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MARTIN LUTHER

AS AN

EDUCATOR

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By

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of the requirements for the degree of
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* * * *

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INTRODUCTION

A. The Revival of Interest in Religious Education.

The revival of interest in religious education will go down in American Church History as an outstanding characteristic of twentieth century Protestantism in the United States.

For a while it appeared that Protestantism had completely relinquished its teaching mission in favor of the State. The rigid rule barring religious influence in state education, as we have it in America, completely ruled out religion in public education, and the church was lethargetic in assuming responsibility for religious instruction.

But the tide has turned. As sound as most American Protestants consider the policy of separation of church and state in the field of education, nevertheless it is being realized that there are certain important values which a "religion-less" state school is bound to neglect. Understanding this void, the church today is seeking to fill the gap, and leaders are at work on a program of religious education which will be just as scientifically formulated in its particular field as is the secular school program in its field.

B. Jesus was the Great "Teacher".

Nothing could be more appropriate than this revival of the teaching movement within the Protestant branch of Christendom, for after all Jesus was known best as the Great Teacher, and "Protestantism, claiming as it does to emulate the practices of Jesus, can be expected to continue this educational emphasis. Only a start has been made. The future holds limitless possibilities for the church in education. " 1

C. Emphasis Given to Education by the Founder of Protestantism.

For another reason also it is fitting that Protestantism concern itself with education. Martin Luther from whom Protestantism is dated was a teacher-preacher, or perhaps he is better described as a teaching preacher. Eloquent and stirring as he was in the pulpit, Luther was at home in the schoolroom. He recognized the schoolmaster as the pastor's necessary companion. In the advancement of his cause he kept the school as the constant handmaid of the church. Luther's appreciation of education is typified in his remark: "When schools flourish, then things go well and the church is secure. Let us have more learned men and teachers! If there are no schools, who will take our places

1. Arlo Ayres Brown, Hist. Religious Educ. in Recent Times, N.Y., 1923.

when we die? In the church we are forced to have schools. God has preserved the church through schools; they are its conservatories...In the city the schoolmaster has much the same responsibility as the minister. We can take magistrates, princes and nobles as we find them, but not the school, for schools rule the world. Were I not a preacher there is no profession on earth I would sooner follow than that of schoolmaster." ¹

The above is characteristic of the high place Luther gave to education. Ever an extremist, and always ready to soar into the superlative, Luther reserves for the schoolmaster and his task some of his highest praise. "It is my opinion that on the last day an honest schoolmaster will be more honored than all the popes," ² Luther said in conversation one day. On another occasion he pointed out: "Where would preachers, lawyers and physicians come from if the liberal arts were not taught? No one can ever sufficiently remunerate the industrious, pious teacher that faithfully educates children." ³

At another time in a personal letter to Roban Hess, the Humanist, in 1523, Luther pronounced his opinion that education is the necessary accompaniment of theology. And remembering the high place Luther

1. Conversation by Luther in "Conversations with Luther", edited by Preserve Smith and Herbert P. Callinger, N.Y. 1915.

2. Ibid

3. F.V.N.Painter, History of Education, N.Y., 1903

accorded theology we can appreciate his tribute to the schools when, after assuring Hess that he by no means desired or expected the Reformation to overthrow the pursuit of letters or to return the Germans to barbarity, Luther continued: "Without the knowledge of letters pure theology, I am persuaded, will in the future be unable to flourish, as in the past it has most miserably fallen and lain in ruins whenever literature has declined." ¹

When a certain noisy element of Christendom, even in this enlightened day, often assails education as unnecessary, it is consoling to know how the father of all Protestantism felt when he said: "If I were obliged to leave off preaching and other duties, there is no office I would rather have than that of a school teacher; for I know that this work is with preaching the most useful, greatest and best; and I do not know which of the two is preferred. For it is difficult to make old dogs docile, and old rogues pious, yet that is what the ministry works at, and must work at, in great part in vain; but young trees, although some may break, are more easily bent and trained. Therefore let it be one of the highest virtues on earth faithfully to educate the children and others who neglect it themselves." ²

1. Letter by Luther in "Luther's Correspondence and other Contemporary Letters," trans. and ed. by P. Smith and C.W. Jacobs, Phila., 1918.
2. F.V.N. Painter, Hist. of Educ., N.Y. 1903.

Who has ever summed up the teacher's task more beautifully. We see, therefore, that to call Luther the "teaching-preacher" is no misnomer. Indeed, Luther's place as an educator has been long recognized, and though various authorities set various estimates on his contribution to the field of education, yet all agree that his contribution was at least noteworthy. Practically all textbooks on the history of education include mention of the Great Reformer as an educator, and F.V.N. Painter in 1889 produced "Luther on Education" which still stands as the English classic on this particular phase of Luther's versatile career.

Therefore, in view of Luther's own high regard for education, in the light of modern interest in the field of religious education, it is not amiss to review again the subject of "Martin Luther as an Educator". In this paper we shall attempt to consider Luther's contribution to his own day, and make an effort to see to what extent Luther's theories of education foreshadowed present day educational psychology and philosophy, and also we shall observe Luther's permanent contribution to the field of educational theory and practice.

In all this we shall avoid eulogy. To study Luther as the friend and promoter of education, so that we may profit thereby, shall be our aim. "Great men need not that we praise them; we need rather that we know them." ¹

1. A.C. McGiffert, Martin Luther, the man and his work, N.Y., 1910.

I. LUTHER'S EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND.

Introduction.

To know how far Luther merely reflected the ideas which were championed before and during his life, and to properly estimate the advance that Luther made over the contemporary educational practices through which he passed, it is necessary to pause and review briefly the salient features of the educational systems existing during the latter part of the fifteenth century, during which years young Luther was getting his elementary schooling. It also will be helpful to discover just what reaction Luther himself made to the educational system in which he was schooled, and to note how these reactions influenced his later interest in educational reform. These are the points that will first be considered before discussing the specific contributions of Luther to the field of education. They will form a background by which we can better appraise the latter.

A. Educational Theory and Practice about 1500 A.D.

1. The Stagnation of Mediaevalism.

Taken as a whole the educational theories and practices of Europe were the same in the few decades prior to 1500 A.D. as they had been throughout the centuries of the mediaeval period. Whatever else

might be said to characterize mediaeval education, all agree that stagnation was an outstanding feature. Generation after generation passed without any distinct contribution being made to the advancement of educational theory as a whole.

The words "as a whole" are important for there were such men as Vittorino of the court school at Mantua who saw beyond the contemporary educational horizon. A few men caught a gleam of better things, but the great mass of educators and students trod the path of education by stepping precisely in the footsteps of their predecessors and steadfastly refusing to make any deviation from the educational pathway as it had been marked out for them.

W. Carlos Martyn ¹ describes this mediaeval stagnancy: "The night of ignorance, which had spread like a pall over Europe upon the conquest of Rome by the barbarous legions of Attila and the consequent extinguishment of the last lingering ray of Roman learning and civility, continued to deepen during the Middle Ages, enlightened only by the twinkling stars of priestly intelligence which shone from a few isolated monasteries, and was broken only a few score years previous to the Reformation by the rising sun of knowledge which then began to redden and broaden upon the intellectual horizon."

1. Life and Times of Martin Luther, N.Y., 1866.

2. Church-Centered Education.

Aside from being stagnant, mediaeval education was also strictly church-centered. The field of education, like all other walks of life, was completely dominated by the papacy, and everything was ignored that did not contribute directly to the glory of the Church.

