

The Northwestern Lutheran

The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; let Him not leave us, nor forsake us. 1 Kings 8: 57.

Vol. 4.

Milwaukee, Wis., November 1917.

No. 21.

Jan 18
Rev C Buenger
65 N Ridge

A Jubilee Song

1517—1917



O come, let us honor with glad jubilation,
Our mighty Creator, our Ruler, our King,
O come lift your voices in glad adoration,
With songs of rejoicing His praises to sing.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee,
O God of our Fathers,—Thy Zion is free!

O come, let us honor with heart and with voices,
Our gracious Redeemer, our Savior, our Lord,
Proclaim to the world, till each nation rejoices,
His life-giving Gospel, through Luther restored.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee,
Thy Blood has redeemed us,—Thy Zion is free!

O come, sing the praises of His holy Spirit,
Whose pow'r hath implanted the Word in our hearts,
O wonderful blessing to keep it and hear it,
Life, Peace, Joy and Comfort its Counsel imparts.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee,
The Word is our Refuge,—Thy Zion is free!

No longer a Pilate's hard stairway ascending,
Thy free grace, dear Father, we strive to obtain.
But straight to Thy throne now our pathway is wending,
For Calvary's Cross rent the curtain in twain.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee,
Unchained is the Gospel,—Thy Zion is free!

No longer we grope in monastic seclusion
No longer in Popery's chains we repine,
The Gospel has cleansed us from Romish pollution,
Thy Blood has redeemed us,—dear Lord, we are Thine!

We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee,
From Popery's bondage Thy Zion is free!

No longer in Popery's darkness we languish,
Thy Gospel of Freedom has vanquished the night.

No longer we groan in our sorrow and anguish,
Rome's midnight has vanished,—Behold, it is light!
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee,
From Rome's vain traditions Thy Zion is free!

No longer we tremble at Popery's thunders,
Our Fortress, our Rock, our Defense is the Lord,

His name we shall praise, and proclaim all His wonders,

His Grace and His mercy, His Truth and His Word.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee,
Rome's fetters are broken,—Thy Zion is free!

We'll tell all the world of Thy blood-bought salvation,
Thy finished redemption, dear Lord, we'll proclaim,

Till every kindred, and people, and nation,
Shall hail, O Messiah, Thy glorious Name.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee,
Thy Gospel has saved us,—Thy Zion is free!

O join, all ye ransomed, the Jubilee chorus;
O come, praise Jehovah in Psalter and song!
For Israel's Keeper is still watching o'er us,
Come join in the song of the heavenly throng,
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee,
Forever and ever,—Thy Zion is free!



Anna Hoppe.

THE GOSPEL OF THE REFORMATION

Rev. 14: 6-9: "I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the eternal gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and people, saying with a loud voice: Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water. And there followed another angel, saying: Babylon is fallen, is fallen, the great city."

In this year of Lutheran jubilation it should be our constant endeavor to make known to all our fellowmen the blessings bestowed upon the world by the great work of Luther. Being filled with this purpose, we are sorely tempted to enlarge upon the social and political benefits enjoyed by all mankind as a result of the Reformation. It is easy to demonstrate that all the advancement in arts and sciences of which the modern world speaks so boastfully as its own achievements, are in reality based only upon that deliverance from mental bondage which was an incidental effect of Luther's preaching. As Americans, we feel a special urge to show our own people that the fundamental thoughts of political and religious liberty on which that priceless document, the Constitution of the United States, is based, were voiced clearly and distinctly by the Monk of Wittenberg four centuries ago. But we must not permit ourselves to be enticed away from the main issue by such temptations. We would be untrue to the spirit of the Reformation were we to create the impression that its chief importance to the world lay in preparing the way for the intellectual, social and political advancement of the world. We have a greater message to give, and a better, a message, moreover, which we alone of all mankind know and are enjoined to deliver. Let our jubilee message to the world be that which all the world needs, today as much as four hundred years ago: **THE GOSPEL OF THE REFORMATION!**

It was decided many years ago that Rev. 14: 6-8 (9) was a proper lesson to be read in Lutheran churches on Reformation Day. An angel, in the language of the Scriptures, is a messenger of God; surely Luther was sent by God, a herald, to proclaim the message of the King of Heaven. John saw the angel flying in the midst of heaven; our Lord has taught us to recognize the Church as the kingdom of heaven on earth, and it was in the midst of this heaven that Luther raised his compelling voice. Proceeding to compare the remaining portions of the prophecy, we readily find that it truly describes the main features of Luther's message, **the Gospel of the Reformation.**

1. It is the eternal Gospel.—One of the wild accusations hurled against Luther by his exasperated opponents, and vehemently re-asserted by Romanists of all periods since those days, is the claim that his work was not a reformation, but a revolution; that he did not

improve conditions, but merely turned upside down the cherished traditions of centuries; that he departed from the old faith and introduced a new and heretical doctrines. Never was greater falsehood spoken in defense of a bad case! Under every fair test, Luther's Gospel shines forth as the true, the eternal Gospel of God. This Gospel was first conceived in the heart of the merciful God, before the foundations of the world were laid, before any of those children of men existed for whose salvation it was designed. It was given to the first parents of all mankind when they had sinned, as the saving truth which offers everlasting life to those who must otherwise die in their sins. Since that blessed day the Gospel has been preached among the children of men. It became the priceless heritage of the chosen people of God. Of the worship of the Old Testament it was the basis as well as its pervading element. It was the covenant of God, and all bloody sacrifices represented it. It was the chief burden of all messages of the prophets to whom it was given to outline the work of the coming Savior with ever increasing clearness. And when the fulness of the time arrived, God sent His Son to do what had been promised, to achieve the salvation of mankind, and to preach the merciful will of God as One who was in the bosom of the Father. He then enjoined His disciples to go forth into the world as preachers of the Gospel to all men, and thus the Gospel began to spread to the uttermost ends of the earth. It never disappeared, but proved to be truly everlasting. There came a time, however, when the Man of Sin succeeded in turning the eyes of Christians away from the light of the Gospel. Though it was still heard in the Church in Scripture lessons and in the administration of the Sacraments, a dark and heavy veil of man-made doctrine and superstition had been drawn before it with malevolent skill. Subjected to spiritual tyranny which has never been equaled anywhere else, the Church was held in bondage, for want of the Gospel. Then came Luther and affixed his renowned 95 Theses against the abuse of indulgences to the church-door at Wittenberg. What was the significance of this act, that it should be remembered as of world-wide importance? With these Theses Luther rent the veil that had concealed the Gospel from the sight of men. He taught them that salvation for the sinner does not depend upon the decisions of popes and church councils, but upon the Word of God alone. From the Bible as his one and only authority he proclaimed that for which the Bible was originally written—the Eternal Gospel. New as his message sounded to the men of his day, it was no more, and no less, than the precious word of our salvation, first announced in the Garden of Eden, then preached by all the prophets of God, and finally by the Lord Himself and by His chosen Apostles. The Eternal Gospel of God and nothing else is the real Gospel of the Reformation.

2. And it is the **universal** Gospel! It is characteristic of all false religions to safeguard their messages against misuse by restricting their application. Test whatever heathen religion you will, and you will find that any alleged salvation which it offers is not held out as a free gift to whoever may need it, but is restricted to those who will comply with certain conditions and will submit to definite restrictions. Test Romanism, and you will find the same to be true. What salvation Antichrist offered to those under his subjection was conditioned on many things, which all centered in the supreme requirement that he who would benefit by the pope's gospel must submit body and soul to the control of the "supreme pontiff."

