," says the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. The fact is that *Arminian writers*, as Luther said of "Doctor" Eck, "*skim over Scripture almost without touching it, as a spider runs upon water.*" Erasmus's second book, Luther never thought of sufficient force to call for a reply. Luther had been an *Augustinian* monk, and always most highly esteemed the writings of Augustine, and (except, as already mentioned, about 1519, when he became nearly a Bible Baptist) he always closely adhered to both the Augustinian or Pauline doctrine of monergism (or salvation by grace alone) and Augustine's inconsistent doctrine of sacramentalism (or salvation by the sacraments or ordinances). Luther rightly maintained that the imperative (or commanding) and the subjunctive (or conditional) moods do not mean the same as the indicative (or declarative) mood, in Scripture any more than in any other writings; and that the imperative and subjunctive moods are often used in Scripture to show, not the ability, but the inability of man, and his utter dependence upon God; that, if man has the free will or ability to choose holiness and go to God, then he has no need of the grace of God, of the atonement of Christ, or of the regeneration of the Holy Ghost; that, without Christ, man can do (not little, but) nothing; that the holy will of God is the perfect standard of right; that the unchangeable moral commandments of God show what unfallen man could and should have done, but what fallen man ought to, but cannot do; that the secret or decretive will of God *justly permits* (but does not compel) some of His creatures (both angels and men) to depart from Him and go on and perish in their *voluntary* sins, while the same holy will, with gracious, renewing and almighty power, quickens some of the fallen race of men (though no fallen angels) into spiritual life, conforms them to the Divine image, and makes them infallible heirs of the heavenly inheritance; and that thus *both the justice and the grace of God are glorified*; that man's so-called "free will" is, according to the Scriptures,

really in total bondage to sin and Satan (John 8:34; Rom. 6:20; 2 Peter 2:19; Rom. 7:14, 44; Acts 8:23; Eph. 2:1, 4:18; Ezek. 36:26; Matt. 7:18, 12:34; John 6:44; Rom. 8:7, 8; 2 Tim. 2:26; Luke 11:21, 22), and that man's deliverance from that bondage is altogether of the free grace and almighty power of God, who raises men from the death of sin, makes them new creatures in Christ Jesus, and works in them both to will and to do of His own good pleasure (Rom. 3:24, 4:1-8, 16, 11:5,6; Eph. 1:19-20, 2:1-10; 2 Cor. 5:17, 18; John 1:12, 13, 3:3-8; Phil. 1:6, 29, 2:13; James 1:17, 18; 1 Peter 1:1-5; Ps. 110:3; 2 Tim. 1, 9). President Edwards, by far the ablest writer on the Freedom of the Will, demonstrates that the arguments of Arminians are as inconsistent with themselves and common sense as they are with Scripture; that every act of the will, like every other event, has a cause, and that cause is the prevailing motive or disposition of the heart; that if freedom of will, undetermined by disposition or inclination of heart, be essential to moral agency, virtue and vice, reward and punishment, praise and blame, then there is no such thing in the universe as moral agency, virtue or vice, just praise or blame, and the most virtuous beings are least worthy of praise, and the most vicious least worthy of blame; that, if a necessary holiness is no holiness, then God and Christ and the elect angels and glorified saints are not holy; that, if it would not be just in God to require of fallen men perfect obedience, because they cannot render such obedience, and if Christ died simply to make satisfaction for the imperfections of our obedience, and to do away with the old rigorous law and put us under a new and milder law, which required no more than imperfect sincere obedience, in compliance with our poor, infirm, impotent circumstances since the fall, then our imperfections are not sins, for they are not transgressions of any existing law, and therefore they do not deserve punishment, and it would have been unjust in God not to have given His Son to die for us, and not to give His grace to all the fallen family of man, and *thus salvation is not of grace, but is a debt which God owes us and is bound to bestow*; that the doctrine of the sovereignty or self-determining power of the human will, or the ability of man to turn himself from sin to God, teaches men that salvation is in their own power, lulls them in carnal security, leads them to postpone eternal things to a more convenient season, and thus to perish in their sins; that God, by the withdrawal of His sustaining influence, is no more than proper cause of sin than the sun, by its departure, is the

proper cause of darkness and cold, but God is thus proved to be the fountain of all holiness, as the sun is proved to be the fountain of light and heat; that it would be strange arguing indeed, because men never commit sin only when God leaves them to themselves, and always sin when He does so, that therefore their sin is not from themselves, but from God, and so that God must be a sinful being, as strange as it would be to argue, because it is always dark when the sun is gone, and never dark when the sun is present, that therefore all darkness is from the sun, and that the sun itself is dark and cold, and its beams are black and frosty; that God overrules all the evil that He permits for the ultimate good of His people and glory of His name; that the crucifixion of Christ was, as an act of His murderers, the most horrible of all sins, but, as the permission and appointment of God, was the most glorious of all possible exhibitions of the Divine holiness and goodness, perfectly demonstrating God's infinite hatred of sin and, at the same time, His infinite love of sinners; that God's numerous predictions, in the Scriptures, of future events, prove His foreknowledge of the innumerable volitions of future events, and, though knowledge of an event does not cause that event, yet, as an event cannot be different from certain foreknowledge of it; that, if the Scriptures are false in declaring that God foreknows all things, then He must be imperfect, constantly learning new things, exercising a precarious government over the world, and He must be the most changeable, embarrassed and miserable of all beings, and therefore not God the omniscient, omnipotent, and existed alone from eternity, and created all things out of nothing, and disposed of all things in His providence, with all the surrounding circumstances, exactly foreknowing all the results, then, certainly, *in one sense*, His foreknowledge of all things is equivalent to His foreordination of all things, including the volitions of his creatures, yet without the slightest degree of sin on His part, as the Most Holy God tempts no one to sin. The sinful carnal mind of fallen darkened rationalism paints this certain truth of nature and Scripture in the most revolting colors, preferring that *senseless and heartless fate or chance* should sit at the helm of the universe; but the regenerated, enlightened, spiritual mind of the child of God incomparably prefers that his *Holy and Heavenly Father* should sit at the helm, and direct and work all things according to the counsel of His own will. The foreknowledge of God is, *in one sense*, so evidently identical to His foreordination that some of the most able

living conditionally propose to revolutionize the Arminian theology, and make consistent with itself by the denial of God's foreknowledge of future contingent events (see the articles headed "Will" in McClintock and Strong's Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature, and in the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge). It is maintained by the leading Calvinistic (or Presbyterian) writers of the present century that the controversy between Luther and Erasmus, while it was nominally about free will, was really about ability; that Augustine and Luther, by denying free will to man since the fall, intended simply to deny to fallen man the power to turn himself to God; that all creatures, whether fallen or unfallen, are free agents, or endowed with power to will or act according to their nature or character, and thus are justly accountable for acts determined by their character, whether that character or inward state be inherited or acquired, or induced by the grace of God; and that all men, being contained seminally and representatively in Adam, and sinning and dying in him, are also responsible for that depraved nature or character, which is the fountain of all their iniquities. This modern criticism seems to me to be a distinction without a difference; for, if the will of fallen man is inevitably restrained from spiritual good by his innate depravity, he cannot be said to be truly free (his fallen will always preferring evil)—especially as Christ declares that the sinner is the servant (*doulos, the born slave*) of sin, and must be made free of the Son if he be free indeed (John 8: 34, 36).