That was the day when even kings bowed humbly before the Bishop of Rome. No wonder, then, that when rulers of the realm stood in awe of the papacy that humble schoolmasters hesitated to defy the church-centered system of education by attempting to broaden its scope and make it more adapted to secular walks of life. Certainly "mediaeval education was narrowly technical. It prepared for but one profession, the clergy, and for but one type of service, the church. There was little or no liberal culture or humanitarian interest. It prepared for the world to come, not for the world to live in." ¹

The awakening which finally came ^{began} ~~was~~ in Italy where Humanism gave rise to the idea that education should exist for the non-church occupations in city and state, in business and commerce. However, it took some time for Germany to be reached by the

1. Elwood P. Cubberly, Hist. of Educ., N.Y. 1920

Renaissance spirit, and not till after the sixteenth century did the humanistic influence gain appreciable headway in northern lands. An account of conditions as they were prior to the opening of the sixteenth century, during the years which form the educational background of Martin Luther, do not make an encouraging picture: " the ancient erudition of the church which had been wont to take the son of the people, who was desirous of learning, into the cloister, was in the depths of decline. The learning of the Middle Ages still sat with pretension in the professorial chairs of the German universities, but it had been ossified into dead formulae and scholastic subtleties. The acquaintance with dead languages was slight, Hebrew and Greek almost unknown; writing and teaching was done in barbarous monk Latin; the ancient sources of serious learning, the Bible and church fathers, Roman historians, institutes, the Greek texts of Aristotle, and the writers on nature, and the art of healing, were lying in dust covered manuscripts; the mediaeval commentators alone were again and again expounded, learned by heart and combated. Such was the state of affairs in Germany."¹

This depressing state of affairs presented a most needy field for reformation and progress.

1. Gustav Freytag, Doctor Luther, trans. G.C.L. Reimer, Phila., 1916

3. The Low State of German Education.

At the same time young Martin Luther was learning his letters in the village school at Mansfeld, education was not a highly developed science in Germany. Elementary education suffered particularly. Though humanism touched somewhat the higher institutions of learning, such men as Sturm and Melanchthon, who were to systematize elementary education in Germany, had not yet arrived on the scene. Consequently lower education scarcely was considered, and the boys of 1480 and thereabouts had a sorry time trying to cram a few rudiments of knowledge into their bewildered heads. A sketch of a few of the various types of schools and curricula will give a suggestive picture of elementary education in that day.

a. Monastic Schools.

"Under the impulse of ascetism, monasteries flourished and as long as uncorrupted, monasteries were asylums of the oppressed, missionary stations for the conversion of the heathen, and repositories of learning." ¹

"The literary work of the monasteries," says Graves, ² "soon led to the establishment of regular schools within their walls..... The course in these monastic schools may often have lasted eight or ten

1. F.V.W.Painter, Luther on Educ., Phila., 1886.

2. F.P.Graves, A Student's Hist.of Educ., N.Y. 1926

years as boys of ten or even less were sometimes received.... The schools sometimes also admitted pupils who never expected to enter the order."

In all these monastic schools as might be expected, the instruction had a distinctly ecclesiastical flavor. Everything was taught in the interests of the church, and they cleverly linked up all subjects with the church and its theology.

b. The Cathedral and Parochial Schools.

Another type of schools were those conducted by the cathedrals. One would naturally from the very nature of the institutions that churchliness would loom large in these schools also. In fact the religious element in the cathedral schools was stronger than in the monastic, and liturgy was the chief study.¹

The student life in these schools was far from ideal. Privation was frequent, and there was plenty of moral laxity. Boys from city and village, farm and hamlet, came to the Latin school supposing that there they would secure the precious "open sesame" which would open the door to success in church or state.

The curriculum was in Latin, and "In the Latin schools the mysterious knowledge could be acquired that

1. cf. F.V.W.Painter, Luther on Educ., Phila. 1889.

raised its possessor out of the oppressed, wretched and joyless mass of the people. Consequently the desire to become learned became powerful in the souls of the people. Children and half-grown lads journeyed from the remotest valleys into the unknown world seeking learning. Where there was a Latin school near a bishopric or in the rich parish of a large town, thither the children of the people wended their way, often amid the greatest suffering and deprivations, decivilized and demoralized by the troublesome wandering upon the street and by the uncertainty of their lives in the vicinity of the school. The founders, who had established the school or the citizens of the towns, gave the strangers shelter and lodging in special houses at times, but their subsistence they had to obtain for the most part by begging. " 1

c. Burgher Schools.

As a reaction against the strictly ecclesiastical schools, especially in the industrial and commercial centers, where the church was unable to have free reign, there arose Burgher or Town schools. These were under the supervision of the trade guilds usually, and though at first they differed little from the church schools, soon they became more practical in

1. Gustav Freytag, Doctor Luther, trans. by G.C.L. Reimer, Phila. 1915.

curriculum and introduced the vernacular instead of adhering wholly to Latin.

4. Curriculum in the Lower Schools.

The curriculum which the youth of the fifteenth century was expected to study is rather astonishing when we compare it with twentieth century ideas as to what a curriculum ought to be.

Latin was used altogether, and no matter what the vernacular, every child received his education in this imported tongue (with the exception of certain burgher schools which also included the vernacular). The subjects taught were the seven liberal arts which had been inherited from antiquity: first, the trivium of grammar, rhetoric and dialectic, and then the quadrivium of music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy.

As has been suggested, the curriculum was church-centered, and it is illuminating to observe how the mediaeval educator related his curriculum to the church. Rhabanus Maurus' comment on the quadrivium was characteristic: "Arithmetic is important because of the secrets contained in the numbers, the Scriptures also encourage its study since they speak of numbers and measures. Geometry is next because in Scripture occur circles of all kinds in the building of the ark and Solomon's Temple. Music and astronomy are required in connection with divine service, which cannot be celebrated with dignity and decency without

music, not fixed on definite days without astronomy." ¹

5. Low Standard of Pedagogy.

But as ill-fitted as was the curriculum to prepare youth for life, it might have been endurable if the quality of instruction had been at all adequate. As it was, original thought and research were completely throttled. Anything more modern than Aristotle was regarded as dangerous. Education aimed to store the memory rather than develop the mind and judgement. Complete passivity was demanded of the students, and to differ with the past was rank heresy. Spots on the sun, as observed through a telescope, were said to be spots on the glass because Aristotle had not mentioned sun-spots.

One Erasmus Alberius, born in 1500, a German writer, said regretfully: "In my school days I have often seen the poor children frightfully maltreated. Their heads were knocked against the wall, and I did not escape the same treatment; and I was taught in such a way that I was 14 years old before I could decline a single noun or parse a single sentence." ²

Again Nicholas Herman, an old German schoolmaster, wrote in 1580 ³: "When I turn my mind to the past

1. of F.V.N. Painter, Luther on Educ. Phila. 1889
2. of George Fielder, Luther's Views and Influence on Schools and Educ., Mod. Quart. of Lang. and Lit. Vol I, 1898, London.
3. of. Ibid.

and think of the state of the schools in my youth, fifty years ago, and of the system of education then in vogue, my hair stands on end with horror. How much misery and wretchedness from cold, hunger and bad treatment did the poor little ones suffer, and how little instruction did they get in return! Many a one reached his 20th year before he could understand a little Latin and what poor stuff that Latin was, in comparison with that spoken now like a worn out kettle-drum after a beautiful organ. And after the poor boys had been made sufficiently miserable in school they were sent out to beg, and when they gathered a little store in the sweat of their brow by singing in wind and rain and snow, they were forced to give it all up to pacify "the Bacchanti" who sat at home in ease, and nothing was left the poor boys but to lick their lips and to starve."

Though admitting that mediaeval pedagogy was careless and crude as a rule, there were certain exceptions which gave promise of a better day. Even Anselm in the eleventh century had opposed cruel treatment of pupils by saying: "In educating youth we should learn from artists who do not fashion their gold and silver images with blows alone, but they press and touch it lightly and finally complete their work with gentleness."

Then too, in Holland and western Germany schools under the supervision of the Brethren of the Common Life had for years prior to the Reformation stood as beacon lights in a benighted educational environment. Erasmus came under the influence of these Brethren when at 9 years he attended Hegius' school at Devan-
ter.¹ Luther met the Brethren at Eisenach where he studied in a school modelled after the one at Devanter; and at Erfurt collegian Luther studied text books written by Gabriel Biel who was later a rector of the Brethren of the Common Life.²

It is hard to estimate the good done by this group of forward looking educators. Gerard Groote their founder, lately^{is} called the founder of the Christian Renaissance³ and the spiritual father of all the men educated by the Brethren such as Thomas a Kempis, Agricola, Zwingli, Calvin, Loyola, in addition to Luther and Erasmus already mentioned.⁴

6. The Dawn of Humanism.

During the later part of the fifteenth century dawn was breaking through Germany's educational shadows. The Renaissance, born in Italy, carried to France, and transferred to Germany, slowly but surely penetrated the scholastic lethargy of the Teuton states.