How different the Eternal Gospel of God! According to our text, it is to be preached "to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." A universal Gospel, indeed, that knows no distinction of nationality, of sex or age, but is meant for every individual human being on earth. A universal Gospel, because it was purchased by the sufferings and death of Him Who took away the sins of all, even as He stood in the place of all sinners. A universal Gospel without a single restriction or limitation, an unconditional and free offer of salvation, as broad as only the merciful God could possibly make it. This is Luther's Gospel, the Gospel of the Reformation! How quickly and decidedly its universal appeal was felt far and wide, is attested by the marvelous speed with which the Theses were carried abroad. Written in Latin and intended merely for a basis of debate among the learned, they were seized upon by the people generally as a godsend. Looking back in later years the contemporaries of Luther remembered to their amazement that these statements of Gospel truth had become known throughout Germany within a fortnight, and had found their way to all parts of Christendom within a month, and this in a day without telephones, telegraphs, railway communication, or even regular mails. Whoever read them recognized at once the voice of the Gospel speaking to him personally! Here was the unconditional, unrestricted, absolutely free Gospel of God being sounded forth as it had not been heard for centuries.

Because the Lutheran Church possesses this universal Gospel of God, it is the true **missionary** Church. No church can do missionary work with full assurance of success if it carries a gospel hedged round about with various man-made restrictions and conditions which must first be complied with before the gospel can apply. But wherever the Lutheran Church goes forth upon her errand of mercy her messengers know that her Gospel applies, without restriction or condition, to every man, woman, or child whom they may meet in their wanderings. They must not and dare not fear to make a mistake whenever they offer the salvation of Jesus Christ freely to any human being;

a mistake is impossible because the Gospel of the Reformation, being the Eternal Gospel of God, is meant to be a free gift to each human being wherever found on earth.

By force of this universal Gospel, the Lutheran Church also at once became the insistent promoter of **Christian education**. If the Gospel is for all mankind, then it is for our children; if it is for all nations, then surely it is for that new nation which is born every year among each nation and kindred. Recognizing this, Luther was the first man who raised his voice in an appeal for universal Christian education of children. Though burdened with labor of many kinds he yet found time to write that unsurpassed book of Christian instruction known as the Small Catechism—to write it in order that fathers and mothers might thus be helped to instruct their children at home, since the common school was then no more than a dim vision, not to be realized until centuries later. The Lutheran Church has preserved its traditional position in this matter to this day, and has tried to realize it in this country of religious liberty by establishing its own parochial schools. This great undertaking has been widely misunderstood or wilfully misconstrued. Our schools are not German schools, but Christian schools; their aim is not to perpetuate the German language, but to preserve the knowledge of the eternal Gospel of God among our descendants to whom we owe a bringing up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Because the Gospel belongs to our children by God's intention, we make an earnest effort to have their whole education pervaded and sustained by the spirit of the Gospel. We could not slight this important work without denying the paramount importance of the Gospel of God for our children!

3. The Gospel of the Reformation is also the **saving** Gospel.—A gospel is good tidings; the Gospel of God is good tidings for sinful man. What can God say to the sinner so as to bring him good tidings? The conscience of every man convinces him of sin. If he be honest with himself he must admit that his sins separate between him and his God. In his inmost heart he feels and knows that he is a lost creature, condemned to everlasting death by the Law of that God to whom he is responsible. As far as man can see without divine enlightenment, there is no help for the sinner, no way to escape the final doom. If God would bring tidings of joy to these unhappy creatures, lost in sin and unable to help themselves, what must the tidings be? What Gospel must be brought them to turn their despair into gladness.

The Roman church claims to have a message for the sinner, and it calls it a gospel. But what does it offer? Salvation, yes, but on condition! Jesus a Savior, yes, but not from all sin nor from all damnation! In this false gospel the real burden of salvation falls to the sinner; it is his task to acquire the right-

eousness that avails before God, by his own efforts, through unceasing labor in works of his own hands. This false gospel assures the sinner that there is no salvation for him excepting that which he achieves himself. It tells the helpless fettered slave of sin that he must free himself; it tells the dead in sin that they must acquire life by their own efforts. And to deny the last crumb of comfort, the sinner is told that there is no certainty whatever that any amount of labor on his part will really secure his salvation. Under the influence of this false gospel Luther failed to find the peace which his soul craved. You know that he finally entered the cloister, for no other reason but that he hoped to achieve righteousness there, if anywhere; he assures us that if any monk could ever have succeeded in obtaining grace by works, it would have been himself, so earnestly did he apply himself to the task. But his efforts failed, as they must. He sought enlightenment from the Bible, but the veil of Romanism hung thick before it so that he could not see the light. He tells us he fairly hated those passages of the Bible where the righteousness of God is extolled. He knew of no divine righteousness except that which compels God to condemn forever all those that are not perfect in holiness. Then his eyes were opened. To his inexpressible joy God gave him to see that the righteousness of God which is meant for sinners, is no other than the righteousness purchased and won by the Son of God Himself when he gave his life for the salvation of all sinners. Having learned that this righteousness is the gift of the Gospel, offered freely to every sinner; having learned that God justifies the unrighteous for the sake of the righteous Savior; having learned that the forgiveness of sins offered in Jesus Christ is a perfect and complete pardon of God—in short, having at last understood the eternal Gospel of God, he knew that he was saved! Now also his eyes were opened to understand the Bible and he saw the light of the eternal Gospel shining from all its pages.

The fact that the Gospel of the Reformation which has been preserved to us through the grace of God, is the saving Gospel gives the real zest to our jubilation. Having experienced within our own hearts that it is indeed the power of God unto salvation, we esteem it the highest privilege that may be accorded to man that we are permitted to preach it to sinners wherever we go, and thus to become their helpers unto the joy of salvation.

4. Finally, the Gospel of the Reformation is an effective Gospel.—Our text declares that the Gospel angel was followed by another angel who said, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, the great city." The days in which John wrote these visions were part of that period of bloody persecution to which the first Church was subjected. Under the stress of circumstances, it had become customary for Christians to be cautious in their utterances, especially when speaking of the im-

perial city, the seat of the persecuting emperors. When John wrote of Babylon, every Christian reader knew that he did not refer to the ancient Mesopotamian city of that name, but to the City of the Seven Hills, to imperial Rome. "Rome is fallen, is fallen"—what may these words signify in the prophecy here placed before us?

Ask history! It seems unreasonable that all the potentates of the Roman church, including their head, the pope, should have been filled with uneasiness, yea, with terror, when the lone Monk of Wittenberg raised his voice. Incredible, that is to say, unless you understand the Gospel of the Reformation! The shrewd leaders of the church recognized the danger immediately. They saw that, unless the voice of that monk could be hushed, Rome would fall, since the Gospel which he preached set men free from the spiritual bondage in which they had been held. Hence their strenuous efforts to silence Luther, efforts which stopped short of murder only because divine providence interposed. And what they foresaw, did indeed come to pass. Here was fulfilled the prophecy of Paul declaring that Jesus would in due time slay Antichrist with the breath of His mouth—i. e., through the Gospel. Rome is fallen! But perhaps you will point to the fact that the Roman church continues to exist, and that it is an open secret that the pope together with his hierarchy is striving for some kind of supremacy in our country, if not in the world? Remember that the temporal power which the papacy had acquired was merely an accessory to that spiritual dominion which it exercised during the period which we call the Dark Ages. This spiritual dominion, however, was shattered for all times by the powerful Gospel of the Reformation. Never again will Rome be able to fetter the hearts and consciences of men, as it had them fettered before, unless men turn their backs to the Gospel and voluntarily accept the yoke of the spiritual taskmasters. Rome is fallen, for the light of the Gospel is shining!

But John tells us of another effect of this Gospel which is as great as the one just mentioned. He hears the first angel proclaim both the content and the effect of the Eternal Gospel, saying, "Fear God, and give glory to Him . . . and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Whatever the Gospel seems to demand, it really brings about. It turns men from slavish, abject fear of a condemning God to the true reverence of faith in His boundless mercy. It leads men to see the true glory of God that He is their Savior, and He alone. It turns their hearts away from all desire to achieve salvation by their own efforts, and makes them willing to entrust their life into His hands with child-like faith. Thus He, through the Gospel, establishes on earth that great company of believers whom we call the Church of God, who worship none but the

great God of heaven through Jesus Christ His Son. In other words, the Gospel of the Reformation makes true Christians, and it alone. That is its glorious, divine power. Incidentally, John implies that these are the people who through the Gospel have a sane and sound understanding of all things temporal, being qualified to live and move among their fellow men with all due regard for the rights of their neighbors. The Gospel makes good fathers, good mothers, good neighbors, good citizens. For how could it be otherwise, since it brings them to fear God and give glory to Him?