While Martin Luther had great spiritual light on the doctrine of grace, the crime of religious persecution, and other matters, he was in great spiritual darkness on many other subjects. Among the latter, I will name the most important, as follows: His urging the Princes to war on the Peasants; his increasing hatred, during the last twenty years of his life, of the "Anabaptists" and of all others who differed from him; his traditionalism; his sacramentalism; his assumption of infallibility, making himself a pope, considering himself the authoritative judge both of the meaning and the authenticity of Scripture; his thus rejecting the books of Esther, Jonah, James and Revelation, and his criticism of the books of Chronicles, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Hebrews and Jude; And his advising Henry VIII, of England to marry his second wife without getting a divorce from his first, and his authorizing, or granting a "dispensation" to Philip, Landgrave of

Hesse, the princely champion of the Reformation, to do the same thing, which, to the great scandal of the morals and of the cause he espoused, the latter did, thus having two wives at once, and a large family by each. This pope-imitating "dispensation" was drawn up and signed by Luther and Melanchthon at Wittenberg, December 19th, 1539, and afterwards signed by seven other Protestant ministers; the prudent attempt to keep it secret failed. Luther was himself of blameless morals, and of high moral courage, too, except against Protestant Princes; but this serious practical error contributed to unsettle Protestant morals, and to make Wittenberg and Hesse centers of moral corruption; insomuch that he, shortly before his death, complained of Wittenberg as a Sodom, and, for a while, actually abandoned it. On a mission to settle a quarrel between the counts of Mansfield and some of their subjects, he died, in triumphant faith, at his birth-place, Eisleben, February 18th, 1546.

"In the northern parts of Europe" (for various political, pecuniary, moral and religious reasons), says Macaulay, "the victory of Protestantism was rapid and decisive. In fifty years from the day which Luther burned the pope's bull, it attained its highest ascendancy—an ascendancy which it soon lost and which it never regained. In England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Livonia, Prussia, Saxony, Hesse, Wurtemberg, the Palatinate, in several cantons of Switzerland, in the Northern Netherlands, the Reformation had completely triumphed; and in all the other countries on the northern side of the Alps and the Pyrenees, it seemed on the point of triumphing. But the great outbreak of Protestantism in the north of Europe produced an equally violent outbreak of Catholic zeal in the south—the former a reformation of doctrine, and the latter a reformation of manners and discipline. The latter was also marked by the matchless Roman Catholic policy, the unscrupulous cunning of the Order of Jesuits, and the merciless fires of the Inquisition. Between the two hostile regions lay, geographically as well as morally, a great debatable land—France, Belgium, Southern Germany, Hungary and Poland. The history of the two succeeding generations is the history of the great struggle between Protestantism and Catholicism for the possession of this doubtful territory. All the weapons of carnal and of spiritual warfare were employed. Both sides may boast of great talents and of great virtues. Both have to blush for many follies and crimes. At first, the chances seemed

to be decidedly in favor of Protestantism; but the victory remained with the Church of Rome. On every point she was successful. If we overleap another half-century, we find her victorious and dominant in France, Belgium, Bavaria, Bohemia, Austria, Poland and Hungary. This result was due to the fact that the Protestants had become divided, degenerate and apathetic, while the Catholics were united, reanimated and zealous. Then the great southern reaction began to slacken, as the great northern movement had slackened before. The paroxysm of religious excitement was over on both sides. During three generations religion had been the mainspring of politics. The revolutions and civil wars of France, Scotland, Holland, Sweden, the long struggle between Philip and Elizabeth, the bloody competition for the Bohemian crown, all originated in theological disputes. But a great change now took place. The religious zeal of both Protestants and Catholics having declined, the Thirty Years' War in Germany lost its religious character, and became a war for the equilibrium of Europe. Calvinists, Lutherans and Catholics, under Gustavus and Richelieu, united against the house of Austria. When at length, the peace of Westphalia was concluded (1648), it appeared that the Church of Rome remained in full possession of a vast dominion, which in the middle of the preceding century she seemed to be on the point of losing. Since that time there has been no religious war between Catholics and Protestants as such. During the eighteenth century infidelity, rising in Paris, the virtual capital of Europe, extensively undermined the stately fabric of Roman Catholicism, and swept over the continent, in some countries obtaining a complete ascendancy; but, during the nineteenth century; Roman Catholicism has gradually revived, and (nominally) reconquered her old dominion, while the European domain of Protestantism has not been increased. It is remarkable<sup>[4]</sup>vi that no Christian nation which did not adopt the principles of the Reformation before the end of the sixteenth century, should ever have adopted them. Catholic communities have, since that time, become infidel and become Catholic again, but none has become Protestant. It is certain that Protestant have far outgrown Catholic countries and colonies in civilization, intelligence and prosperity."

Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), the "Preceptor of Germany," the scholarly, humble, ethical and conciliatory co-laborer of Luther, the lay theologian and second leader of the German Reformation, was, in nearly all

respects, the exact complement of Luther. He acknowledged that infant baptism was a weak point in Luther's system. He was the author of the *Commonplaces of Theology*, the *Augsburg Confession*, and the *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*. Though, under Luther's influence, at first a monergist, he made a gradual departure towards synergism, and indeed, for the sake of peace, he seemed to be willing to yield everything except justification by faith. When the double marriage of Philip of Hesse became public, Melanchthon was so overcome by the pangs of conscience on account of his consent to that iniquity, that he sickened almost to death, and is said to have been "raised up by the powerful will and prayer of Luther, who thought that he could work miracles by his prayers, and who said, by way of comforting Melanchthon, that, while they could not justify the matter to man, they could to God, who knew all the circumstances!" Melanchthon's wife was a pious and devoted woman, and his domestic life was happy. He called his home "a little church," and "always found there peace, and showed a tender regard for his wife and children, and not infrequently was found rocking the cradle with one hand and holding a book with the other." He lectured on the Scriptures at his home, which was a social center of the Wittenberg Reformation. In his public career he is said not to have sought honor or fame or wealth, but to have earnestly endeavored to serve the church and the cause of truth.

The three fundamental principles of the Protestant Reformation have been well described to be "the absolute supremacy of the Scriptures, the absolute supremacy of Divine grace, and the general priesthood of all believers."

The bigoted and despotic Catholic Emperor, Charles V., was providentially hindered, by his wars with the pope, with the King of France, and with the Turks, from undertaking a war with the Protestant princes of Germany, until Protestantism had become deeply rooted, and Luther had died; and then in 1546 and 1547 he waged a war of ten months against the Protestants, and through the treachery of the subtle and ambitious Saxon Duke, Maurice, he defeated them, and imprisoned John Frederic, Elector of Saxony, and Philip Landgrave, of Hesse. But in 1552, the treachery of Maurice, turned against and defeated Charles and forced him to sign the Treaty of Passau, confirmed

in 1555 by the Peace of Augsburg, granting freedom to the imprisoned Princes, and toleration to the Lutherans. Several violent theological controversies divided the Lutherans until the adoption of the Formula of Concord in 1580.

Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531), the able, scholarly, eloquent, clear-headed, bold-hearted and patriotic leader of the Reformation in German Switzerland, despising papal threats and gold, advocated, like Luther, the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and salvation by grace alone. He declared, at the daily risk of his life, that tradition is worthless, and the Scriptures are the only standard of faith and practice; that the mass and image and saint worship are idolatry; that Christ is the only sacrifice for sin, and the only mediator between God and man. In 1523 he went so far as to deny the scripturalness and propriety of infant baptism; but he afterwards retreated from this position. The Swiss Reformation was more rapid and more thorough than the German—one cause being that Switzerland was a republic, and Germany a monarchy. In the conference at Marburg (1529) Luther and Zwingli agreed in fourteen and a half articles; but in the last half of the article, in reference to the nature of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper, they did not agree. Luther maintained the doctrine of consubstantiation (the next thing to the Roman Catholic dogma of transubstantiation), that the true body and blood of Christ are present in, with and under the bread and wine; while Zwingli maintained that the body and blood of Christ are only spiritually or emblematically present with the literal elements—that the Greek verb *esti* (translated *is*—"This is my body") means *signifies*, as it does in numerous other passages in the New Testament, as well as in other Greek literature. The Seventh (or last) Edition of Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon, the highest authority on the Greek language, shows that Zwingli was correct; as do many passages in the Scriptures. It is said that Zwingli had transcribed and memorized the entire Greek New Testament, especially the epistles of Paul. At the close of the Marburg conference, Luther would not accept Zwingli's extended hand of fellowship, but afterwards consented to give him the right hand of peace and charity; and in his "Short Confession on the Lord's Supper" (published in 1544) Luther atrociously stigmatized Zwingli as a "heretic, liar and murderer of souls." In a war between the Protestant and Catholic cantons of