1. Wm. Boyd, Hist. of Western Educ., London, 1921

2. Albert Hyma, The Christian Renaissance, N.Y. 1925

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

Luther knew nothing of this humanistic tendency at Mansfeld, but at Eisenach, as has been mentioned, Luther came in contact with the Brethren of the Common Life who for the first time put him in touch with the new learning and its broadening influence. In the University of Erfurt he became still better acquainted with the humanities, and as his later relations with Erasmus revealed, he had formed very definite opinions as to the virtues and shortcomings of humanistic education.

What Humanism proposed in its attack on strongly entrenched scholasticism is revealed by reviewing the educational theories of Erasmus who incarnated northern Humanism.

"Scholarship," said Erasmus, "is not for the sake of scholarship, but culture is justified only in so far as it bears directly on good living."¹

As to methods and aims of education, Erasmus believed: "The first and most important part of education is that the youthful mind may receive the seeds of piety; and next, that it may love and thoroughly learn the liberal studies; third, that it may be prepared for the duties of life; fourth, that it may have from the earliest day acquaintance with good manners."²

1. Wm. Boyd, Hist. of West. Educ., London 1921

2. Ibid.

Moreover, Erasmus strongly stood against beginning to teach grammar by making children learn rules and definitions. He considered it better that the pupil should have a minimum of rules and a maximum of contact with great masters and by speaking acquire rules.

In his treatise "On the Liberal Education of Boys", Erasmus advised beginning the child's education from the earliest years in reading, writing and drawing, not with the customary floggings, but by means of games and stories. First instruction should take place at the mother's knee; later the child should be instructed in Scripture and classics from the father or able teacher.

These theories show Erasmus was far ahead of his day, and though many Humanist schools neglected to incorporate the injunctions of the master Humanist, nevertheless by surveying Erasmus' position on the question of education we can appreciate the best that Humanism had to offer.

Modern educational psychology was also somewhat foreshadowed by the humanistic school of thought. Erasmus had worked out a three-fold theory of the factors in the progress of the individual pupil. The first essential for a pupil's advancement in learning was "nature" which gave or withheld the innate capacity for being trained; second, "training" which included the exterior guidance and instruction of the pupil; third, "practice" or the exercise of the activities implanted by nature and furthered by training.

Moreover this clear thinking leader of the Humanistic school considered education as a social process calling attention to the state's interest in the problem of schools. Said he: "Your children are begotten not to your self alone, but to your country; not to your country alone, but to your God." And he added at another time that churchmen and statesmen alike are under obligation to promote education by making provision for an adequate supply of teachers.

At one point Erasmus failed, and it was at this very point, as we shall later see, that Luther contributed his greatest service. The Humanist failed to provide education adapted to the children of the middle classes. He believed in an educational aristocracy; neither did he have any use for the vernacular, but proposed all his instruction in Latin after the usual custom of the day.

6. Luther's Reaction to Educational Practices Prevailing in His Earlier Days.

These Erasmian theories have been depicted in order that we may better understand the educational atmosphere Luther unconsciously breathed as he went forward with his educational work at Erfurt and later at Wittenberg.

Passing through crude and violent educational methods in his boyhood which were a remnant of mediaevalism, Luther entered Erfurt which was the stronghold of humanism in Germany. Here he could not avoid absorbing the educational theories of the Humanists along with

their other contributions in philosophy and religion. Moreover, suffering as he did from a benighted elementary school system, his contact with Humanistic education could not help but form contrasts by which mediaeval theories suffered.

With these things in mind it will be interesting later to trace certain of Luther's educational theories. Though they undoubtedly had the Lutheran stamp upon them, nevertheless, many of his suggestions unquestionably had their root in *Humanism*. However, Luther was not content to stop with Humanism. Appreciating its advance over *Scholasticism*, ~~Luther~~ was impatient with its pacifist attempts at educational, social and political reform. Luther advanced beyond Humanism and in so doing made ^a ~~his~~ notable contribution to the history of education.

B. Luther's Educational Experience as a Boy and Young Man.

1. Luther's Home Life as a Boy.

(a) His Lowly Origin. The Great Reformer was unashamed of his lowly origin and freely admitted: "I am a peasant's son. My father, grandfather, and ancestors were all peasants." Life was not a bed of roses for Martin Luther. Even as a lad he faced the grim realities of poverty and early learned lessons of discipline.

Martin's father, Hans, married Margaret Ziegler and the couple settled in Mansfeld, Germany, attracted there by the prospect of working in the mines. For the first years of their married life they knew the pinch of real poverty, but with persistence they saved their earnings, and finally the elder Luther was able to go into business for himself by renting three smelting furnaces from the Count of Mansfeld.¹ From this period the family prospered, and as a result, poor as he was a youth, Martin was able to spend his university days in comparative financial ease.

(b) Martin Luther's Birth. In their later years Luther's parents could not remember the exact year in which Martin was born, and we must rely on the word of a brother for 1483 as the correct date. Mother Luther, however, never forgot that her boy

1. cf. Encyclopedia Britannica on "Luther".

who was to rise to eminence, was born between = NOV. 3
 between 11 and 12 o'clock on the night of October 10th.
 The place of this event was the town of Eisleben
 where Hans and Margaret had gone to a country fair
 which regularly attracted folk from far and near with
 its amusements and gaiety. Thomas Carlyle says of
 these humble peasant parents: "... in the whole world
 that day there was not a more entirely unimportant
 looking pair of people than this miner and his wife.
 And yet what were all Emperors, Popes, Potentates ,
 in comparison." ¹

Shortly after Martin's birth the family moved
 to Mansfeld where most of his boyhood was spent.

(c) Luther's Boyhood. The early ^{years} of Martin's
 boyhood being spent in rigid economy, his surroundings
 were of the utmost simplicity, and he acquired all
 the provincial notions and superstitions that were
 then common.

"His barelegged rambles through the hills
 were haunted by the dread of surrounding demons. Once
 he said: 'In my native country there is a high hill
 called the Pubelsberg, on top of which is a lake;
 if one throws a stone into the water a great tempest
 will arise over the whole region, for it is the habi-
 tation of captive devils. Prussia is full of them,
 and Lapland is full of witches.' " ²

1. Heroes and Hero Worship.
2. Preserved Smith, Life and Letters of Martin Luther,
 N.Y. 1911.

Heinrich Boehmer suggests ¹: "Let us transport ourselves into the past / to the home of miner Hans Luther. The good people lived in continual fear of all kinds of monsters and goblins, sorcerers and witches, great and small, wise and stupid devils. This popular belief in devils and angels, which he imbibed with his mother's milk, the Reformer tenaciously retained during the whole of his life. Besides he ever clung to the ancient faith in the evil omen of comets, eclipses of the sun or moon, and was prone to see in human or animal monstrosities a good or bad portent like all other people of his time."

There is no doubt that both parents of Martin Luther loved him and the other children, but in the family circle they maintained a discipline that bordered on cruelty. As a man Luther recalled that his "father often whipped him for a mere trifle till the blood came." ² Also he stated in after life that he had such fear of his father that he always hid in the chimney corner when he had done anything to anger him. ³

Martin's memories of his boyhood were always clouded by these memories of unjustly severe punishment. He never forgot them and they led him to insist on a saner, gentler method of discipline. He said: "The apple should always lie beside the rod. Children should not be punished for trifling things like cherries,

1. Luther in the Light of Recent Research, N.Y. 1916

2. F.V.N. Painter, Hist. of Educ. N.Y. 1903

3. Audin, Histoire de Luther, 5th ed. 1845.

apples, pears, nuts, as though they were serious matters. My parents dealt with me so that I was completely cowed. My mother once beat me for the sake of an insignificant hazel-nut until the blood came. Her strictness and the rigorous life she compelled me to live drove me into the monastery and made me a monk. At heart ~~she~~^{they} meant well, but they were unable to distinguish between dispositions and to adapt their correction accordingly. " 1

Luther's statement that his parents meant well seems corroborated by the report made by friends of the family, that "one day Hans Luther was found bending over Martin's cradle in earnest prayer". 2 And it is interesting to note that father and mother Luther eventually espoused the Protestant cause of their son, and "their devotion never ceased. They followed him as their religious leader with implicit confidence and rejoiced in the freedom of the gospel to which he led them." 3

2. Martin's Elementary Schooling

It seems that early Martin exhibited signs of ability that were to mark the man. One biographer 4 reports: "At six years of age Luther could read and write fluently. He showed an aptitude for study and singular oratorical talents, so that his father determined to make a lawyer of him."