5. In conclusion, observe the words omitted in the last quotation, "For the hour of His judgment is come." These words do not immediately point to the last judgment. We use the same word which John wrote when we speak of a **crisis**, meaning a moment of decision. The hour of His crisis has come! The hour appointed by Him for decision has arrived—with the preaching of the Gospel. Wherever the Gospel is proclaimed that hour has come for those who hear it. Then their fate is decided. Jesus says, "He that believeth on the Son of God, is not judged; but he that believeth not is judged already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3: 18-19). Let us not forget the responsibility laid upon us who possess the Gospel of the Reformation, with the charge to preach it to all the world. Having rejoiced in the goodness of God as exhibited in the continuance of our Church for four hundred years, let us not forget that the time may be brief in which we are permitted to proclaim the Gospel of life to a dying world. May our jubilation be an efficient spur to greater efforts than ever in proclaiming the Gospel of the Reformation!

J. Schaller.

LUTHER'S NINETY-FIVE THESES

*Disputation of Doctor Martin Luther on the Power and Efficiency of Indulgences.

October 31, 1517.

Out of love for the truth and the desire to bring it to light, the following propositions will be discussed at Wittenberg, under the presidency of the Rev. Father Martin Luther, Master of Arts and of Sacred Theology and Lecturer in Ordinary on the same at that place. Wherefore he requests that those who are unable to be present and debate orally with us, may do so by letter.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

1. Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ when He said

*Works of Martin Luther, published by A. J. Holman Company.

"Repent ye," willed that the whole life of believers should be repentance.

2. This word cannot be understood to mean sacramental penance—i. e., confession and satisfaction—which is administered by the priests.

3. Yet it means not inward repentance only; nay, there is no inward repentance which does not outwardly work divers mortifications of the flesh.



4. The penalty (of sin), therefore, continues so long as hatred of self continues; for this is the true inward repentance, and continues until our entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

5. The pope does not intend to remit, and cannot remit, any penalties other than those which he has imposed either by his own authority or by that of the Canons (Decrees of the Church).

6. The pope cannot remit any guilt, except by declaring that it has been remitted by God, and by assenting to God's remission, though, to be sure, he may grant remission in cases reserved to his judgment. If his right to grant remission in such cases were despised, the guilt would remain entirely unforgiven.

7. God remits guilt to no one whom He does not, at the same time, humble in all things and bring into subjection to His vicar, the priest.

8. The penitential canons are imposed only on the living, and, according to them, nothing should be imposed on the dying.

9. Therefore the Holy Spirit in the pope is kind to us, because in his decrees he always makes exception of the article of death and of necessity.

10. Ignorant and wicked are the doings of those priests who, in the case of the dying, reserve canonical penances for purgatory.

11. This changing of the canonical penalty to the penalty of purgatory is quite evidently one of the tares that were sown while the bishops slept.

12. In former times the canonical penalties were imposed not after, but before absolution, as tests of true contrition.

13. The dying are freed by death from all penalties; they are already dead to canonical rules, and have a right to be released from them.

14. The imperfect health (of soul), that is to say, the imperfect love, of the dying brings with it, of necessity, great fear; and the smaller the love, the greater is the fear.

15. This fear and horror is sufficient of itself alone (to say nothing of other things), to constitute the penalty of purgatory, since it is very near to the horror of despair.

16. Hell, purgatory and heaven seem to differ as do despair, almost-despair and the assurance of safety.

17. With souls in purgatory it seems necessary that horror should grow less and love increase.

18. It seems unproved, either by reason or Scripture, that they are outside the state of merit—that is to say, of increasing love.

19. Again, it seems unproved that they, or at least that all of them, are certain or assured of their own blessedness, though we may be quite certain of it.

20. Therefore by "full remission of all penalties" the pope means not actually "of all," but only of those imposed by himself.

21. Therefore those preachers of indulgences are in error, who say that by the pope's indulgences a man is freed from every penalty, and saved.

22. Whereas he remits to souls in purgatory no penalty which, according to the canons, they would have had to pay in this life.

23. If it is at all possible to grant to any one the remission of all penalties whatsoever, it is certain that this remission can be granted only to the most perfect—that is, to the very fewest.

24. It must needs be, therefore, that the greater part of the people are deceived by that indiscriminate and high-sounding promise of release from penalty.

25. The power which the pope has, in a general way, over purgatory, is just like the power which any bishop or curate has, in a special way, within his own diocese or parish.

26. The pope does well when he grants remission to souls (in purgatory), not by the power of the keys (which he does not possess), but by way of intercession.

27. They preach man (merely human doctrine), who say that so soon as the penny jingles into the money box, the soul flies out (of purgatory).

28. It is certain that when the penny jingles into the money box, gain and avarice can be increased, but the result of the intercession of the church is in the power of God alone.

29. Who knows whether all the souls in purgatory wish to be bought out of it, as in the legend of Sts. Severinus and Paschal.

30. No one is sure that his own contrition is sincere; much less that he has attained full remission.

31. Rare as is the man that is truly penitent, so rare is also the man who truly buys indulgences—i. e., such men are most rare.

32. They will be condemned eternally, together with their teachers, who believe themselves sure of their salvation because they have letters of pardon.

33. Men must be on their guard against those who say that the pope's pardons are that inestimable gift of God by which man is reconciled to Him.

34. For these "graces of pardon" concern only the penalties of sacramental satisfaction, and these are appointed by man.

35. They preach no Christian doctrine who teach that contrition is not necessary in those who intend to buy souls out of purgatory or to buy confessionalia.

36. Every truly repentant Christian has a right to full remission of penalty and guilt, even without letters of pardon.

37. Every true Christian, whether living or dead, has part in all the blessings of Christ and the Church; and this is granted him by God, even without letters of pardon.

38. Nevertheless, the remission and participation (in the blessings of the Church) which are granted by the pope are in no way to be despised, for they are, as I have said, the declaration of divine remission.

39. It is most difficult, even for the very keenest theologians, at one and the same time to commend to the people the abundance of pardons and (the need of) true contrition.

40. True contrition seeks and loves penalties, but liberal pardons only relax penalties and cause them to be hated, or at least furnish an occasion (for hating them).

41. Papal pardons are to be preached with caution, lest the people may falsely think them preferable to other good works of love.

42. Christians are to be taught that the pope does not intend the buying of pardons to be compared in any way to works of mercy.

43. Christians are to be taught that he who gives to the poor or lends to the needy does a better work than buying pardons.

44. Because love grows by works of love, and man becomes better; but by pardons man does not grow better, only more free from penalty.

45. Christians are to be taught that he who sees a man in need, and passes him by, and gives (his money) for pardons, purchases not the indulgences of the pope, but the indignation of God.

46. Christians are to be taught that unless they have more than they need, they are bound to keep back what is necessary for their own families, and by no means to squander it on pardons.

47. Christians are to be taught that the buying of pardons is a matter of free will, and not of commandment.

48. Christians are to be taught that the pope, in granting pardons, needs, and therefore desires, their devout prayer for him more than the money they bring.

49. Christians are to be taught that the pope's pardons are useful, if they do not put their trust in them; but altogether harmful, if through them they lose their fear of God.

50. Christians are to be taught that if the pope knew the exactions of the pardon-preachers he would rather that St. Peter's Church should go to ashes than that it should be built up with the skin, flesh and bones of his sheep.

51. Christians are to be taught that it would be the pope's wish, as it is his duty, to give of his own money to very many of those from whom certain hawkers of pardon cajole money, even though the church of St. Peter might have to be sold.

52. The assurance of salvation by letters of pardon is vain, even though the commissary, nay, even though the pope himself, were to stake his soul upon it.

53. They are enemies of Christ and of the pope who bid the Word of God be altogether silent in some churches, in order that pardons may be preached in others.

54. Injury is done the Word of God when, in the same sermon, an equal or a longer time is spent on pardons than on this Word.