Switzerland (October, 1531) Zwingli, by the earnest request or command of the Canton of Zurich, attended as chaplain, and, with twenty-five other Protestant ministers, was slain on the battle-field of Cappel. He had, before leaving home, predicted his own death, and had bidden his weeping wife and children a most tender final farewell, and committed them to the care of God. —The learned, gentle, laborious, afflicted, spiritual, almost Baptist, John Œcolampadis, of Basel (1482-1531), the associate of Zwingli, as Melancthon had been of Luther, overcome with sorrow at the death of Zwingli, followed his friend the next month to the grave, his last moments being full of light and peace. Calling his three little children around him, the eldest of whom was barely three years old, he took their little hands and said, "Eusebius, Irene, Alethea, love God, who is your Father." To the ten pastors kneeling around his bedside he gave the most affecting exhortations, and then said, "I have something new to tell you; in a short time I shall be with the Lord Jesus." His doctrinal views were expressed by him in one brief sentence: "Our salvation is of God; our perdition is of ourselves."—Zwingli was succeeded at Zurich by the mild and energetic Henry Bullinger (1504-1575), who exercised great influence on the "Anglican Church," and who composed the "Second Helvetic Confession," one of the most elaborate and valuable of the Reformed Creeds. Œcolampadis was succeeded at Basel by the teacher and preacher, Oswald Myconius (1488-1552), who brought into its present shape the "First Confession of Basel."

Checked in German Switzerland by the battle of Cappel, the Reformation made a more important conquest in western or French Switzerland, from which district it was to move westward, with the course of empire, to France, Holland, England, Scotland, and North America. William Farel (1489-1565), one of the first and boldest of the French Reformers, preached from 1526 in the French parts of the cantons of Berne and Biel, in Neufchatel, in 1530, and in Geneva in 1532. The Reformation had reached Geneva in 1528, and was adopted by the Council of this free city in 1535. In 1536 the city gained its most distinguished teach, John Calvin (1509-1564), a native of Noyon, in Picardy, seventy miles northeast of Paris. He became the ablest theologian and disciplinarian of the Protestant Reformation; and his work, "Institutes of the Christian Religion," has been well called "the masterpiece of Protestantism." For commanding intellect, lofty character and far-reaching

influence, Calvin was one of the foremost leaders in the history of Christianity. He was always poor and sickly, severely moral and censorious (even in childhood being called by his companions "the Accusative Case"). He was educated by his father, first for the Catholic priesthood and then for the law. He injured his health by studying nearly all night; and attained such proficiency in the law as to be called to lecture to his fellow-students in the absence of the Professor. But Providence called him to a higher work. Deeply convicted of sin, he sought inward peace by the Roman Catholic methods, and found it not. Miserable and abject, with tears and cries, he was enabled to flee to God, and throw himself upon His free mercy in Christ, and thus he entered into rest, and joyfully testified, "We are saved by grace, not by our merits, not by our works. Only one haven of salvation is left for our souls, and that is the mercy of God in Christ." He renounced Romanism, joined the persecuted Protestants, and had to flee from Paris (in 1533), in which city, during the next two years, "twenty-four Protestants were burned alive, while many more were condemned to less cruel sufferings. For more than two years he wandered a fugitive evangelist, under assumed names, from place to place." In 1534 at Orleans he published his first theological work (Psychopannychia), a treatise against the Anabaptist doctrine of the sleep of the soul between death and the resurrection. In 1536 at Basel he published the first edition of his Institutes—his sole motive for issuing this work being, he says, "to remove the impression that his persecuted brethren in France were fanatical Anabaptists, seeking the overthrow of civil order, which their oppressors, in order to pacify the displeasure of German Lutherans, industriously propagated." The eloquent and powerful preface was addressed to Francis I., the King of France. "The Institutes," says Prof. Schaff, "are by far the clearest and ablest systematic and scientific exposition and vindication of the ideas of the Reformation in their vernal freshness and pentecostal fire. The book is inspired by a heroic faith ready for the stake, and a glowing enthusiasm for the saving truth of the gospel, raised to a new life from beneath the rubbish of human additions. Though freely using reason and the fathers, especially Augustine, it always appeals to the supreme tribunal of the word of God, to which all human wisdom must bow in reverent obedience. It abounds in Scripture learning thoroughly digested, and wrought up into a consecutive chain of exposition and argument. It is severely logical, but perfectly free from the dryness and pedantry of a

scholastic treatise, and flows on, like a Swiss river, through green meadows and sublime mountain scenery. Greeted with enthusiasm by Protestants, the Institutes created dismay among Romanists, were burned at Paris by order of the Sorbonne (Theological College), and hated and feared as the very 'Talmud' and 'Koran of heresy.'" In 1536 Calvin settled at Geneva, and lived there the remainder of his life, with the exception of three years (1538-1541), when he was banished from the city on account of his severe discipline (during which period he lived at Strassburg). In 1540 he married Idelette van Buren, "the widow of an Anabaptist preacher whom he had converted," as the historians tell us. Their three children died in infancy. Otherwise their married life was very happy, but short, lasting only nine years, when his wife died. He deeply lamented her, and never married again.—Calvin desired to make his church at Geneva the model, mother, and seminary of all the Reformed (or Presbyterian or Calvinistic) Churches. The Presbyterian polity, or church government, is imaginarily derived, primarily from the old Jewish Sanhedrims, and secondarily from the Greek, Roman and Anglo-Saxon Senates; but the best authorities declare that the gradation of Session, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly was an invention of Calvin himself (his doctrine of the organization of the church and of its relation to the State being the only original feature of his system, says J. R. Green); and the civil government already existing in Geneva and other cities (consisting of *four* Councils, rising in power one above the other) seems to have suggested the idea to him. In Geneva were the Little Council (or Council of 25), the Council of 60, the Council of 200, and the General Council or General Assembly of Citizens. As for the *two* permanent Jewish courts called the Lesser and the Greater Sanhedrim, the first of inferior and the second of appellate jurisdiction, they are nowhere mentioned in the Old Testament, but are believed by the most critical scholars to have been derived by the News from the Macedonians (or Greeks) about 300 B. C.—the very name, Sanhedrim, being, not a Hebrew, but a Greek word. Calvin's Consistory (or Presbytery), composed of six preachers and twelve "laymen," of which body he was President, exercised a most stringent, vigilant, inquisitorial supervision, in respect to doctrine, morals and manners, over the entire life of every inhabitant of Geneva; not only excommunicating persons of every age and sex, but handling them over to the civil authorities to be imprisoned, tortured or put to death for heresies, improprieties and