Martin's elementary education in the village school of Mansfeld seems to have consisted of one thrashing

1. Henry Eyster Jacobs, Martin Luther, N.Y. 1898

2. Ibid 3. Ibid.

4. W. Carlos Martyn, Life and Times of Martin Luther,

after another. The teachers of that day, many of them, were of a low type, and many a blundering schoolmaster made up in beatings what he lacked in intelligence. Later Luther himself said: "It is a miserable thing when on account of severe punishment children learn to dislike their parents, and pupils learn to dislike their teachers. Many a clumsy schoolmaster by blustering and storming, striking and beating, completely ruins children of their good dispositions and excellent ability." ¹

Under this cruel discipline it is recorded that one forenoon Martin was flogged fifteen times. No wonder in adulthood he admonished: "We must whip children, but we must love them." ² At another time Luther said: "Ah, what a time we had with the 'lupus' (meaning wolf, the name given to the teacher) and 'Donatus' (Latin grammar then in use). My teachers made us parse everything and made obscene jokes. The examination was like a trial for murder." ³

Growing out of these experiences, Luther made it one of his ambitions as a reformer to establish a school system with a better adapted curriculum and more temperate discipline. He was able to accomplish this in some measure, and the schools of his later life were a marked improvement over those of his youth. As a man he was able to declare: "It is not generally known to every-

1. Henry Eyster Jacobs, Martin Luther, N.Y. 1898

2. W. Carlos Martyn, Life and Times of Martin Luther, N.Y. 1866

3. Preserved Smith, Life and Letters of Martin Luther, N.Y. 1911

body that boys are now so well prepared that in their fourteenth year they have more knowledge than they could formerly get in all high schools and cloisters put together. What did they learn in those days except to be donkeys, logs and blocks? They studied in twenty and even forty years and then knew neither Latin or German."¹ Again he wrote: "Our schools are no longer a hell and purgatory in which children are tortured over cases and tenses, and in which with much flogging, trembling and anguish and wretchedness, they learn nothing."²

3. Luther's Secondary Education.

When he was 13 years old Martin outgrew the village school and was sent to Magdeburg for a year. Here the school was maintained by charity and the boys were expected to pay their expenses and secure their sustenance by singing on the streets before the houses of the more well-to-do. Martin had a good voice and joined in with the others in making his livelihood. In memory of those days he commented: "Do not despise the boys who beg from door to door, 'a little bread, for the love of God'. I myself have been such a beggar pupil."³

Begging, however, in those days was not regarded as a degrading practice. The country swarmed with mendicant monks who were held in high esteem, and as for the practice of school boys seeking charity, "begging for an education in those days was regarded with no more stigma than the acceptance of a scholarship today."⁴

1. A.C. McGiffert, Martin Luther, His Life and Work, N.Y. 1910

2. F.V.N. Painter, Luther on Educ., Phila. 1889

3. Ibid.

4. Preserved Smith, Life and Letters of M. Luther, N.Y. 1911

"But the rich people of Magdeburg were by no means charitable and Luther could not make wherewith to pay his masters beyond one year. At length, Martin, having spent his last groschen, left the hard hearted city in 1498. He again took to the road with his pilgrim's staff and wallet, and turned his steps toward Eisenach where his mother had numerous relations." ¹

The school at Eisenach was one of those maintained by the Brethren of the Common Life (see page 16 of this thesis). These schools also were supported by public charity, and one day as Luther was singing at the door step of the prosperous home of Ursula Cotta, she was attracted by the boy and invited him in. On being asked what he desired, Martin confessed that he was hungry. The good woman gave him food, and from this meeting developed a wonderful friendship between the Cotta family and Luther. He was taken into this home and given free lodging and board as long as he attended school at Eisenach. It was in remembrance of Dame Cotta that Luther later said: "There is nothing sweeter on earth than the heart of a woman in which piety dwells." ²

It is noteworthy that while at Eisenach among the Brethren of the Common Life, Luther met some really worthy teachers. Chief of these was John Trevenius who instead of the usual floggings produced results by inspiring the boys with self-respect and making them eager to prove themselves worthy of the honor shown them. ³

1. M. Audin, His Life, Writings, Doctrines of Luther, trans. by W.B. Turnbull, London 1854
2. W. Carlos Martyn, Life and Times of M. Luther, N.Y. 1866.
3. Henry Eyster Jacobs, Martin Luther, N.Y. 1898

Trevonius had the unique custom of always taking off his hat in the classroom out of deference to all the great statesmen, clergymen and scholars of the future that sat before him. ¹

4. College Days at Erfurt.

In 1501 when he was 18 years of age, Martin entered the University at Erfurt, situated in the German province of Saxony. Photographs of the University as it looks to-day reveal a firmly built stone edifice which stands staunchly defying the elements. And just as staunchly did Erfurt maintain its place as leader among the universities of Germany at the opening of the 16th century. Learning was at its height in this school and it ranked high in educational circles at the time youthful Luther matriculated.

(a) Humanism at Erfurt. Humanism held the fort at Erfurt. Interest centered in the ancient classics, and the Latin and Greek writers were regarded with esteem. The university's whole policy of education was progressive, and the humanistic influence was apparent in both faculty and curriculum.

Luther's life must have been influenced by the liberalizing atmosphere that encircled him at Erfurt. The faculty was made up of an able and broadminded group of professors. Among "Luther's instructors at Erfurt were Jodocus Truttvetter, whose death Luther afterwards accused himself of hastening by his rebellion against the dis-

1. A.C. McGiffert, M. Luther, the man and his work, N.Y. 1910

comfiture of the curriculum of the schools; Jerome Emser, who explained the poetics of Reuchlin; Gerard Hecker, an Augustinian monk who afterwards became a convert to the tenants of the Reformation introducing it into his convent; Bartholomew Usinger, who vigorously opposed the new doctrine; John Grovenstein, who loudly protested against the execution of John Huss, and regarded the squire of Bethlehem as a martyr; and John Baugaud, who remained throughout life zealously attached to his pupil." ¹

No man could pass under the tutelage of such a diversified group without having fresh trains of thought provoked and a new appreciation of the virtue of liberal mindedness.

The particular school of philosophy current at Erfurt was that of William of Occam (?-1349). Occam had been one of the last defenders of Nominalism which prior to him had never received "so vigorously logical treatment." ² The Nominalists advanced the philosophy that only individual objects have real existence, and that universals are nothing but "names" (Latin, 'nomina', hence Nominalism). These names were considered as so much breath, without indicating any real identity in the objects sharing in the identical names. ³

"Luther was attracted to Nominalism because it taught that as subjects can only be known individually, all other truths must be remitted to the domain of faith." ⁴

1. W. Carlos Martyn, Life and Times of M. Luther, N.Y. 1866

2. International Encyclopedia, "Occam, William of,"

3. Ibid, "Nominalism".

3 4. Henry Eyster Jacobs, Martin Luther, N.Y. 1898

This explanation of Luther's partiality toward Occam as based on "faith" seems to be rather far-fetched, but the fact does remain that as a student the teachings of Occam had a special appeal to Luther.

Later as Luther entered into his work as reformer Occamist teachings colored his decision of many problems. Luther's high regard for the unique place secular government holds as distinct and unsubservient to clerical government was influenced probably by Occam's contention that secular power has the privilege to remedy abuses in administration of public worship, and it has the right to disregard written law under certain circumstances. ¹

Moreover Luther's insistence that the support of schools is a state responsibility, rather than a burden devolving wholly on the church, may be traced to the Occamist belief that the care of the poor is a task of secular, communal and territorial administration, rather than a churchly duty. ²

An effort to make certain of Luther's later proposals derivative from his connection with the Occamists at Erfurt will not find universal favor. But no man drops from heaven with his ideas and notions ready made. The education and experience through which a man passes have everything to do in the formation of his final position on any question. Consequently we can expect to find in Luther's philosophy of religion and education

1. Heinrich Boehmer, Luther in Light of Recent Research,
2. Ibid. N.Y. 1916

not only certain thoughts from Occam, but also from the Waldenses, Lombards and Wiclifites who had preceded him. Augustine also had a tremendous influence over him.