55. It must be the intention of the pope that if pardons, which are a very small thing, are celebrated with one bell, with single processions and ceremonies, then the Gospel, which is the very greatest thing, could be preached with a hundred bells, a hundred processions, a hundred ceremonies.

56. The "treasures of the Church," out of which the pope grants indulgences, are not sufficiently named or known among the people of Christ.

57. That they are not temporal treasures is certainly evident, for many of the vendors do not pour out such treasures so easily, but only gather them.

58. Nor are they the merits of Christ and the Saints, for even without the pope, these always work grace for the inner man, and the cross, death and hell for the outward man.

59. St. Lawrence said that the treasures of the Church were the Church's poor, but he spoke according to the usage of the word in his own time.

60. Without rashness we say that the keys of the Church, given by Christ's merit, are that treasure.

61. For it is clear that for the remission of penalties and of reserved cases, the power of the pope is of itself sufficient.

62. The true treasure of the Church is the most holy Gospel of the glory and the grace of God.

63. But this treasure is naturally most odious, for it makes the first to be last.

64. On the other hand, the treasure of indulgences is naturally most acceptable, for it makes the last to be first.

65. Therefore the treasures of the Gospel are nets with which they formerly were wont to fish for men of riches.

66. The treasures of indulgences are nets with which they now fish for the riches of men.

67. The indulgences which the preachers cry as the "greatest graces" are known to be truly such, in so far as they promote gain.

68. Yet they are in truth the very smallest graces compared with the grace of God and the piety of the cross.

69. Bishops and curates are bound to admit the commissaries of apostolic pardons, with all reverence.

70. But still more are they bound to strain all their eyes and attend with all their ears, lest these men preach their own dreams instead of the commission of the pope.

71. He who speaks against the truth of apostolic pardons, let him be anathema and accursed.

72. But he who guards against the lust and license of the pardon-preachers, let him be blessed!

73. The pope justly thunders against those who, by any art, contrive the injury of the traffic in pardons.

74. But much more does he intend to thunder against those who use the pretext of pardons to contrive the injury of holy love and truth.

75. To think of papal pardons so great that they could absolve a man even if he had committed an impossible sin and violated the Mother of God—this is madness.

76. We say, on the contrary, that the papal pardons are not able to remove the very least of venial sins, so far as its guilt is concerned.

77. It is said that even St. Peter, if he were now pope, could not bestow greater graces; this is blasphemy against St. Peter and against the pope.

78. We say, on the contrary, that even the present pope, and any pope at all, has greater graces at his disposal, to-wit, the Gospel, powers, gifts of healing, etc., as it is written in I Corinthians xii.

79. To say that the cross, emblazoned with the papal arms, which is set up (by the preachers of indulgences), is of equal worth with the Cross of Christ, is blasphemy.

80. The bishops, curates and theologians who allow such talk to spread among the people will have an account to render.

81. This unbridled preaching of pardons makes it no easy matter, even for learned men, to rescue the reverence due to the pope from slander, or even from the shrewd questions of the laity.

82. To-wit: "Why does not the pope empty purgatory, for the sake of holy love and the dire need of the souls that are there, if he redeems an infinite number of souls for the sake of miserable money with which to build a church? The former reasons would be most just; the latter is most trivial."

83. Again: "Why are mortuary and anniversary masses for the dead continued, and why does he not return or permit the withdrawal of the endowments founded on their behalf, since it is wrong to pray for the redeemed?"

84. Again: "What is this new piety of God and the pope, that for money they allow a man who is impious and their enemy to buy out of purgatory the pious soul of a friend of God, and do not rather, because of that pious and beloved soul's own need, free it for pure love's sake?"

85. Again: "Why are the penitential canons, long since in actual fact and through disuse abrogated and dead, now satisfied by the granting of indulgences, as though they were still alive and in force?"

86. Again. "Why does not the pope, whose wealth is today greater than the riches of the richest, build just this one church of St. Peter with his own money, rather than with the money of poor believers?"

87. Again: "What is it that the pope remits, and what participation does he grant to those who, by perfect contrition, have a right to full remission and participation?"

88. Again: "What greater blessing could come to the Church than if the pope were to do a hundred times a day what he now does once, and bestow on every believer these remissions and participations?"

89. "Since the pope, by his pardons, seeks the salvation of souls rather than money, why does he suspend the indulgences and pardons granted heretofore, since these have equal efficacy?"

90. To repress these arguments and scruples of the laity by force alone, and not to resolve them by giving reasons, is to expose the Church and the pope to the ridicule of their enemies, and to make Christians unhappy.

91. If, therefore, pardons were preached according to the spirit and mind of the pope, all these doubts would be readily resolved; nay, they could not exist.

92. Away, then, with all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Peace, peace," and there is no peace.

93. Blessed be all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Cross, cross," and there is no cross!

94. Christians are to be exhorted that they be diligent in following Christ, their Head, through penalties, deaths and hell.

95. And thus be confident of entering into heaven rather through many tribulations, than through the assurance of peace.

WHAT WE CHILDREN OF THE REFORMATION OUGHT TO BE THANKFUL FOR

"Luther is too great, too wonderful, for me to depict in words," says his most learned friend and co-laborer Melancthon. None must feel the truth of this remark more keenly than those of us whom duty calls upon to assist in a measure in striking the keynote of the quadricentennial of the Reformation.

It is, indeed, with diffidence we offer our humble service in celebrating an event which marks the turning point in the world's history, and which as none other since the beginning of the Christian era has bestowed blessings of such magnitude on all mankind, and of which the entire Christian world must say: this is not a mere man's doing, this is the work of God.

The fruits of the Reformation through Luther, whom God in His counsel of wisdom has chosen for His servant, to lead His people out of the house of bondage and bring about the restoration of the Christian Church to its original purity and blessedness under the Gospel dispensation, are so many and of such beneficial influence to both the church and the world at large as to render it impossible to depict them in a short article. We must confine ourselves to a few prominent features of the Reformation. Let us endeavor, therefore, to appreciate in some measure the blessings arising from three great principles established by the Reformation: the supremacy of the Bible, the supremacy of faith, the supremacy of the rights of the Christian people.

Supremacy of the Bible

Consider, in the first place, as a matter of fact, the restoration of the Bible to its proper place. Are you aware of the fact, that under the papal dominion "the Church had fallen from her proper place and office as a publisher of the light of God's Word to the world; that she was not only not engaged in the free circulation of the Scripture, but, in its essential principles, denied that there is any necessary or important connection between the knowledge of the Scriptures and the growth of Christian religion; that made the seed

to be not the Word, and claimed to be able to do the entire work of the church, though all but her own chief priests be wholly destitute of Scriptures?" Do you know that the church under the rule of the Antichrist, instead of seeking to convince and persuade by manifestation of the truth, substituted her own authority and power, and not only did not set an open Bible before her members, and say **come and read**, but has shut the Book and wrote upon it "**mystery**," concentrating her whole authority and vigilance upon keeping the people from free searching of the Scripture? Yet, this was actually the case under the Roman hierarchy for centuries. The papacy insisted, and to this day insists upon a blind and unquestionable submission to the authority of the church. Not the Word of God but the church establishes the articles of faith. We may well imagine the misery of the Christian people under such rule. It has been said with striking force, "the deepest curse under which the church was groaning was the practical dethronement of God's Word."

Witness, on the other hand, the glorious fact that Luther by the grace of God once more brought the divine Word to its proper honor and position by placing an open Bible before the whole world. With Luther the supremacy of the Bible was fundamental. Not the pope, not the fathers, not the councils of the church, but the Word of God as revealed in Scriptures was the supreme authority in all matters of faith and life. The very first words of Luther spoken before the world at large proclaimed this principle. It found utterance in the opening words of the Ninety-five Theses: "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said—," and again he plainly says in the sixty-second thesis: "The true treasure of the Church is the most holy Gospel of the glory and the grace of God." And when Luther at the immortal scene at Worms, deliberately, at the risk of his life, declared "unless I am convinced by proofs from Holy Scriptures or by sound reasons, and my judgement by this means is commanded by God's Word, I cannot and will not retract anything," he laid the cornerstone of the Reformation by asserting the supremacy of the Bible. It was the Word that kindled the heart of Luther to the work of Reformation and the Word alone could bring it to its consummation. The principle that the Word of God, given by inspiration in Holy Scripture, is alone authoritative in the church, achieved the glorious victory of the Reformation, and by that principle the Christian church stands to this day, and lives and flourishes and gains victories still.