immoralities. The proceedings of the Consistory were marked by a Dionysian and Draconian severity. "The prisons became filled, and the executioner was kept busy. A child was beheaded for striking its father and mother. Another child, sixteen years old, for attempting to strike its mother, was sentenced to death, but, on account of its youth, the sentence was commuted; and having been publicly whipped, with a cord about its neck, it was banished from the city. A woman was chastised with rods for singing secular songs to the melody of the Psalms. A man was imprisoned and banished for reading the writings of the Italian humanist, Poggio, Profanity and drunkenness were severely punished; dancing, and the manufacture or use of cards, or nine-pins, and even looking upon a dance, and giving children the names of Catholic saints, and extravagance or eccentricity of dress, and the dissemination of divergent theological doctrines, brought down upon the delinquent the vengeance of the laws. No historical student needs to be told what an incalculable amount of evil has been wrought by Catholics and by Protestants from a mistaken belief in the perpetual validity of the Mosaic civil legislation, and from a confounding of the spirit of the old dispensation with the of the new—an overlooking of the progressive character of Divine revelation."—*George P. Fisher's History of Reformation*. Christ and His Apostles did not persecute; neither does the true church of Christ. The Protestant persecutions of each other, and of Catholics, and of "Anabaptists," were derived from Rome, and were in direct and horrid contradiction of the Protestant principle of freedom of conscience. Calvin's condemnation and execution of the almost "Anabaptist" and the Anti-Trinitarian, Michael Servetus (1553), though then approved by his brother Protestants, is a sad and ineffaceable blot upon his character—the bloody deed producing only evil, utterly condemned by the entire spirit of the New Testament, and by ever person (not a Roman Catholic) of today. It is noteworthy that in 1537 Peter Caroli accused Calvin and Farel of Anti-Trinitarianism (or Arianism and Sabellianism), because they would not enforce the Athanasian Creed, and had not used the words "Trinity" and "Person" in the Confession that they had drawn up. In his first residence at Geneva, Calvin had avoided using these terms, although having no particular objection to them; as he has very indifferent to the terminology of theology, so long as the truth was expressed. Jerome Bolsec was imprisoned and banished from Geneva in 1551 for denying the doctrine of predestination.

Like Luther, Calvin was, in general, unselfish and unworldly, honest and conscientious, doing what he believed to be right, and not seeking human applause or temporal riches. His disciplinarian severity was induced not by personal animosity, but by his views of the Scriptures of what was required for the honor of God. Under his iron and bloody discipline (the result of a combination of "Church and State"), Geneva, from being one of the most licentious places, became the most moral town in Europe. But some of the profligate people, hating him with a perfect hatred, would sometimes fire off fifty or sixty shots before his door in the night, and would set upon him their dogs, which would tear his clothes and flesh. He received from the city a small house and garden, with about five hundred dollars per year, and was very generous to the needy. In the latter part of his life he ate but one meal a day, and sometimes went without that. He would not draw his salary when he was too sick to work, and he refused an increase of salary and all kinds of presents except for the poor. Besides his library, he left only about two hundred dollars, which he gave to his younger brother and his children. "When Pope Pius IV, heard of his death, he paid him this high compliment: 'The strength of that heretic consisted in this, that money never had the slightest charm for him. If I had such servants, my dominions would extend from sea to sea.'" Like Luther, he had a fiery temper, which was the propelling power in his extraordinary life-work. He was a walking hospital, and the wonder is that he showed so patient a spirit as he did. In his fifty-fifth year, overcome with headache, asthma, fever and gravel, he yielded to his complication of bodily infirmities. He never complained of his physical sufferings. Though his body was utterly feeble, and reduced almost to a shadow, his mind retained its clearness and energy. Assembling the city councilors, and then the ministers, around his bed, he declared that he had lived, acted and taught honestly and sincerely, according to his views of the word of God, never knowingly perverting the Scriptures, and never laboring for any personal end, but only to promote the glory of God. He thanked them for their kindness, and craved their forgiveness for his occasional outbursts of anger. He exhorted them to humility and to a faithful observance of the pure doctrine and discipline of Christ. Sitting up in bed, he offered a fervent prayer for them, and took each one by the hand, and bade him a solemn and affectionate farewell; and they parted from him, with their eyes bathed in tears, and their hearts full of unspeakable grief. According to

his express injunction, no monument was erected over his grave, so that the exact spot, in the cemetery of Geneva, is unknown. "Like Moses, he was buried out of the reach of idolatry."—Ernest Renan, the French rationalist, finds the key to Calvin's wonderful influence in the fact that he was "the most Christian man of his generation." As Prof. Schaff says: "Calvin's spirit resembled that of a Hebrew prophet. Soaring high above the earth, he was absorbed in God—who alone is great—and he looked down upon man as a fleeting shadow. Though his system was Pauline, and though he strongly sympathized with Paul's sense of the freedom of the gospel salvation, yet he looked more to the holiness than to the love of God. His piety bears more the stamp of the Old Testament than that of the New. He represents the majesty and severity of the law rather than the sweetness and loveliness of the gospel, the obedience of the servant of Jehovah rather than the joyfulness of a child of our heavenly Father." On account of his logical and systematic mind and "Institutes," he has been appropriately called the Aristotle of the Protestant Reformation. "The striking, the peculiar feature of his system," says Prof. Fisher, "is the doctrine of predestination. This doctrine, at the outset, indeed, was common to all the Reformers. They were united in receiving the Augustinian theology, in opposition to the Pelagian doctrine, which affected, in a greater or less degree, all the schools of Catholic theology. It is very important to understand the motives of the Reformers in this proceeding. Calvin was not a speculative philosopher who thought out a necessitarian theory and defended it for the reason that he considered it capable of being logically established. It is true that the keynote in his system was a profound sense of the exaltation of God. Nothing could be admitted that seemed to clash in the least with His universal control, or to cast a shade upon His omniscience and omnipotence. But the direct grounds of his doctrine were practical. Predestination is, to him, the correlate of human dependence; the counterpart of the doctrine of grace; the antithesis to salvation by merit; the implied consequence of man's complete bondage to sin. In election, it is involved that man's salvation is not his own work, but wholly the work of the grace of God; and in election, also, there is laid a sure foundation for the believer's security under all the assaults of temptation. It is practical interests which Calvin is sedulous to guard; he clings to the doctrine for what he considers its religious value; and it is no more than justice to him to remember that he habitually styles the

tenet, which proved to be so obnoxious, and unfathomable mystery, an abyss into which no mortal mind can descend. And, whether consistently or not, there is the most earnest assertion of the moral and responsible nature of man. Augustine had held that in the fall of Adam the entire race were involved in a common act and a common catastrophe. The will is not destroyed; it is still free to sin, but is utterly disabled as regards holiness. Out of the mass of mankind, all of them are alike guilty, God chooses a part to be the recipients of His mercy, whom He purifies by an irresistible influence, but leaves the rest to suffer the penalty which they have justly brought upon themselves. In the 'Institutes,' Calvin does what Luther had done in his book against Erasmus; he makes the Fall itself the primal transgression, the object of an efficient decree. In this particular he goes beyond Augustine, and apparently affords a sanction to the extreme or supralapsarian type of theology, which afterwards found numerous defenders—which traces sin to the direct agency of God, and even founds the distinction of right and wrong ultimately on His omnipotent will. But when Calvin was called upon to define his doctrine more carefully, as in the *Consensus Genevensis*, he confines himself to the assertion of a permissive decree—a volitive permission—in the case of the first sin. In other words, he does not overstep the Augustinian position. He explicitly avers that every decree of the Almighty springs from reasons which, though hidden from us, are good and sufficient; that is to say, he founds will upon right, and not right upon will.vii[5]viii The main peculiarity of Calvin's treatment of this subject, as compared with the course pursued by the other Reformers, is the greater prominence which he gives to predestination. It stands in the foreground; it is never left out of sight. Luther's practical handling of this dogma was different. Under his influence it retreated more and more into the background, until not only in Melancthon's system, but also in the later Lutheran theology, unconditional predestination disappeared altogether." "The characteristic principles of the system now called Calvinism," says Prof. A. A. Hodge, "were first full developed by Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (324-430), whose great opponent was Pelagius (Morgan), a British monk, a student of the Greek fathers. *The opinions of Pelagius were unanimously condemned by the whole church, Eastern and Western, at the Councils of Carthage (407-416), Mileve (416) and Ephesus (431), and by Popes Innocent and Zosimus (417 and 418)—a sure proof that they were not in*