When later he was at Wittenberg, Luther freely admitted his connection with Occamists, and also paid tribute to their wide influence: "The Nominals are in the upper school (university) a sect to which I once belonged myself. They controvert the views of the Thomists, the Scottists, and the Albertists. They call themselves Occamists. This is the newest and now is the most powerful of all sects, particularly in Paris." ¹

It is true that in later life Luther referred to the Occamists as "hog theologians", a characteristic term of Luther's for those with whom he disagreed; but this reversal of sentiment never obliterated the Occamist influences on his life.

(b) Luther's Studies in the University.

When Luther entered the University he followed the wishes of his father and proceeded to prepare himself for Law. Ambitiously he threw himself into his studies; but ^{how} ~~some~~ he could not seem to get enthusiastic over the precedents and technicalities of the legal profession. His ardor for law waned in spite of himself.

Though Erfurt was avowedly Humanistic, the preparation for law demanded concentrated study in the liberal arts of scholasticism. The dialectics and hair-splitting distinctions of the mediaeval schoolmen were given large place.

1. M.Michelet, Life of Luther (as written by himself)

London, 1888

It was in this musty atmosphere that Luther was forced to spend most of his college days.

The curriculum which Luther passed through "began with logic, dialectic, grammar, rhetoric, followed by mathematics, various natural sciences, ethics and metaphysics. All these studies were sic^lied over with a pale cast of scholasticism. Mediaeval thought progressed little if any beyond Aristotle. The natural sciences were studied absolutely without experiment or original research, and in perfect reliance on Aristotle's ancient work." ¹ In a letter from Wittenburg, dated November 11, 1517, ² Luther reveals his disgust for scholasticism by writing: "For what are those schoolmen of yours except critics, Aristarchuses (proverbially severe critics) and dumb Momuses (god of fault-finding)."

Of these scholastic pursuits, Luther seems to have had a great regard for logic, especially for its aid in mastering other studies. "Logic," he said, "teaches many to say a thing distinctly and plainly, and in short, clear words. It does not give the ability to teach concerning all subjects, but is only an instrument enabling one to teach correctly, and in proper order, what has already been learned. It enables one to give a round, short, straight-to-the-point definition, and is highly necessary for us in the schools, courts and churches." ³

However, the student Luther managed to steal a little time from the scholastics and get into the humanistic discussions that were constantly going on among the students

1. P. Smith, Life and Letters of M. Luther, N.Y. 1911
2. Letter from Luther to John Lang at Erfurt.
3. Henry Eyster Jacobs, Martin Luther, N.Y. 1898

and professors. He spent much time reading the Latin authors of whom Cicero was his favorite, and he never lost his admiration from for this Roman whom he praised: "Cicero far excelled Aristotle in philosophy and teaching. The 'Officia' are better than the 'Ethica'. And although Cicero lived in great care, and had upon him great burdens, labors, and pains in the government, yet he was far above Aristotle who had money, wealth and easy days." ¹

(c). Luther Finds the Bible.

To omit mention of Luther's discovery of the Bible while at the University of Erfurt, would be to omit a vital incident in the educational development of the Reformer. It was due to Luther's discovery of the Scriptures, his reliance on its truth, and his insistence on his right to his own individual interpretation of truth that led Luther to break with Romanism. We are interest in Luther as an educator, not as a religious reformer, but as the discovery of the Bible and the subsequent enlightenment as to its teachings are closely related to his interest in education.

Without going into the ramifications of the development of Luther's theology, let us recall merely that his contention was that man was "saved by faith", and that to be thus saved all intermediary agencies were unnecessary as a means of approaching God. By faith, and only by faith the individual could establish direct communion with Deity.

Granted then that faith is necessary for salvation, and for communion with God, Luther realized that only

1. M.Michelet, Life of Luther (as written by himself)
London 1888

through an intimate and firsthand knowledge of the Bible can men arrive at a complete understanding of these principles. Thus it was imperative that every man, woman, and child be able to read and be educated ~~as~~^{to} as to read the Scriptures intelligently and interpret them correctly. Thus the relationship between Luther's finding of the Bible, and his zeal for the education of the masses.

There is not clear agreement between authors as to whether Luther first laid his hands on a Bible in the University of Erfurt, or whether it was in the library of the Erfurt Augustinian monastery. However, Luther was accustomed to browse around in both places and it may have been either one.

Up to this time, if we are to believe Luther's own statement, he had seen the Scriptures only in church formulae. Finding a copy of the Bible in one volume made a deep impression. Opening the book his eyes fell on the story of Hannah and Samuel, and he read with such keen interest that he is accredited with the exclamation: "O God, could I have one of these books, I would ask no other worldly treasure."

The fact that Luther was 20 years old before seeing a complete edition of the Bible is of educational as well as religious importance. The fact that the Bible was secluded from the common people reflects the domination which ecclesiasticism held over the intellectual culture of the masses.

Certain modern authors deny that the Bible was kept in isolation. They scoff at the idea that Luther could

have been 20 years old before seeing the Bible. They also label as highly improbable the story that Carletadt, Luther's colleague at Wittenberg, took his Doctor's degree without seeing the Bible. They say that it is "surprising that such tales should live." ¹

However, we have Luther's own words: "I was twenty years old before I had ever seen a Bible. I had no notion that there existed any other Bibles or Epistles than those in the Service. At last I ran across a Bible in the library at Erfurt." ²

Moreover, M. Audin says: "While ^{at} Erfurt University Luther's most pleasant hours were spent in the library of the Augustinians The monastery had purchased at a large price some Latin Bibles which were reluctantly shown to visitors. Luther opened one and his eyes fell on the story of Samuel ..etc." ³

Conditions after some years were much different with printing presses turning out Bibles wholesale. More of this will be mentioned later, but it must be remembered that not the least of Luther's contributions to education was his release of the Scriptures from its seclusion and also from its Latin which was incomprehensible to the masses.

(d) Luther's Ability as a Student.

Luther was a good student. "His powerful intellect, the glow of his imagination, and his remarkable memory, soon gave him a start of all his fellow students. He was

1. Catholic Encyclopedia on "Luther".

2. Michelet, Life of Luther (written by himself) London 1888

3. Hist., Life and Writings and Doctrines of Luther (tr. by W.B. Turnbull) London 1854

especially gifted in the dead languages, in rhetoric and poetry; cheerful, obliging, sociable and good hearted, he was beloved by his teachers and companions." ¹ Wrote Melancthon: "The whole university admired his genius." ²

With such exalted statements before us it is a little hard to reconcile the fact that on receiving his B.A. degree in 1502, Martin Luther ranked 30th in a class of 57 students. However, he did better three years later when on receiving his degree of Master of Arts he stood second in a class of 17.

According to custom his graduation was celebrated with much aplomb. There was a big torch-light parade and much feasting. Luther thought nothing brings so much joy in life as comes to a new graduate passing his examinations successfully, being escorted through the streets by students with banners, torches, music, and being hailed "Magister" by the townspeople. These were the days when a scholar was held in high honor by all the world. ³

(e) Luther's Entrance into the Monastery.

A great future in the legal field was supposed to lie before Martin Luther, M.A. His father had gladly paid all his expenses, spent much money on textbooks, and anticipated with joy his son's career as a lawyer. But it was not to be so.

One night quite unexpectedly, Martin invited his college friends to what modernly would be called a stag party. Amid the gayety he suddenly astounded them with the

1. J.B.Remenanyder, What the World Owes Luther, N.Y. 1917.

2. Ibid.

3. cf. A.C.McGiffert, M.Luther, the man and his work, N.Y. 1910

information that he had renounced his legal career and was to enter the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt. His companions were shocked. When his father heard of it he objected strenuously, and moved heaven and earth to dissuade his son. But Martin could not be swerved. And on July 17, 1505, at the age of 21 years, Luther presented himself for admission at the Erfurt Augustinian monastery.