The Bible thus restored to supremacy, and all doctrines tested by its teachings, there is involved in it inevitably the right and assertion for every man, especially for every believer, to read and study the Scriptures for his own salvation. Nor is the Bible merely the canon of Scripture to man, as a fixed and, as it

were, a legal authority. God Himself speaks in those Scriptures; the words of our Lord in the New Testament, and the words which He spoke by holy men and prophets in the Old Testament, are His living voice, bringing those who read them into direct communion with Him. The Scriptures thus establish and maintain a relation between God and man by the same means as that by which such personal relations are maintained among ourselves—by mutual voices and assurances. And Scriptures are the only means, by which God speaks to man; they are God's only revelation to mankind. That was Luther's conception of the Bible as the Word of God, and it was this conception, above all, which constituted the Reformation so momentous an epoch in human history. And that Bible is now open to all. It is put into the hands of every Christian with the exhortation of old extended to him: "Seek ye out of the Book of the Lord, and read." Is. 34: 16.

Supremacy of Faith

The second fundamental principle of the Reformation out of which grew the most glorious blessings for all Christendom is the supremacy of faith. Consider before you all the troubled consciences of those times, the earnest souls who asked: what must I do to be saved? Where shall I find peace with God? Who shall deliver me from sin and death and condemnation? What assurance have I that I am acceptable unto God? Rome's answer was, and is to this day: keep the commandments, obey the ordinances of the Church, do satisfaction for your sins, offer the sacrifice of the mass, invoke the saints, buy indulgences, etc. Thus Rome taught another way of salvation, not a salvation through faith, but a salvation by one's own merit. It was the supremacy of man's righteousness that was established by Rome.

Then came the Reformation. In searching Scriptures Luther by the grace of God found his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and with Him the precious doctrine of atonement by His blood and righteousness. And the light of the Gospel having dawned upon his mind, Luther preached to all the world that the righteousness of Christ, in His obedience and death, embraced by faith, excluding all our good works and deservings entirely, is the only ground of a sinner's hope of justification and salvation before God. It is God who took the salvation of man into His own hand. Sending His only begotten Son into the flesh to take on Himself the guilt of Adam and his children and to make atonement for the sin of the world God prepared a ransom for all, and now man is saved by grace through faith. Thus the supremacy of faith was established by the Reformation. Opening the treasures of the Gospel the great Reformer advises the troubled consciences: "salvation is there, you can take it when you will. You have no need to consider whether you are fit for it; you have not to consider

whether you have done and suffered enough for it; you never could do or suffer enough for it; if any part of it, however small, depended upon your doing or suffering, you could have no assurance of it. But it is given you—given you by virtue of the one complete sacrifice of Christ, and you have but to accept it. The promise is made to you, and you have but to believe it. Only believe the promise; and, in the faith of the promise, take up the gift that is offered you, and it is yours."

This is the glorious Gospel of the supremacy of faith. It was re-written, re-established by Luther, and it is now written before every eye, by the publication of Scriptures in so many languages, and by the preaching of the Gospel from so many pulpits. It is written by the Spirit of God in the hearts of a multitude that cannot be numbered, and no power of Antichrist, no wiles of the devil, can ever deface or take it away.

Supremacy of Christians' Rights

And last, but not least, there are those blessings flowing from the third great principle of the Reformation—the supremacy of the rights of the Christian people.—The Church of Rome was a mighty power, and the papacy, which had become identical with the Romish Church, claimed to be the Church of Christ, outside of which there could be no salvation. The pope claimed to be its only Lord and Master, the Vicegerent of God on earth, and that to him is committed all the power of the Church, as well as all temporal power, and that every member of the Church, as well as every subject and potentate of the state must acknowledge his supremacy. The foundation of this papal power had been skilfully laid. Every avenue to human liberty had been barricaded. The right of private judgment was denied; even the appeal to the common rights of man was nullified by the pretense that the papal dominion, extending over all the interests and powers of man, must be absolutely decisive against averse claims of souls and governments. Having universal control the papacy accordingly proceeded to usurp divine authority in the Church, and the Christian people were reduced to slavery, instead of being a free people under Christ, who asserts His sovereignty by the Gospel of spiritual liberty.

The Reformation rescued Christendom from the curse of such ecclesiastical tyranny. The light of the Gospel, which had made the way of salvation through faith in the blessed Redeemer clear to Luther and his coworkers, and given them peace in believing, also made clear to them the doctrine of the Church. Not those who submit to the pope, but those who believe in Christ are the Church. Christ is the only head and Lord of the Church, and all true believers in Christ are the communion of saints, a royal priesthood of brethren, to whom Christ has given all spiritual power, all spiritual blessings and rights which He has

purchased. All Christians, whosoever they be, have and enjoy equal rights and privileges. To them are entrusted the administration of the means of grace, the office of the keys, the right and duty, to preach the Gospel, to administer the sacraments, to forgive and retain sins. Accordingly the Reformers denied that the Romish hierarchy is the Church of Christ, which is the ground and pillar of truth; they denied that their visible organization has divine authority to dictate what Christians shall believe or not believe and to determine their final state accordingly; they rejected the Roman notion that all rights and spiritual power of the Church are vested in the priesthood or clergy. On the other hand they reasserted the principle of the general priesthood of the Christian people as taught in Scripture, vindicating for the laity the possession of spiritual faculties and powers similar in kind to those of the clergy. All Christian men are admitted to the privilege of priesthood, and are "worthy to appear before God to pray for others, and to teach one another mutually the things which are of God," without the mediation of priests and official clergy. In short, the Reformation by Luther and his colaborers vindicated for the whole lay estate, and for all ranks and conditions of life, complete spiritual independence—the supremacy of the rights of the Christian people based on the Gospel of that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.

Our Gratitude

The quadricentennial of the Reformation exhorts us never to forget or to become indifferent toward the glorious blessings we children of the Reformation by the unmerited grace of God are enjoying to the full extent even to this day. Woe to us if we lend our ears to "another gospel," the gospel of this so-called age of enlightenment, which not only ignores, but openly repudiates the Bible as the revealed Word of God, which rejects the Gospel of faith, which scorns the privileges and rights of the Christian people. Our gratitude demands that we conscientiously guard the precious treasures handed down to us by the Reformation. It enjoins upon us the supreme duty to be faithful stewards of its blessings by not only applying them to our own need, but by conveying them to generations to come.

J. J.

A LETTER WRITTEN BY LUTHER TO GEORGE SPENLEIN, AUGUSTINIAN IN MEMMINGEN

This is one of the earlier letters of the great Reformer and contains an exquisite passage on true righteousness.

April 7, 1516.

Grace and peace in God and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Dearest Brother George! I write to let you know that I have realized two gulden and a half, for what I sold for you. One florin for the Brussels robe, half a florin for the Eisenach volume, and one for the cowl,

etc. We cannot dispose of the rest, so have handed the money to the honored Prior for you. Regarding the half-gulden you still owe him, you must see to the paying of it, or let him remit the debt. This will not be difficult, as the esteemed father is well disposed to you. Now I would like to know how it is with your soul, if it has at length learned to despise its own righteousness and seek comfort and joy in Christ's.

For, at present, the temptation to rest in one's own works is very powerful, especially with those who long to be good and pious. They are ignorant of God's righteousness, which has been so richly bestowed on us in Christ without money and price, and try to do good of themselves, till they fancy they can appear before God adorned with every grace. But they never get thus far. You, yourself, when with us in Erfurt suffered from this illusion, or rather delusion, and I also was a martyr to it, and even yet I have not overcome it. Therefore, dear brother, learn Christ and Him crucified. Praise and laud His name, and despairing of self, say to Him, "Thou, Lord Jesus, art my righteousness, but I am Thy sin. Thou hast taken what is mine, and given me what is Thine. Thou hast assumed that which Thou wert not, and given me what I had not."