*accordance with the original faith of the church.* And up to the present time Pelagianism has never been adopted in the public creed of any ecclesiastical body except that of the Socinians (Unitarians) of Poland (Racovian Catechism, 1605). Afterwards the doctrines of Augustine triumphed, in their conflict with Semi-Pelagianism, at the Synods of Orange and Valence (529), and by the decrees of Popes Gelasius (496) and Boniface (530). Henceforth a moderate Augustinianism became the legally recognized orthodoxy of Western Europe, and actually tintured the leading minds and events of that great community for several centuries. Bede, Alcuin and Claudius of Turin and afterwards the best and greatest of the schoolmen—Anselm (910), Bernard of Clairvaux (1140), Hugo St. Victor, Thomas Aquinas (1247) and Thomas Bradwardine (1348)—were all of the school of Augustine. The same is true of all of the ‘Reformers before the Reformation’—Wycliffe (1324-1384), John Hus (1369-1415), the Waldensesix[6]x of Piedmont, John Wessel (1419-1489), John of Goch (1475), Savonarola (1493), John Reuchlin and Staupitz, the spiritual father of Luther. The Reformation was a reaction from the growing Semi-Pelagianism, as well as from the idolatry and tyranny of the papal church. It was in all its leaders, Luther as decidedly as Calvin and in all its centers, England and Germany, as well as Scotland, Holland or Geneva, an *Augustinian movement*. Although Calvin was not the first to formulate the system which goes by his name (and which he himself professes to have borrowed from Augustine), he presented to the world the first and grandest work of systematic divinity, recast Augustinianism in the its Protestant form, and handed it to the modern world stamped with his own name. From him his doctrines passed to that ‘apostolic succession’ of Bullinger, Turretin, Witsius, John Owen and Jonathan Edwards: to the Synod of Dort (1618-1619) and the Westminster Assembly (1638); and so to the churches of France, Switzerland, Holland, England and Scotland; to the Independents (Congregationalists), the Baptists, and to the Presbyterians in all lands. The Episcopal Church of England and America, whatever may be the teachings of its different leaders, was, beyond controversy, in the intention of its founders, and in the first century of its history, and is yet in its doctrinal articles, essentially Augustinian.” “Every people of Europe,” says Prof. Schaff, “was represented among Calvin’s disciples. He helped to shape the religious character of churches, and the political moral and social life of nations yet unborn. The Huguenots of

France, the Protestants of Holland and Belgium, the Puritans and Independents of England and New England, the Presbyterians of Scotland and throughout the world, yea, we may say, the whole Anglo-Saxon race, in its prevailing religious character and institutions, bear the impress of his genius, and show the power and tenacity of his doctrines and principles of government. The doctrine of predestination, xi[7]xii in its milder, infralapsarian (or sublapsarian) form, was incorporated into the Geneva Consensus, the Second Helvetic, the French, Belgic and Scotch Confessions, the Lambeth Articles, the Irish Articles, the Canons of Dort, and the Westminster Standards (from which latter documents the same doctrine was incorporated into the English Congregational and Baptist Confessions of Faith of the seventeenth century); while the Thirty-nine (Episcopalian) Articles, the Heidelberg Catechism, and other German Reformed Confessions, indorse merely the positive, humbling, comforting part of the free election of believers [as also the Kehukee Baptist Association of North Carolina did in 1777 in a Confession which today constitutes the Articles of Faith of the churches of that Association, and which is given in the latter part of this work], and are wisely silentxiii[8]xiv concerning the decree of reprobation, leaving that to theological science and private opinion. Supralapsarian, which makes unfallen man, or man before his creation, a mere abstraction of thought, the object of God's double foreordination for the manifestation of His mercy in the elect and His justice in the reprobate, was ably advocated by Beza in Geneva, Gormarus in Holland, Twisse (the Prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly) in England, and Nathaniel Emmons (1745-1840) in New England, but it never received symbolical authority, and was virtually or expressly excluded (though not exactly condemned) by the Synod of Dort, the Westminster Assembly, and even the Formula Consensus Helvetica (1675). *All Calvinistic Confessions, without exception, trace the fall to a permissive decree, make man responsible and justly punishable for sin, and reject, as a blasphemous slander, the charge that God is the author of sin.* And this is the case with all the Calvinistic divines of the present day. Prof. Charles Hodge, who best represents the Old School Calvinism in America, reject supralapsarianism, and defends infralapsarianism, which he define thus: 'According to the infralapsarian doctrine, God, with the design to reveal His own glory—that is, the perfections of His own nature—determined to create the world; secondly, to *permit* the fall of man; thirdly, to elect from

the mass of fallen men a multitude whom no man could number as 'vessels of mercy;' fourthly, to send His Son for their redemption; and fifthly, to *leave* the residue of mankind, as He left the fallen angels, to suffer the just punishment of their sins."

Modern "Liberal" Philosophy (misnamed Religion), *while admitting that the predestinarianism of Augustine and Calvin is the logical deduction of the language of the New Testament, especially of the epistles, particularly of Paul*, pronounces it a ghastly and revolting system of religious fatalism, a hideous nightmare intolerable in this enlightened age, a lie repugnant to reason and conscience, making morality impossible by the denial of the freedom of the will, telling men that they cannot help themselves, and thus flinging them into recklessness and despair. Such tenets, these wise and gentle philosophers tell us, have in our age retired from the blaze of day, and are found only in the obscure writings of obscure men (most ignorant fanatics), and would not now be tolerated for a moment outside a small uninfluential circle. This declaration (as may be seen from Matt. 7:13,14, 11:25, 13:11, 16:17; Luke 12:32; Rom. 8:7, 8; 1 Cor. 1:23-31, 2:14, etc.) affords a strong scriptural presumption that predestinarianism is true. Strange to say, however, some of the most learned, able and candid of these philosophers (such as Messrs. J. A. Froude and J. H. Allen) admit that, while Arminianism commends itself to our *feelings*, Calvinism is nearer the *facts*—the everywhere seen facts of human sinfulness and sorrow, and the inequality of human capacities, dispositions and advantages; that, though Calvinism is now about dead (slain by the Modern "Liberal" Philosophy), yet we owe to it the best and noblest features of the last four hundred years, and that there was never any more need than now of its stern, vigorous, courageous hatred of evil and loyalty to truth; the bland optimism Epicurean Scientific Liberalism is superficial, unsatisfactory, enfeebling and demoralizing, and has never accomplished anything good and great for the human race; that the ancient fatalistic Stoics were the most noble and virtuous of the Greeks and Romans; that even modern materialistic science, like Calvinism, denies the freedom of the will, and teaches necessitarianism; that in the better sort of men there are two elementary convictions, name, that there is over all things an unsleeping, inflexible, all-ordering, just Power, and that this Power governs all things by everlasting, immutable and