There is much speculation as to why young Luther took such an unusual step. It is often supposed that it was a sudden decision taken in a moment of fright when in a thunder storm, as the tongues of lightening were leaping about him, he cried: "Help, dear Saint Ana! Save me now and I swear I will become a monk." McGiffert¹ partly explains this story by adding that Martin had been under severe nervous strain at the University due to hard study for his Master's degree. His constant distaste for law may have reacted badly upon his system. Moreover, only shortly before a dear friend of his had died violently, probably assassinated. These things combined to react unfavorably, and when the thunder storm found incident occurred it found in young Luther a ready subject for fear.

But to dismiss the affair as a purely nervous reaction does justice neither to the decision or to the man. We know Luther was naturally religious minded. As a boy he had been trained carefully by his parents in their simple way. He had learned the catechism, the creed, the Lord's prayer. Childhood religious memories are of the strongest sort,

1. A.C. McGiffert, M. Luther, the man and his work, N.Y. 1910

and though apparently interested in law, evidently Luther could not shake off his inclination toward the Church. We must be guarded therefore in claiming Luther's entrance into the monastery as entirely due to a sudden whim.

Certain childhood memories were imprinted indelibly on Luther's mind. The affect of these impressions on Luther's decision to enter the Church would make a profitable psychological study. We have no time now for this phase of the subject except to recall certain boyhood impressions.

For instance, the old Mansfeld church had contained a painted window of Jesus with a stern face, armed with a sword, coming to judge the world. Likewise, Luther could never forget an altar cloth in the church at Magdeburg on which was pictured a ship rising to heaven without a single layman aboard. Again he remembered seeing a young nobleman who had turned monk to save his soul, staggering through the streets clothed in coarse garments and carrying a heavy pack.

Such reminiscences made this religiously sensitive individual morbidly apprehensive of his soul. His emotion was augmented by the gloom that brooded over all western Europe at this time. The plague was devastating large areas; new diseases were making large inroads; the Turk was a constant menace; Christ was regarded as a stern judge; and it was the common idea that God could best be served within convent walls.

With such a background and with a nature keenly sus-

ceptible to religious influence Luther could not get away from religion — and religion in those days was chiefly a matter of saving one's soul. The thunder storm, therefore, was undoubtedly the immediate occasion of Luther turning monk, but there is ample psychological background to believe that the cry to St. Ana was not merely a sudden, blind, fear-inspired impulse, but was the climax to a long sequence of memories, impressions, thoughts, and beliefs. Later events show that Luther was not at all legally minded; he was religiously inclined, and if it had not been the thunder storm that turned him from law to theology, it would have been something else.

In the monastery, if we are to believe consensus of authorship, Luther was not concerned primarily in educational pursuits. His soul's salvation seems to have continued as his major interest, and many an anxious day and night is said to have been spent in prayer and fasting and self-abasement in the hope of securing the coveted sense of peace of heart.

One account ¹ suggests there is "no reason to doubt that Luther's monastic life was happy with heart at rest, mind undisturbed and soul at peace. His metaphysical disquisitions, psychological dissertations, pietistic maunderings concerning interior conflicts, torturing and ascetism have little more than academic value, possibly a psychopathic value." However, the bulk of evidence points to Luther being at times utterly miserable during his ^{early} stay in the convent.

1. Catholic Encyclopedia on "Luther".

In spite of inner doubts and misgivings Luther pursued the course of study outlined by the Augustinian Order. As in the University, Luther commanded the respect of his fellows as a student. Untrained in theology as he was at the time of his entrance to the cloister, "In the monastery he excited general admiration in the public exercises by the facility with which he extricated himself from the labyrinths of dialectics. He read assiduously the prophets and the apostles, then the books of St. Augustine. He almost got by heart the treatises of Gabriel Biel and Pierre d'Andilly, Bishop of Cambray; he studied with earnestness the writings of Occam, whose logic he preferred to that of Scotus and Thomas." ¹

6. Conclusion

In the monastery we take leave of Martin Luther as an educand. From thenceforth we are interested in him as an active educator who left his stamp on many phases of life. Thus far we have seen the times from which Luther sprang; we have noted the conditions which formed his environment. Much of biographical interest has been omitted but those points that have bearing on his work as educator have been noticed. However, as we shall see, Luther's role as educator was so entwined with his work as reformer, that many religious features of Luther's life are equally important to his educational career.

II. LUTHER AS AN EDUCATOR.

A. As a Professor.

1. Call to Wittenberg.

Near the close of the 15th century Wittenberg was a hamlet of some 350 low, ugly, wooden houses built without much regard for orderly plan. An old church and town hall were the only two imposing structures. The site of the village was on the banks of the River Elbe, about half way between Leipsic and Berlin. The surrounding country was flat, and the soil sandy and unfertile.

In the year 1486, Frederick the Wise became Elector of Saxony and he chose Wittenberg as capitol of his new kingdom. Leipsic had been the former capitol, but Frederick's brother had inherited that city, and Frederick was forced to build a new capitol. He set about ornamenting the city and erecting public buildings including a splendid castle and church.

In further effort to rival Leipsic, the Elector founded a university so that the students of his territory would not have cause to go to ^{the University of} Leipsic. The new educational institution opened its doors in 1502, and Staupitz, Luther's good friend at the Erfurt monastery, was the first dean of the faculty of theology. ¹

It was Staupitz who was responsible for Luther being called as instructor of philosophy at the new University. While both men had been at Erfurt, the young monk had often used Staupitz as a sort of father confessor and

1. of. P. Smith, Life and Letters of M. Luther, N.Y. 1911.

and counsellor. As a natural result the tie of friendship between the two men was strong.

Thus in 1508 Luther turned his back on the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt and bent his steps toward Wittenberg. "His portmanteau was a light affair; it contained a coarse stuff robe; two Bibles, one Latin and one German; some ascetic books, and a small stock of linen. The books named together with a few volumes of Latin poetry and a Concordance, and some of Aristotle's treatises composed the entire library of the monk of Wittenberg." ¹

2. Distaste for Scholasticism.

At Wittenberg as instructor in philosophy, Luther was expected to expound upon Aristotle and the schoolmen. But already the young teacher was showing the independent tendencies. Bondage to Aristotle galled him, and he arrayed himself with the humanists in attempting to overthrow the blind adherence to Aristotle that dominated the field of philosophy. Said Luther concerning Aristotle: "That cursed heathen's ethics were not Christian, and his philosophy was not Pauline." ²

His vexation at scholasticism increased to such an extent that in 1517 he published 97 theses on "Disputation against Scholastic Theology". These appeared in September, just a month prior to the famous 95 theses which rocked all Christendom. Strange to say, Luther attached little importance at first to the "ninety-five" and considered them totally unworthy to be published. He was greatly concerned however about the fate of the ninety-

1. M. Michelet, Life of Luther (as told by himself) London 1888

2. P. Smith, Life and Letters of M. Luther, N.Y. 1911

seven theses against scholasticism, and after their preparation he sent them carefully to his friends for opinion and criticism.

This was one of Luther's contributions to the downfall of scholastic influence. It was his first distinct contribution as an educator. This undermining of scholasticism ~~eventually~~ proved so successful that as early as May 18, 1517, Luther was able to write: "Our theology and St. Augustine prosper. Aristotle is gradually tottering to a fall from which he will hardly rise again, and the lectures on the 'Sentences' are wonderfully disrelished."

3. Studying for Doctor of Divinity

In the early universities a degree was equivalent to a license to teach. A Master's degree gave a man the right to teach, but not the right to render his own interpretations. The advanced degree, however, of Doctor of Divinity made one eligible to interpret philosophy and theology without regard to other scholars, but only with such limitations as were demanded by loyalty to the Church.¹

After serving for a short time at Wittenberg, Luther was urged to continue his studies for the Doctorate. Burdened as he was with work, Magister Luther was reluctant to assume the additional tasks which this would involve.

Staupitz was especially insistent, and after much pressure Luther was prevailed upon to undertake preparation for the Doctor's degree. Years later Luther told the amusing narrative: "Doctor Staupitz said to me one day, 'You should take the degree of Doctor so as to have something to do'.