Beware, my brother, at aiming at a purity which rebels against being classed with sinners. For Christ only dwells among sinners. For this He came from heaven, where He dwelt among saints, so that He might also sojourn with the sinful. Strive after such love, and thou wilt experience His sweetest consolation. For if by our own efforts we are to attain peace of conscience, why then did Christ die? Therefore thou wilt only find peace in Him when thou despairest of self and thine own works. He, Himself, will teach thee how in receiving thee He makes thy sins His, and His righteousness thine. When thou believest this firmly (for he is damned who does not believe) then bear patiently with erring brothers, making their sins thine. If there be any good in thee, then receive ye one another, even as Christ received us, to the glory of God. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Be thou the same. If thou esteem thyself better than others, do not pride thyself on that, but be as one of them, bearing their burdens. For he is a pitiable saint who will not bear patiently with those worse than himself, and longs only for solitude, when he, through patience, prayer, and example, might be exercising a salutary influence over others. This is burying his Lord's talent, and not giving his fellow-servants their due. Therefore, be thou a lily or rose of Christ, knowing that thy walk must be among thorns. Only see that through impatience, hasty judgments, or secret pride, thou dost not thyself become a thorn!

"Christ's kingdom," says the psalmist, "subsists in the midst of its enemies." Why then rejoice in being surrounded only by faithful friends? If He, thy Lord, had only lived among the good, or had died only for His friends, for whom then would He have died, or with whom could He have lived? Remember this, brother, and pray for me. The Lord be with thee. Farewell, in the Lord! Your brother,

MARTIN LUTHER,
Augustinian.

THE BIRTH OF FREEDOM

An Address Delivered at Milwaukee, Nov. 4

The cradle of American liberty stood at Eisleben! At the head of the long line of men who nursed the idea of freedom through dark days and handed it on to the fathers of our country when the hour was come that it should become reality, stands that man born at Eisleben—Martin Luther. Civil liberty, American liberty, would be inconceivable without the Reformation. And Martin Luther is the Reformation.

It is not enough to concede that Luther's work marks an epoch in the development of political freedom; nor is it enough to say that his great heart set an example of heroic courage to men of all times. Luther gave us more than an example, more than inspiration. He was not a mere pioneer, nor yet an inspired visionary born before his day. He was the prophet of the new Era, and he shaped that new Era by the power of his personality, and, under God, he gave it its stock of living and forceful ideas. He did not merely chart the way to the dragon's stronghold so that others might seek him out, he was himself the Knight Saint George who slew the dragon of political superstition and tyranny.

The modern state of popular government has its inception in the Reformation of Martin Luther. He formulated the principles which govern its development. But freedom is a realm so boundless and so great that the four hundred years that have passed since Luther raised its banner for our race may mark no more than the first few halting steps of exploration through its vast space. But however far we go, never shall we go beyond the lofty ideals which the great reformer held up before his world to rouse it out of centuries of political coma.

Luther's appearance on the stage of the world's history was incisive and decisive, but it was a role that he did not seek out for himself. He was driven by a power greater than himself. Every word he uttered was said in the fear of the Lord and under the inspiration of His Word. The only enemies he fought were those who injured the Gospel of Christ and endangered the security and happiness of God's children in the Christian Church. But every enemy of that kind felt the keen edge of his blade. For that reason the Reformation was not only a religious awakening, it

was also the greatest political revolution the world has ever seen. Luther, the Gospel preacher, saw that the Church had to be freed of political superstition if it was to remain safe, and in freeing the Church he freed the world.

Thank God, Luther never was a politician, or a diplomat, or a statesman! He was always nothing more—neither anything less—than a preacher of the Gospel. He wrote, preached, and prayed for the Kingdom of God. In the providence of God the sparks that were struck from Luther's sword of the Spirit in his fight for Christian liberty kindled the fires that shall blaze forth the message of civil freedom to all generations of men until the end of time. When men and women were free to stand before their God and Savior in joyous gratitude for their salvation, then no power on earth could make them quail. When the heart of man was once filled by faith in Christ with the knowledge of the unutterable goodness of God, then fire and sword could not stamp out the conviction that God gave His children the gift of freedom.

That is the soil in which the seed of civil liberty was planted by Martin Luther, and that was the manner of its planting. All nations have shared in a measure in this liberation, but the ideal of Luther has nowhere been realized more fully than in our own beloved America. Here the seed of his planting has become a giant oak of rugged greatness that shelters a hundred million freemen. There should be today a chorus of a hundred million voices ready to proclaim to all the world the proud debt America owes Luther.

The world waited for Luther's day to usher in the bright morn of popular liberty because until his day the civilized nations of the earth were under the dark spell of an idea that stifled every thought of freedom. The dying empire of Rome bequeathed unto the centuries that followed it a theory of government that left no room for individual and national independence. World empire, imperialism in its most unlimited meaning, that was the obsession under which all political thought of the Middle Ages labored. That was bad. So bad that every one of us today knows that our country is justly at war if it arises in its might to prevent the world from falling again under the sway of imperial domination. But bad as it was, Roman imperialism had committed the one unpardonable crime that made a bad matter worse: it had prostituted the Christian religion to its own ends.

From the day when Roman emperors had made Christianity the state religion, the Christian Church was made an instrument of imperialistic government. The unhappy union endured for over a thousand years, and both Church and state failed of their divine trust because of it. In the earlier days the Church had to be the slave of the empire—the day came when the servant felt strong enough to supplant the master. The bishop of Rome, the pope, grew stron-

ger and more ambitious every day. As soon as he had made himself the accepted head of the Church of Christ on earth he began to demand for himself the right to decide the destiny of that world which had once been the Roman empire. The idea was the unchanged idea of imperial Rome, but in place of Caesar, or rather above him, loomed the figure of the prince with the triple crown, the Roman pontiff. Through weary centuries the Christian nations shed their blood in battle and expended their energies in wrestling over the question, whether in the great empire of civilization the Church should be subordinate to the prince, or whether the prince should obey the commands of the bishop of Rome. History tells us that the pope had won the victory when the day of reckoning dawned with the Reformation.

It was not an idle boast when Boniface VIII said: *Ego sum Caesar, ego sum imperator!* I am Caesar, I am emperor! At the zenith of his power the pope did grant kingdoms and withhold them, at his pleasure. King John of England was not the only prince that was forced to accept his kingdom by the grace of the bishop of Rome. There was not a civilized kingdom that did not feel the powerful hand of Pope Innocent III; France, Aragon, Leon, England, Hungary, Bulgaria, the Byzantine empire, the Holy Roman Empire itself, all were but pawns that the pontiff moved as he saw fit in his game of ruling the world. His triple crown was of terrible significance; Heaven, Earth, and Hell were but provinces of his imperial domain. Body and soul of prince and peasant trembled before the relentless power of the "vicar of Christ." The pope is like a "God on earth," said one of them—and he meant it—and men had to believe it or perish.

When Luther was a boy of ten the New World was discovered. Unblushingly asserting his sovereignty over all the earth, Pope Alexander VI arbitrarily distributed the new countries to Spain and Portugal "in the name of God." And that decision was accepted by all concerned until the Reformation taught the nations that God did not give the earth to the bishop of Rome to dispose of at his pleasure.

There were men that saw the iniquity of this system quite clearly. Many made attempts to break the charm that held all the world in enchantment. All attempts were failures because they did not go to the heart of things. The very heart of the trouble was that men were enslaved in their conscience. By bitter experience Luther had learnt that lesson in his own struggle for salvation. He struck the liberating blow against papal tyranny by raising on high the standard of the Word of God as the only authority under which the conscience of man is bound. That made men free. That made individuals of them where before they were no better than a spiritual and political proletariat. When men once were free, the

mildewed fiction of the dead and buried Roman empire had lost its power to enslave. In all countries men felt the fresh breeze of liberty that was wafted to them from the hills of Saxony. Where men are free in their hearts no bonds of political forging will hold.