righteous laws, which sinful creatures cannot disobey with impunity; that the wisest and best Christians have believed and been animated and inspired by the fact that their conviction of sin and conversion to the love of holiness have been the mighty work within them, not of themselves, but of the Divine Spirit, whom they will henceforth rejoice to love and obey; that Calvin had the keenest eye to discern the unsound spots in the Roman Catholic creed, and the most imperturbable resolution to excise, tear out and destroy the false, and establish the true in its place, and make truth the steadfast rule of practical life; that his historical followers have, far more than their contemporaries, abhorred all falsehood, all impurity, all moral wrong of every kind; that the conscientious fear of doing evil, now existing in England, Scotland and America, is the remnant of Calvinism in the people's hearts; that though the Calvinists failed to destroy Romanism, they drew its fangs, and shamed it out of its immoralities; that the spirit of Calvinism will, in due time, appear again on earth, unless God be a delusion, and men be as the beasts that perish, for it is but the inflashing, upon the conscience, of the nature and origin of the imperishable spiritual laws by which the universe is governed. Mr. Allen, who confesses that, from early childhood, he was trained to dread and hate Calvinism, and that only by reflection and a wider view of things has he come to see it in a different light, says, in his *Christian History*: "The strength of Calvinism lay in its *facing the facts, and in its coming closer home to men's experience and sense of duty*. In its age of vigor it mean an incessant, untiring, unrelenting war—war with sword in hand and hot hate and courage in the heart—against that Evil of which its only definition was 'enmity to God.' It is most important of all, in considering Calvinism as a force in history, to it—in full armor and in fighting attitude [compare Paul's stirring exhortation to the soldier of Jesus Christ, Eph. 6:10-20; 2 Tim. 2:3]. Notice, too, that the fighting quality in Calvinism lies in its very fundamental dogma of absolute predestination. Can a serious man ever once think of salvation as resting on his own merit? If he has been snatched as a brand from the burning, he is the Lord's once for all, to do with as He will. [Paul calls himself the *doulos*, the born slave of Jesus Christ, Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1]. Of that sword of Divine Justice, which Calvinism was, we may say that the sharp point was the Eternal Decree, and that the two keen edges were Free Grace and Salvation by Faith. We for our part," continues Mr. Allen, "think of the dogma chiefly for the great part it has played in human

history, as 'the sword of the Lord and of Gideon,' by which the Midianites of that day were to be struck down. [This old, well-trying sword of the Spirit has lost none of its strength and keenness, and is, of all others, the very weapon with which to smite the Midianites of the present day]. Calvinism was the sharp edge of Protestantism, waging an unrelenting warfare against the pope as the Man of Sin, and all his doctrines and works, his idolatry and immorality. Not only is Calvinism an austere type of piety; it is also a fountain-head of stern, aggressive, self-sacrificing virtue, rising often to the heights of moral heroism, so necessary to brace up the tone of morals in an age of license, and even, at a crisis, to save the very life of a State, political as well as social. May the characteristics of Calvinism—mental vigor, moral courage, intolerant hate of Evil under all disguises, stern loyalty to Truth—remain an imperishable possession of mankind."

"Over against the mock sovereignty of the pope," says Prof. Schaff, "Calvin set the absolute sovereignty of God, and he made this the chief article in his system; while Luther gave the greatest prominence to justification by faith alone; but the central place in the Christian system belongs only to the person and work of Christ—the incarnation and the atonement."

Calvin had extraordinary light on the doctrine of grace and the holy effects of that doctrine in the heart and life; but he was in great and lamentable darkness in regard to infant baptism, indifference of the "form" of baptism, a modified sacramentalism, alliance of "Church and State," the civil punishment of excommunicated persons, the subjection of the individual church to a gradation of higher bodies, and fellowshipping Catholics and all the members of every so-called Christian "Church."

The able and scholarly Theodore Beza (1519-1605), the friend, biographer and successor of Calvin, the surviving patriarch of the Reformation, was pastor of the Geneva Church for nearly forty years. While increasing the doctrinal, he relaxed the governmental rigor of Calvin. He was Professor of Greek and Theology, and Rector of the University of Geneva. In 1556 he published a faithful and elegant Latin translation of the New Testament; and afterwards four excellent editions of the Greek Testament,

which were the main basis of the Authorized (James) English Version of 1611. Upon the English Geneva Bible of 1560 (translated by William Whittingham, Thomas Sampson and Anthony Gilby, English exiles at Geneva)—“a noble, scholarly production,” says the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia—Beza exerted a marked influence by his Latin version and his exegetical notes. The famous notes of the Geneva Testament are mostly original, or selected from Calvin and Beza, both of whom were profound critical scholars.

*“The Church of Rome,”* xv[9]xvi says Mr. W. E. H. Lecky, *“has caused more wars, has shed more innocent blood, and inflicted more unmerited suffering, than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind.”* The history of the sixteenth century, with the decade preceding and following it, presents the most forcible illustrations of this horrible truth. Among these illustrations are the cruel enslavement and extinction, by the Spanish and Portuguese Catholics, of untold millions of the poor, inoffensive Indians of North, Central and South America; the inauguration, by the same Catholic nations, of the horrors of the African slave-trade; the Portuguese persecutions and enslavement of thousands of the Nestorian “St. Thomas Christians” in India; the pitiless impoverishment, enslavement or expulsion, with indescribable sufferings, of about a million Jews and a million Moors from Spain and Portugal; thirty-eight years of religious wars in France, and similar but shorter wars in Switzerland, Germany and Holland; three Catholic insurrections in England, and the sending forth of the Spanish Armada against the same Protestant country; the execution of about a thousand persons, on account of their religion, by the Anglo-Catholic Pope, King Henry VIII., and of about three hundred, on the same account, by his daughter, Bloody Queen Mary; the execution of from fifty to a hundred thousand Protestants in the Netherlands, and the condemnation of all the three million Netherlanders to death; the frightful massacres of the French Waldenses in Provence, and of the Italian Waldenses in Calabria, and of the Huguenots or French Protestants on the eve of St. Bartholomew (on account of which the pope sung a *Te Deum* and issued a medal); and the diabolical cruelties of the Spanish Inquisition, with its lurid *Autos-da-fe*, all over Southern Europe, effectually repressing, in those countries, all exhibitions of the spirit of religious freedom. “The first Protestants,” says Mr. Lecky, “were as

undoubtedly intolerant as the Catholics." They derived the practice from the Catholics, and they persecuted the Catholics and other Protestants, and especially the "Anabaptists." Persecution is directly opposed to the fundamental Protestant principle of the right of private judgment, and has, therefore, happily declined in almost all Protestant countries; but intolerance is the essence of Roman Catholicism, and, if armed with the power of the State, it would today wreak the same bloody and exterminating vengeance upon its opponents as it has practiced, when able, for fifteen hundred years.

The birthday of the "Lutheran Church," when it began its existence as a distinct organization, was August 27th, 1526, the last day of the first Diet of Spires, when each German State was permitted by the emperor, Charles V., to act in religious matters according to its own convictions, and when the Lutheran territorial churches were thus legitimized. The birthday of the "Church of England" (or Episcopalian Church), when it began its existence as a distinct organization, was November 3rd, 1534, the date of the passage, by the British Parliament, of the "Act of Supremacy," extirpating the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic Pope in England, and making King Henry VIII, the "Supreme Head of the Church of England." And the birthday of the "Church of Scotland" (or Presbyterian Church), when it began its existence as a distinct organization, was August 17th, 1560, when the Scotch Confession of Faith, drawn up by John Knox and his compeers, was formally adopted by the Scotch Parliament.<sup>xvii</sup>**[10]**<sup>xviii</sup> All these three bodies were born from the "Roman Catholic Church," and therefore acknowledged that body to be a true church of Christ, and her ordinances to be valid.