1. A.C. McGiffert, M. Luther, the man and his work. N.Y. 1911

I objected that my strength was already used up. He answered, 'Do you not know that the Lord has a great deal of business to attend to in which he needs the assistance of clever people? If you should die you might be his counsellor.'¹ Of course such an argument could not be gainsaid and Luther began his studies which culminated in October 18, 1512, when he received the Doctor's cap before a notable assembly.

Luther wrote to his old friends at the monastery at Erfurt inviting them to the occasion of his receiving the doctorate as follows: "Greeting in the Lord: Reverend and venerable and dear Fathers! Behold the day of St. Luke is at hand on which I shall take my examination in theology in the hall of the University, as I believe you already know from the letter of our Wittenberg Prior Link. I do not now accuse myself of unworthiness, lest I should seek praises and honor by my family; God and my conscience know how worthy and how grateful I am for this public honor Then I beg that you will deign to come and be present at the celebration, if convenient, for the glory and honor of religion and especially for our chapter..... It would seem indecorous, unworthy and scandalous for you not to be with me on such an occasion of honor, as though you were ignorant of it and uninvited."

(Signed) Brother Martin Luther, Augustinian.²

1. P. Smith, Life and Letters of M. Luther, N.Y. 1911
2. Letter to Prior Andrew Lohr and the Convent of Augustinians at Erfurt. From Luther's Correspondence, edited by Preserved Smith, Vol I., Phila., 1913.

4. Luther's Versatility.

Luther was a hard worker. From the time he entered Wittenberg until his death he maintained a rapid pace of production. Besides his teaching and preaching, after his conflict with Rome opened, he turned out pamphlets and sermons at a great rate. His administrative duties were heavy, first as supervisor of the Augustinians with a number of convents to look after; and later as an organizer of the Protestant ranks. When we consider also his hymns, his debates, his translations, we are staggered at the energy of the man.

It is to this "busy-ness" on the part of Luther that the Catholics attribute his detachment from the Church. A man as concerned with worldly affairs as he was necessarily had to neglect something, argues the Roman church, and it was his religious life which suffered. This carelessness in maintaining the spiritual glow that characterized him in his convent life led to serious results which eventually culminated in his dissatisfaction with the Church and ⁱⁿ entertaining unorthodox notions that fomented the Protestant "revolt".¹

Be that as it may, Luther's ability to continue at high tension had a bearing on his work as educator. Engrossed as he was in reforming the Church, if he had not been a man of versatile qualities, much of his educational contribution would have gone undone. Luther realized the burden of his undertakings, and on one occasion from Wittenberg he wrote Spalatin a letter on December 28, 1519,

1. Catholic Encyclopedia on "Luther".

in which he dispaired at the work confronting him¹: "I do not know whether I can write sermons on the gospels and epistles for Lent, as you urge me, for I have much to do and am very busy. Don't you believe it? My lectures on the psalter require a whole man; my sermons to the people on the gospel and Genesis need another whole man; and a third is required by the little prayers and regulations of my Order; a fourth might do this work you ask, not to mention my correspondence and my occupation with the affairs of others, including the meeting with my friends, which steals so much of my time that I almost think it wasted. I am one man; certainly I prepare for my work, but if what you ask is to be accomplished all else must be omitted. Would that I could give myself quietly to this alone, I should consider it a great pleasure ... "

Remarkable
~~fortunate~~ it was that in the press of these duties, Luther was able to think on questions of education, and to formulate as clearly as he did letters and treatises on this most important subject.

5. Luther as a Scholar.

Certainly a prime requisite for a man to attain fame as an educator is that he himself possess a sufficient ^{high} scholarship to command the respect of his contemporaries and of posterity. A few such men as Pestalozzi might be exceptions, but there are not many.

It is said that as a scholar Luther considered himself somewhat inferior, and designated himself as a

1. P. Smith, Luther's Correspondence, Vol I, Phila, 1913.

were prattler as ever against Philip Melanchthon for whose scholarship he had the profoundest regard. Heinrich Bohmer however states ¹:".... he had no cause for such a poor estimate of himself. True he was not a Humanist like that 'doctor above all doctors'(Erasmus) His Latin, vivid and natural though it be, ever retained a monkish tinge. He also never acquired in the same measure as his younger friend (Melanchthon) that facility of expressing an idea neatly and tersely and yet clearly and fully.... As far as critical acumen was concerned he was at least the equal of the renowned Erasmus and considerably superior to Magister Philippus."

Luther admitted his failings in this regard by saying: "I am able to write letters, but not in Ciceronian style, as Aricola does, but I have substance, although Latin words and eloquence fail me." ²

The Reformer was not only scholarly in a cloistered way, but was ever alert for a new and fresh approach to knowledge. He is credited with being one of the first German professors to learn Greek and Hebrew so as to thoroughly master the languages, and his lectures prove that he endeavored to gather information widely, and took particular pains to acquire specific facts from rabbinical literature and Jewish exegesis.

When just beginning his professorial career Luther soon established a reputation as no mean scholar, but even his best friends doubted his sagacity when he disputed the authenticity of certain works which were accredited to St.

Augustine. His accusation of spurious authorship ^{of the works} brought

1. Luther in the Light of Recent Research, N.Y. 1916.

2. Conversations with L., P. Smith and H.P. Callinger, Boston. 1915

a storm upon his head. But convinced that he had sufficient evidence to prove his point Luther held his ground. Later investigation has proved the correctness of his theory, which adds to modern appreciation of the man's learning.¹

The all-round genius of the man has been summed up thus:² "If we add to the picture, the ease and dexterity with which he moved amidst the most abstract philosophical and theological distinctions, the rapidity with which he worked into not merely the theological, but also the political, legal, social and economic problems with which he was brought face to face by the progress of the Protestant movement, and note how quickly and without effort he always found for his ideas a striking and original expression, how easily, thanks to his enormous memory, he retained in mind whatever he had read, seen or heard, we will be forced to confess that even regarded purely as an intellectual character he was a phenomenon without equal."

6. Luther's Teaching Method.

Many an educational theorist of the first rank fails miserably in the test of the class room. Luther, however, was a popular teacher. Discarding the traditional reserve and frigidity that was supposed to denote great learning, Luther's pedagogy was entirely unconventional. He

1. Preserved Smith, Life and Letters of M. Luther, N.Y. 1911
2. Heinrich Bohmer, Luther in the Light of Modern Research, N.Y. 1916.

referred repeatedly to the events of the day and viewed them in the light of the writer he was interpreting. For illustrations he drew from everyday experience, and if it was needed to make the Bible meaning more clear he felt free to drop into the German vernacular.¹ For this latter habit he was criticized, but to criticism he was impervious.

Professor Luther was practical in his teaching. He denounced the schoolmen with their far-fetched interpretations. Regarding the Bible as a practical Book he emphasized its practical values, and his classroom was not so much a place for philosophical speculation as a center of vital and workaday ideas.

When teaching the Bible, Luther made copious marginal notes in his small hand-writing. Photographs of pages from Luther's Bible show literally the whole page jotted here and there with notations by his own hand.² These notes help form an excellent basis for an estimate of the man as a teacher.

From years 1513 to 1515 Luther lectured on Psalms; Romans in 1515 and 1516; Judges in 1516. In 1519 he issued in printed form a Commentary on Galatians based on lectures given in 1516 and 1517. (It was of this Commentary that John Bunyan said: "Of all the books I ever met, I found it most fit for a wounded conscience.")

1. A.C. McGiffert, M. Luther, the man and his work, N.Y. 1920

2. cf. photographs, F.V.N. Painter, Luther on Educ., Phila, 1889

Preserved Smith after a careful study of the marginal notations which Luther made for his lectures, and after examining the Commentary on Galatians, suggests Luther's characteristics as a teacher as follows: ¹

"(1) Thoroughness - he read, marked, learned and digested the books he studied.

"(2) Criticized authors - disputed two works attributed to Augustine and since then found spurious.

"(3) Sought best authority and most recent books.

"(4) Prepared lectures carefully - annotated almost every word in text - wrote out legibly the whole discourse.

"(5) Brings applications up to date.

"(6) He was interesting - with similes, examples from current events, frequent translation into German, with careful summaries at the end of each chapter, he made the lectures a wide departure from the ordinary."