Luther was the guide of those who hoped for a day of better government. Impelled by his love of God's truth and concerned for the safety of the Christian Church, he laid down the principles that will forever remain the principles of freedom. He taught from the Bible that civil government was in its own right the appointed guardian of human welfare. No church need confirm it in its office nor meddle with its affairs; no officials of any church shall have a separate law and so form a state within the state. The state is the sole wielder of the sword of power and God has so ordained it. And this free and independent state is and ought to be a national state. Neither in the name of the Holy Roman Empire nor in any other name shall free Germans, or free Frenchmen, or free Englishmen, be held under a foreign yoke. That was a wonderfully stimulating political gospel; it brought out what was best in all nations.

But if the Church should never meddle with affairs of state, so should the state never meddle with affairs of the Church. They are two distinct spheres. Of these two cardinal principles one is as essential to wholesome growth of Church and state as the other. America is doubly blessed before other nations in having this vital truth written into its charter of liberty.

Early and late, in writing and in speech, Luther taught that other great principle that underlies our democracy: that government is not instituted for the comfort and glory of those who govern, but that it is instituted of God for the interest and advancement of its citizens.

And there is the further fundamental, that all power of state and government is unalterably limited by constitution and law. It is Christian duty to obey the law of the land; it is the duty of the government to rule according to the law of the land. The government that nullifies the constitution under which it holds its power has forfeited the right to the obedience of its citizens. Under that divine justice, brought home to men by Luther and the Reformation, the Thirteen Colonies established in the face of tyranny and oppression this government "of the people, by the people, and for the people."

If there be a token by which free government in all the world can be recognized, it is that principle laid down in our American Constitution in the First Amendment: freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, freedom of the press. And these principles Luther wrote in characters of fire against the horizon of the new day which dawned when he made his im-

mortal declaration at Worms. He never ceased to urge them for friend and foe.

These high ideals of civil government are not fully realized in all lands even to this day; but since Luther's day all men, Roman Catholics no less than Protestants, have had a lode-star to lead them on the path of political progress. Here in America the free men of the Reformation from all races were ready to rally to the call of freedom at the very hour when the tardy wheel of time had brought to them the occasion to translate the freedom of their hearts into political emancipation.

Now it is ours, this glorious heritage of the Reformation—it is ours to enjoy, ours to guard with jealous patriotism. None can guard it better than those who love it most. None can love it better than you, my fellow Lutherans! You know its heroic birth, you know the long, weary struggle that led through wars and devastations, through exiles and migrations, until freedom triumphed and this American Republic was born. The high courage needed to perpetuate the institutions of liberty can only thrive in those who cultivate the spirit of its greatest champion, Martin Luther. Be free men, and you will have a free country! Like Luther, fear God and His Word, and you will fear no man! Be Lutherans, and you will be the best patriots!

The poet Lowell has appealed to all Americans for exalted patriotism in the name of Luther; to us, of all men, that appeal should not be made in vain: What! shall one monk, scarce known beyond his cell, Front Rome's far-reaching bolts and scorn her frown? Brave Luther answered, "Yes"; that thunder's swell Rocked Europe, and discharmed the triple crown.

With Luther's courage, with his purity of motive, with his whole-souled devotion to his Master Jesus and His Word, let us do—and die, if need be—to preserve in this Land of Freedom those principles of pure and enlightened statecraft with which Luther enriched the world and endowed our government. Let us say for all the people of the earth, let us say for the hundred million freemen of the United States of America:
Thank God for Martin Luther! H. K. M.

THE DIET AT WORMS

We are indebted to Luther himself for a fine narrative of what took place at the diet—a narrative in all essential points conformable with that which has been given of it by his enemies:

The Herald summoned me on the Tuesday in Holy Week, and brought me safe-conducts from the emperor, and from several princes. On the very next day, Wednesday, these safe-conducts were, in effect, violated at Worms, where they condemned and burned my writings. Intelligence of this reached me when I was at Worms. The condemnation, in fact, was al-

ready published in every town, so that the herald himself asked me whether I still intended to repair to Worms.

"Though, in truth I was fearful and trembling, I replied to him,—'I will repair thither, though I should find there as many devils as there are tiles on the house-tops.' When I arrived at Oppenheim, near Worms, Master Bucer came to see me, and tried to dissuade me from entering the city. He told me that Glapion, the emperor's confessor, had been to him, and had entreated him to warn me not to go to Worms; for if I did, I should be burned. I should do well, he added, to stop in the neighborhood, at Franz von Sickingen's, who would be very glad to entertain me.

hundred articles against ecclesiastical abuses, praying that they might be reformed, and intimating that they would take the remedy into their own hands if need were. They had all been freed by my Gospel.

"The pope had written to the emperor desiring him not to observe the safe-conduct. The bishops urged his majesty to comply with the Pope's request, but the prince and the states would not listen to it; for such conduct would have excited a great disturbance. All this brought me still more prominently into general notice, and my enemies might well have been more afraid of me than I was of them. The landgrave of Hesse, still a young man at that time, desired to have a conference with me, came to my lodgings, and



The Diet at Worms.

"The wretches did this for the purpose of preventing me from making my appearance within the time prescribed; they knew that if I delayed only three more days, my safe-conduct would have been no longer available, and then they would have shut the gates in my face, and without hearing what I had to say, have arbitrarily condemned me. I went on then in the purity of my heart, and on coming within sight of the city, at once sent forward word to Spalatin that I had arrived, and desired to know where I was to lodge. All were astonished at hearing of my near approach; for it had been generally imagined that, a victim to the trick sought to be practised on me, my terrors would have kept me away.

"Two nobles, the seigneur Von Hirschfeld and John Schot, came to me by order of the elector, and took me to the house in which they were staying. No prince came at that time to see me, but several counts and other nobles did, who gazed at me fixedly. These were they who had presented to his majesty the four

after a long interview said, on going away: 'Dear Doctor, if you be in the right, as I think you are, God will aid you.'

"On my arrival, I had written to Glapion, the emperor's confessor, entreating him to come and see me at his first leisure; but he refused, saying it would be useless for him to do so.

"I was then cited, and appeared before the whole council of the imperial diet in the town hall, where the emperor, the electors, and the princes, were assembled. Dr. Eck, official of the archbishop of Treves, opened the business by saying to me, first in Latin and then in German:

"Martin Luther, his sacred and invincible majesty, with the advice of the states of the empire, has summoned you hither, that you may reply to the two questions I am now about to put to you: do you acknowledge yourself the author of the writings published in your name, and which are here before me, and will you consent to retract certain of the doctrines therein

inculcated?" 'I think the books are mine,' replied I. But immediately Dr. Jerome Schurff added: "Let the titles of the works be read." When they had read the titles, I said: 'Yes, the books are mine.'

"Then he asked me: "Will you retract the doctrines therein?" I replied: 'Gracious emperor,—as to the question whether I will retract the opinions I have given forth, a question of faith in which are directly interested my own eternal salvation, and the free enunciation of the Divine Word—that word which knows no master either on earth or in heaven, and which we are all bound to adore, be we as great as we may—it would be rash and dangerous for me to reply to such a question, until I had meditated thereupon in silence and retreat, lest I incur the anger of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who had said, **He who shall deny me before men, I will deny him before my Father which is in heaven.** I therefore entreat your sacred majesty to grant me the time necessary to enable to reply with full knowledge of the point at issue, and without fear of blaspheming the word of God, or endangering the salvation of my own soul.' They gave me till the next day at the same hour.

"The following morning I was sent for by the bishops and others who were directed to confer with me, and endeavor to induce me to retract. I said to them: 'The Word of God is not my word: I therefore cannot abandon it. But in all things short of that, I am ready to be docile and obedient.' The margrave Joachim then interposed, and said: "Sir Doctor, as I understand it, your desire is to listen to counsel and to instruction on all points that do not trench upon the Word?" 'Yes,' I replied, 'that is my desire.'