The "Church of England," as Macaulay, the best-informed English historian of the nineteenth century, himself an Episcopalian, tells us, was "the fruit of a union between Protestantism and the British government"—the result of "a compromise huddled up between the eager zeal of reformers and the selfishness of greedy, ambitious and time-serving politicians; from the first considered by a large body of Protestants as a scheme for serving two masters, as an attempt to unite the worship of the Lord with the worship of Baal. As for the Church of England having the apostolical succession, the proofs of this for fifteen hundred years are buried in utter darkness; as for her having apostolical unity, she is a combination of a hundred sects battling

within one organization." The elder William Pitt, more than a hundred years ago, well described her as a body with "a Calvinistic creed, a Popish liturgy, and an Arminian clergy." The able and accurate church historian, Prof. Philip Schaff, says:—"The despotic and licentious monarch (Henry VIII.), whom Pope Leo X. rewarded for his book against Luther with the title, 'Defender of the Faith,' remained a Catholic in belief and sentiment till his death; he merely substituted king-worship for pope-worship, a domestic tyranny for a foreign one, by cutting off the papal tiara from the Episcopal hierarchy, and placing his own crown on the bleeding neck." Because the pope would not sanction his divorce from his wife, Catharine of Aragon, he abolished the papal supremacy in England, and made himself virtual pope, assuming to decide all questions of doctrine and worship, and putting to death those who dared to differ from him. In 1543 he decreed that none under the rank of gentlemen and gentlewomen should be allowed to read the Scriptures. Under Edward VI., Henry's son (1547-1553), the forty-two Articles of Religion, mostly written by "Archbishop" Cranmer, and afterward reduced to thirty-nine, were adopted. If the seventeenth Article is not predestinarian, the ablest historians are at fault, and language is meaningless. Henry's oldest daughter, Mary Tudor (1553-1558), revenging the injustice done her Spanish Catholic mother, the divorced Catharine, instituted a papal reaction. "Her short but bloody reign was the period of Protestant martyrdom, which fertilized the soil of England, and of the exile of about eight hundred Englishmen, who were received with open arms on the Continent (especially at Geneva), and who brought back clearer and stronger views of the Reformation. The violent restoration of the old system intensified the hatred of popery, and forever connected it in the English mind with persecution and bloodshed, with national humiliation and disgrace." John Foxe's "book of Martyrs" is a pathetic account of these sufferings, the author himself having been an exile during the persecution. The Protestant Reformation was permanently established in England under Elizabeth (1558-1603), the masculine daughter of Henry VIII., and the Protestant Anne Boleyn. Declared illegitimate by the pope, who would not sanction the divorce of Henry and Catharine, and excommunicated by the pope, and continually plotted against by the Catholics, she ably and successfully maintained the Protestant cause. Her motives were entirely political. She herself was "wholly unspiritual," says Mr. J. R. Green, "a brilliant, fanciful, unscrupulous child of

earth and the Pagan renaissance," and yet the "Supreme Governor of the Church of England." She had the discretion to drop the blasphemous antichristian title of "Head of the Church." The shipwreck and defeat of the great Spanish Armada, sent in 1558 by Philip II., of Spain for the conquest of England, transferred naval and commercial supremacy from Catholic Spain to Protestant England and Holland. The "Church of England" is at present boastfully declared to be "the strongest and richest national Church in Protestant Christendom"—very much then like the "Church of Rome," and to the same extent unlike the church of the New Testament (Matt. 8:20; Acts 3:6, 20:34, 28:22; 1 Cor. 1:26-31; Heb. 11:35-38; James 2:5; Rev. 1:9, 7:14, 12:6, 13-17).

The Scriptures just cited are a fitting introduction to

"The short and simple annals of the poor."

persecuted people of God called "Anabaptists," or "Gospellers," or Image-Breakers," or "Mennonites," in this century, "a set," like the apostolic church, "everywhere spoken against," and "the persecutions of whom," says the Encyclopedia Britannica, "*were incomparably fiercer than any of the larger Protestant bodies ever underwent.*" The Catholics hated them with a perfect hatred, because they were in all respects the antipodes of Rome. And the Protestants detested and destroyed them as deformers, heretics, traitors, dangerous radicals in Church and State. There is no doubt that this hostility and persecution were partially occasioned by the wild, licentious, revolutionary and insane excesses into which some unworthy, carnal and partial professors of Baptist sentiments plunged—making the Reformation indeed appear as a deformation, threatening the overthrow of civil governments, and drawing the vengeance of these governments down not only upon the guilty, but also upon the innocent, scriptural, inoffensive and blameless advocates of religious liberty. The connection of the theoretical "Anabaptist," but practical Pedobaptist, Thomas Munzer, with the Peasants' War, has already been related. After most of the "Anabaptist" ministers had suffered martyrdom or died of the plague, the able but fanatical Melchior Hoffman, of Sweden (from 1529 to 1534), acquired great influence over the "Anabaptists" in the Netherlands and Germany, and instilled his false and

exciting Manichean and Millenarian views into the minds of many. Two of his disciples, John Matthiesen, of Harlem, and John Bockhold, of Leyden, went, in 1533, to Munster, in Westphalia, converted large numbers of the people in their views, overturned the city government, and set up what they called the Kingdom of New Zion, and intended to proceed to the conquest of the world. The city was besieged by an imperial army, and Matthiesen was killed in a sally from the walls. Bockhold made himself king, and inaugurated a diabolical reign of lust and blood, establishing a complete communism both of property and wives, and beheading, sometimes, more than fifty persons in a day. After fifteen months the city was taken; Bockhold and two of his leading associates, Knipperdolling and Krechting, were tortured to death with red-hot pincers, and then hung up in iron cages, which are still preserved in Munster. Similar revolutions were ineffectually attempted in Leyden and Amsterdam. The best historians agree that many of these people, in those times of great change and excitement—when the iron bondage of Roman priestcraft of a thousand years was being relaxed—were affected with religious mania or lunacy, and ought rather to have been confined in straight waistcoats than to have been executed. The vicious and criminal excesses of these *new so-called "Anabaptists"* were earnestly condemned and repudiated by true Baptists everywhere, who saw and declared that these false prophets who professed to be inspired of God were really inspired of the Devil. The true Baptists of this century, like their brethren of former centuries, were—not licentious and warlike madmen, but—peaceful, harmless, God-fearing, God-serving witnesses for the truth. Why, in the first year of the sixteenth century, when Luther and Zwingli were schoolboys, there were, besides the Waldenses in Italy, France and Holland, and the Wycliffites in England, two hundred churches of the Bohemian Brethren in Germany (to whom the careful and exact Gieseler and Keller trace the "Anabaptists"), who were not only virtuous and blameless, but such true and loyal subjects of the Prince of Peace that they were utterly opposed to war, and who, during this century, though grievously persecuted, by thousands, robbed, imprisoned, tortured, driven with their wives and children from their homes to woods and deserts, yet declared that they would rather die than raise a hand, much less a weapon, against their enemies! The Baptist history of the sixteenth century has well been named "THE BAPTIST MARTYROLOGY." In republican Switzerland, where the social

disturbance were but few and moderate; in England, under all the Tudors, where there were no social disturbances; as well as in the Netherlands and Germany, and everywhere, Catholics and Protestants vied with each other in the most horrible cruelties against those stigmatized as "Anabaptists;" and these poor people vied with their ancient brethren in meek submission to the merciless rage of their oppressors. Says Cardinal Hosius, Chairman of the Council of Trent: "If the truth of religion were to be judged of by the readiness and cheerfulness which a man of any sect shows in suffering, then the opinions and persuasions of no sect can be truer or surer than those of the Anabaptists, since there have been none for twelve hundred years past that have been more grievously punished." Besides imprisonment, banishment, confiscation and torture, we read that three thousand were in this century put to death in Germany, six thousand in the Netherlands, and a smaller unknown number in Switzerland and England. Foxe does not record the martyrdoms of the Baptists; but "their record is on high." They were generally poor laboring people, and their ministers were generally uneducated, and labored with their own hands. They had, however, a few learned and eloquent preachers among them, as Grebel, Mauz, Denk, Hetzer and Hubmaier. The last mentioned, Balthasar Hubmaier, was their ablest and most learned minister. He had been professor of Catholic Theology at Ingolstadt, then a zealous and eloquent Protestant preacher, and had translated the Gospels and epistles into German. Not having been able to find infant baptism in the New Testament, he felt constrained to follow the example and command of Christ, and receive believers' baptism, and he himself baptized several hundred others. Prof. Schaff says: "He was perhaps the first who taught the principle of universal religious liberty, on the ground that Christ came not to kill and to burn, but to save, and condemned the employment of force in His kingdom. He was tortured in Switzerland, and burned in Vienna (March 10th, 1528), going steadfastly to the stake with pious joy. His wife, who had encouraged him in his martyr spirit, was three days afterwards drowned in the Danube."

Erasmus, Beza, Commenius, Cassander, Bullinger, Meshovius, Hosius and others testify to the blameless and harmless lives of the "Anabaptist." The Encyclopedia Britannica says: "There is an obvious genetic, though not historical, connection between the Anabaptists and those earlier sects

(Novatians, Donatists, Albigenses, Waldenses) which did not practice infant baptism.”

Menno Simons (1496-1561) was no doubt the most useful Baptist minister of the sixteenth century. While a Catholic priest, he saw an Anabaptist beheaded, and was led to inquire into the scriptural authority of infant baptism; and not being enabled by his Catholic superior or by Luther or Bucer or Bullinger to find such authority anywhere in the Bible, he was conscientiously led, at great worldly sacrifice, to renounce the custom, and to join the despised Anabaptists (in 1536). For twenty-five years he traveled in the Netherlands and Germany, with his wife and children, amid perpetual sufferings and daily perils of his life, and proclaimed God’s full and free salvation to all believing sinners, and he founded numerous churches. He seemed, says Mosheim, to be “the common Bishop of all Anabaptists.” He earnestly warned his brethren against the Munster abominations; and he insisted upon strict discipline in all his churches, which were independent of each other in church government, and united only by a bond of love. Some practiced feet-washing, and some did not. The members of his church were called Mennonites, and were plain, honest, industrious people, mostly farmers.

In the Protestant Confessions and writers of the sixteenth century many false doctrines are charged upon the Anabaptists—such Manicheism, Millenarianism, Arianism, Arminianism, revolutionism, communism, asceticism, psychopannychism (the sleep of the soul from death to the resurrection), universalism, libertinism, and opposition to holding civil offices, to capital punishment, to keeping inns or carrying on trades. In reference to these charges, it may be said that there were numerous sects of the “Anabaptists,” and some of them were fanatical and apparently insane; some even professing to be so inspired as to be able to prophesy and to set aside the Scriptures; and some going so far into error as to believe (and be willing to suffer martyrdom for that belief) that David Joris (who died at Basel in 1556) was a second Christ, greater and better than the Lord Jesus; and some who bore the name rushing into the abominable excesses of Munster. But of those who were most like their brethren in preceding and succeeding centuries, we have two Confessions of Faith—the

Swiss Confession of 1527, and the Mennonite Confession of 1580. The seven articles of the Swiss Confession teach the baptism<sup>xix</sup>[11] of believers; the exclusion of unworthy members; communion of baptized believers; separation from the impure churches and the world; the support of needy pastors by the voluntary offerings of the members; the condemnation of Christians holding civil offices, but allowing others to do so, and enjoining obedience to civil magistrates, except when their commands are opposed to religious convictions; and the disuse of oaths. The forty articles of the Mennonite Confession reject also the use of arms, lawsuits, revenge, all kinds of violence and worldly amusements, and divorce, except in case of adultery. The Swiss Confession seems to imply, and the Mennonite Confession plainly declares, that the atonement of Christ was universal, and that election is conditional. While the true "Anabaptists" or "Mennonites" of the sixteenth century had great spiritual light on most other subjects, Bible Baptists of today believe that they were greatly in the dark in regard to the conditionality of salvation. The bitter persecutions inflicted upon them, inconsistently and unscripturally, by the Lutherans, Calvinists and Anglicans, who professed to believe the doctrine of predestination,xx[12]xxi did not incline them to receive that Bible doctrine, nor indeed did they seem to devote any particular attention to its consideration. It was the ordination of Divine Providence for the Protestant Reformers to consider and elucidate that important scriptural doctrine. The defense of another most important point of truth, neglected by all other religionists, providentially devolved upon the Baptists of that century—and this point was *the spirituality of the church of Christ*, a New Testament principle utterly inconsistent with infant or vicious membership in the church, and with alliance of Church and State. This Bible principle was in the sixteenth century regarded, by Catholic and Protestant alike, as the most intolerable of heresies, urgently demanding the severest vengeance of the secular arm. The Protestants lacked sufficient confidence in God to carry out to its logical results their own fundamental doctrine, that the Bible is the only and perfect standard of faith and practice, and the inevitable corollary of that doctrine—that Christ's kingdom is not of this world. Instead of thoroughly maintaining this scriptural position, it is an indisputable fact that the Lutherans and Calvinists actually corrupted the principles and practices of large numbers of the old Bohemian Brethren and Waldenses, and induced thousands of these simple-minded people to unite

with themselves in the abandonment of New Testament ground in reference to the proper subjects of baptism and the apostolic strictness of church discipline. In the early part of the sixteenth century, when, on account of persecution, those entertaining Baptist sentiments lay concealed, according to Mosheim, in almost all the countries of Europe, the intelligence of the Protestant movement caused them to come joyfully and hopefully out of their hiding places, but only to meet with bitter disappointment; for if flattery failed to entice them from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ, they were heathenishly punished with fines, imprisonment, torture, banishment and death, and that, too, by men who professed to advocate the principles of Christian liberty.

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#### **ENDNOTES:**

xxii[1]xxiii The sixteenth century, or the period of the Protestant Reformation, was, says Prof. Schaff, "by far the richest and deepest in church history next to the age of Christ and His inspired Apostles."

xxiv[2]xxv The extremely accurate John C. L. Gieseler, whose Church History is an indispensable help and an authority with all German, English and American scholars, of every ecclesiastical denomination says (vol. Iv, page 385): "All the genuine attempts for the reformation of the church have proceeded from Augustinianism, which, in opposition to reliance upon works, that fundamental source of corruption, declared the entire helplessness of man, and this fostered the humility which is the essence of all true piety. The doctrine of Augustine as to the corruption of human nature, and that man could be saved only by Divine grace given in Christ, was the one with which the Reformers of the sixteenth century were most deeply penetrated, and which they consequently enforced in the most living manner."

xxvi[3]xxvii The name of "Protestants" originated from the solemn "Protest" (April 19, 1529) made by the evangelical princes of Germany against the intolerant decrees of the second Diet of Spire—the Protest reciting, in defense of its position, the Scriptures, the inalienable rights of conscience, and the decree of the first Diet of Spire (in 1526), which left

each State to its own discretion concerning the question of reform until a general council should settle it for all.

xxviii[4]xxix Among the causes of this fact may be reckoned the old ingrained pride and hatred of Roman Catholics against Protestants, intensified by the fierce and long religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the dense ignorance and superstition of modern Catholic countries; and the revival of the Order of Jesuits and of the Inquisition in the nineteenth century.

xxx[5]xxxi "God's precepts," says Prof. B. L. Dabney, in his *Theology*, "are, for us, an actual, a perfect and a supreme rule of right. They are right not only because He commands, but because they are in themselves right. The distinction between right and wrong inheres and abides in the eternal, self-existent and necessary principles of His moral essence."

xxxii[6]xxxiii This statement of Prof. A. A. Hodge, and a similar one by his father, Prof. Charles Hodge, need correction. As shown on page 335, the early Waldenses, like the other Anti-Sacerdotalists, were, in the darkness of the Dark Ages, Arminians. Under the influence of the Bohemian Brethren, and a more accurate acquaintance, with the Scriptures, they became predestinarians in the sixteenth century,

xxxiv[7]xxxv "*As a matter of history,*" says Prof. Schaff, "*it is an undeniable fact that the strongest predestinarians have been the most earnest, energetic and persevering Christians.*" The life labors and sacrifices of Paul, the most strongly predestinarian of the Apostles, furnish the brightest and most unanswerable demonstration of this great fact, and proofs of it also are afforded in the lives of thousands since the Apostolic Age.

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