Then they told me that I ought to place myself entirely in the hands of his majesty, but I said, I could not consent to this: They asked me, whether they were not themselves Christians, and entitled to have a voice in deciding the questions between us, as well as I? Whereunto I answered, 'That I was ready to accept their opinions in all points which did not offend against the Word, but that from the Word I would not depart,' repeating, that as it was not my own I could not abandon it. They insisted that I ought to rely upon them, and have full confidence that they would decide rightly. 'I am not,' rejoined I, 'by any means disposed to place my trust in men who have already condemned me without a hearing, although under safe-conduct. But to show you my zeal and sincerity, I tell you what I will do; act with me as you please; I consent to renounce my safe-conduct, and to place it unreservedly in your hands.' At this my lord Frederic de Feilitsch observed, "Truly this is saying quite enough, or indeed, too much."

"By and by they said: 'Will you, at all events, abandon some of the articles?' I replied: 'In the name of God I will not defend for a moment any articles that are opposed by the Scripture.' Hereupon two

bishops slipped out, and went and told the emperor I was retracting. At this a message came to me, asking whether I really consented to place myself in the hands of the emperor and of the diet? I answered: that I had consented to nothing of the sort, and should never consent to it. So I went on, resisting alone the attempts of them all, for Dr. Schurff and my other friends had become angry with me for my obstinacy, as they called it. Some of my disputants said to me, that if I would come over to them, they would in return given up to me the articles which had been condemned at the council of Constance. To all which I simply replied: 'Here is my body, here is my life: do with them as you will.'

"Then Cochlaeus came up to me, and said: "Martin, if thou wilt renounce the safe-conduct, I will dispute with thee.' I, in my simplicity and good faith, would have consented to this, but Dr. Jerome Schurff replied, with an ironical laugh: 'Ay, truly that were a good idea—that were a fair bargain, i' faith; you must needs think the doctor a fool.' So I refused to give up the safe-conduct. Several worthy friends of mine, who were present, had already, at the bare mention of the proposition, advanced towards me, as if to protect me, exclaiming to Cochlaeus: 'What, you would carry him off a prisoner, then! That shall not be.'

"Meantime, there came a doctor of the retinue of the margrave of Baden, who essayed to move me by fine flourishes: I ought, he said, to do a very great deal, to grant a very great deal, for the love of charity, that peace and union might continue, and no tumult arise. All, he urged, were called upon to obey his imperial majesty, as being the supreme authority; we ought all to avoid creating unseemly disturbances, and therefore, he concluded, I ought to retract. 'I will,' I replied, 'with all my heart, in the name of charity, do all things, and obey in all things, which are not opposed to the faith and honor of Christ.'

"Then the chancellor of Treves said to me: 'Martin, thou art disobedient to his imperial majesty; wherefore depart hence, under the safe-conduct which has been given thee.' I answered: 'It has been as it pleased the Lord it should be. And you,' I added, 'do all of you, on your part, consider well the position in which you are.' And so I departed, in singleness of heart, without remarking or comprehending their machinations.

"Soon afterwards they put in force their cruel edict—that ban, which gave all ill men an opportunity of taking vengeance with impunity on their personal enemies, under the pretext of their being Lutheran heretics; and yet, in the end, the tyrants found themselves under the necessity of recalling what they had done.

"And this is what happened to me at Worms, where I had no other aid than the Holy Spirit."

From "The Life of Luther" by M. Michelet, tr. by W. Hazlitt.

LETTER FROM LUTHER TO ALBRECHT OF MAYENCE

Written on the day Luther nailed the ninety-five theses on the door of the Schloss Kirche in Wittenberg, being the first time he opposed the Church authorities.

To the Right Reverend Father in Christ, Lord Albrecht, Archbishop of Magdeburg and Mayence, Markgrave of Brandenburg, his esteemed lord and shepherd in Christ. The grace of God be with him.

May your Electoral Highness graciously permit me, the least and most unworthy of men, to address you. The Lord Jesus is my witness that I have long hesitated, on account of my unworthiness, to carry out what I now boldly do, moved thereto by a sense of the duty I owe you, right reverend father. May your Grace look graciously on me, dust and ashes, and respond to my longing for your ecclesiastical approval.

With your Electoral Highness's consent, the Papal Indulgence for the rebuilding of St. Peter's in Rome is being carried through the land. I do not complain so much of the loud cry of the preachers of Indulgences, which I have not heard, but regret the false meaning, which the simple folk attach to it, the poor souls that when they have purchased such letters they have secured their salvation, also, that the moment the money jingles in the box souls are delivered from purgatory, and that all sins will be forgiven through a letter of Indulgence, even that of reviling the blessed Mother of God, were any blasphemous enough to do so. And, lastly, that through these Indulgences the man is freed from all penalties! Ah, dear God! Thus are those souls which have been committed to your care, dear father, being led in the paths of death, and for them will be required to render an account. For the merits of no bishop can secure the salvation of the souls entrusted to him which is not always assured through the grace of God, the apostle admonishing us "to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," and, that the way which leads to life is so narrow, that the Lord, through the prophets Amos and Zechariah, likens those who attain to eternal life to brands plucked from the burning, and above all, the Lord points to the difficulty of redemption. Therefore I could be silent no longer.

How then can you, through false promises of Indulgences, which do not promote the salvation or sanctification of their souls, lead the people into carnal security, by declaring them free from the painful consequences of their wrong-doing with which the Church was wont to punish their sins?

For deeds of piety and love are infinitely better than Indulgences, and yet the bishops do not preach these so earnestly, although it is their principal duty to proclaim the love of Christ to their people. Christ has nowhere commanded Indulgences to be preached, but the Gospel. So to what danger does a bishop expose himself, who instead of having the Gospel proclaimed among the people, dooms it to silence, while the cry

of Indulgences resounds through the land? Will Christ not say to them, "Ye strained at a gnat, and swallowed a camel"?

In addition, reverend father, it has gone abroad under your name, but doubtless without your knowledge, that this Indulgence is the priceless gift of God, and escapes the fires of purgatory, and that those who purchase the Indulgences have no need of repentance.

What else can I do, right reverend father, than beg your Serene Highness carefully to look into this matter, and do away with this little book of instructions, and command those preachers to adopt another style of preaching, else another may arise and refute them, by writing another book in answer to the previous one, to the confusion of your Serene Highness, the very idea of which alarms me greatly. I hope that your Serene Highness may graciously deign to accept the faithful service which your insignificant servant, with true devotion, would render you. The Lord keep you to all eternity. Amen. Wittenberg, the night before All Saints' Day, 1517.

If agreeable to your Grace, perhaps you would glance at my enclosed theses, that you may see the opinion on the Indulgences is a very varied one, while those who proclaim them fancy cannot be disputed.

Your unworthy son,

MARTIN LUTHER,

Augustinian, set apart as Doctor of Sacred Theology.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

TIMOTHY CHAPEL DEDICATED

Under the direction of the synod and the guidance of the mission board, another chapel was dedicated to the service of Christ. It is situated in Graystone Park on Wood and Grand Aves., between Milwaukee and Wauwatosa. The dedication took place on the 7th of October. The Rev. Aug. C. Bendler preached the dedicatory sermon on the words of 2 Tim. 3: 15. Timothy church is the name of the new mission. The dedicatory act was by the Rev. Emil Schulz, city missionary and chairman of the mission board, the Rev. H. Ebert assisting. And on this occasion, twelve children, first-fruits of this new field, were baptized. And since it was necessary that these children have new clothes, the Rev. Emil Schulz made this, too, part of his work and with his brethren was highly gratified to see the necessary means forthcoming. And another thing that must be said to the honor of God is this that the free-will offering in these services amounted to \$15.55. The sum was duly turned over to the church extension fund.

E. Schulz.

THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN

Edited by a committee under authority of the Ev. Luth. Joint Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and other States, and published biweekly by Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wis.

Address all communications concerning the editorial department to Rev. John Jenny, 637 Mitchell St., Milwaukee, Wis.

Address all news items to Rev. F. Graeber, 3709 Sycamore St., Milwaukee, Wis.

Send all business correspondence, remittances, etc., to Northwestern Publishing House, 263 Fourth St., Milwaukee, Wis. Subscription Price: \$1.00 per year in advance.

Entered at the Post Office at Milwaukee, Wis., as second class matter.