The result of this sort of teaching is easy to guess. Students of any generation have a way of discovering an oasis in an otherwise dry environment, and there was no exception in that day. Luther's classes became immensely popular and students flocked to them enthusiastically.

We should not pass from Luther's ability as a teacher without special mention to his innovations in handling Scripture. It is idle to speculate how well Luther would have fared in defending the Protestant cause scripturally if it had not been for his experience as a lecturer on the Bible. However his role as educator must have had no small part in fixing the theories of

1. P. Smith, Life and Letters of M. Luther, N.Y. 1911

Biblical interpretation which were later to grip all Europe. Before the Reformation was dreamed of, wise men discerned in Luther's class room certain signs which were prophetic of the coming events. The rector of the University used to say of his popular professor: "This *man* will confound all our doctors, establish new doctrines, and reform the whole Roman Church, for he bases himself on the writings of the prophets and apostles, and is firmly planted on the word of Jesus Christ." ¹ Michelet ² relates "the venerable Pollich heard him and struck with wonder exclaimed: 'This father has profound insight, exceeding imagination; he will trouble the doctors before he is done and excite no slight disturbance.'"

7. The Classroom as a Foundation upon which Luther Later Built

All the time that Luther spent in his classroom attracting students from far and near, he was building for his future work as Reformer of church and school. Not only was he finding a stable foundation on which to stand, but he was gathering a group of adherents who in later years rallied to their former teacher. Students went forth from Luther's classes with a new vision which is the sine qua non of all progress. And if we give Luther credit for inaugurating the Reformation finally at the Diet of Worms, we must set the classroom at Wittenberg as the place where the foundation was laid for the Reformation's permanency.

1. cf. F.V.N.Painter, Luther on Educ., Phila., 1889
2. Life of Luther(as written by himself) London 1888

Later when Luther had radical views of Christian faith, and when he was ready to propose advanced steps in education, because of his teaching experience, and because of the contacts he had made while teaching, there was prepared for him an audience ready to hear. On December 10, 1518, Spalatin wrote to Guy Bild at Augsberg:

"Martin Luther ... has a full lecture room and disciples not only eager to learn, but already proficient, who do not fear even the greatest of the sophists."¹

8. The Relation of Luther's Teaching to his Predecessors and Contemporaries.

It is easy to claim too much for any outstanding character. In picturing Luther we must avoid painting a halo. He had his virtues; he also had his faults. Luther was original, but he was not always original. Because of Luther's notoriety, those predecessors and contemporaries who thought alike with him are often overlooked. We are apt to regard Luther as some great colossus standing absolutely alone in the principles for which he stood. But that is not the case.

Unique as was his approach to the Bible, he was not alone in his desire to get away from the endless speculations of the scholastics. "Luther was not the first to revive Paulinism. Previously John Colet and Jacob lefevre d'Etaples had given out the watchword: Back to Paul! Moreover, not Luther, but Lefevre published the first commentary based upon the original text, and first employed Pauline concepts for the purpose of criticising

1. Luther's Correspondence and Other Contemporary Letters, P. Smith and C.M. Jacobs, Phila., 1918.

the piety of the day.

"Luther was not first to emphasize that there was but one religious authority for a Christian — Christ, or the Bible as far as it teaches Christ's views. Erasmus had expressed the same opinion very vigorously and had earnestly demanded the return to the simple doctrines of Christ.

"Also Erasmus as early as 1516 in the preface of his first edition to the New testament emphatically developed the concept which sounds distinctly Lutheran, namely, that the Bible ought to be translated into all popular tongues and spread in every language so that man, woman, and child, young and old, noble and commons, might read the gospels and the Pauline letters, and in the future the peasant in the field, the workman in the shop, and the traveller upon the high road might pass the time with passages from the Scriptures and with hymns." ¹

Luther early recognized Erasmus genius and was glad to avail himself of it. In 1516 appeared the Humanist's famous edition of the Greek New Testament. It happened that at the time Luther was lecturing on the Pauline Epistles, and he immediately made the new Greek text the basis of his class room comments.

Luther frequently was influenced by Erasmus. Not a few of Luther's attitudes in the field of education seem to be attributed to the Humanist. However, Luther was temperamentally able to popularize and vigorously promote theories as Erasmus could never have done.

1. Heinrich Bohmer, Luther in the Light of Recent Research, N.Y. 1916.

Erasmus' traits were not those of a reformer, and he admitted it candidly: "I have no inclination to risk my life for the truth. We have not all the strength of martyrdom, and if trouble comes I shall imitate Peter. Popes and Emperors must settle creeds; if they settle them well, so much the better; if ill, I will keep on the safe side."¹

And who can say that Erasmus was all wrong in his desire for moderacy. He realized the dangers attendant with the blustering ways of his contemporary Reformer. In a personal letter to the Rector of the University of Erfurt, Lewis Platz, the great Humanist expresses his appreciation for Luther after calling attention to Luther's faults: "The classics ought to come to a university, not like enemies to spoil, but like guests to live in peace. I never liked tumult, and either I am much mistaken, or more will be accomplished by moderation than by impotent force. I think it is the part of good men to desire to carry through reforms with injury to few, or if possible, to none..... Luther has given some splendid warning, but would that he had done it more civilly. He would then have had more favorers and allies, and would have reaped a richer harvest for Christ. And yet it would be impious to leave him entirely undefended in what he has rightly said, lest hereafter none should dare to tell the truth. Hitherto he has certainly profited the world."²

1. F.V.N.Painter, Luther on Educ., Phila., 1889

2. Letter from Louvain, July 1, 1520; cf. P.Smith, Luther's Correspondence, Vol I, Phila, 1913.

B. The Part Played by Luther's Debates in Extending His Influence as an Educator.

Mention of Luther as a debater should not be omitted in considering his career as an educator. Through his debates with John Eck he gained a noteriety which later became popularity, and it was this popularity with the masses which eventually gave him a gallery willing to lend ear to his proposed reforms in education and religion.

Luther was endowed with considerable ability as a disputant. He possessed "keen discrimination, wonderful faculty of discerning the weak points of his opponent, a never failing memory, uninterrupted flow of speech, an amazing knowledge of Scripture, a coolness of temper amid the most vigorous onslaught, and an unshaken confidence in the righteousness of his cause."¹

The young monk's opponents at Leipsic expected to see him completely crushed. Eck's prowess was counted on to bring great honor to the Romanist standards. In a letter to the University of Leipsic, Duke George of Saxony acknowledged: "We consider that honor, glory and profit will come to the University (Leipsic) and to all of you from this debate."²

But many of the people of Germany were looking at Luther expectantly. By daring to oppose such a man as Eck, who was a most noted disputant, Luther caught the imagination of the public. Even though the young monk must be rated the technical loser in the public arguments, he became nonetheless the leader and hero of the common people.

1. Prof. J. Yutzy, M. Luther as a Preacher, Lutheran Quat. Vol 28 pp. 279-589, 1898. (Pub. Gettysburg, Pa.)
2. Letter from Dresden, July 19, 1519. of P. Smith and C.M. Jacobs. Luther's Correspondence and Other Letters Phila. 1912

At Erfurt they would have none of John Eck, and when he tried to post the Papal Bull in the town, he was contemptuously refused permission. Luther was greatly amused at the treatment accorded Eck at Erfurt, and he wrote of the fate of the Bull.¹ When the edict was printed and placed on sale the students straightway seized all the copies they could lay their hands on and threw them into the river.

An interesting narration of Luther's debate with John Eck shows the boldness of the young professor in facing Eck's prowess; also Luther's contempt for scholasticism is portrayed, and his popularity with the throngs depicted.²

"The great Goliath of controversy in that day was Dr. John Eck, who challenged the Saxon monk to a public disputation at Leipsic. All Germany was interested. The question at issue stirred the nation to its very depths.

"The disputants met in the great hall of the palace of the Elector. Never before was seen in Germany such an array of doctors and theologians and dignitaries. Dr. Eck was superior to Luther in reputation, dialectic skill, in scholastic learning. He was the pride of the universities. Luther, however, had deeper convictions, more genius, greater eloquence, and at that time he was modest.

"The champion of the schools, of sophistry and authoritism of dead letter literature, of quibbles, refinements of words, soon overwhelmed the Saxon monk with

1. Letter of Luther to John von Greffendorf at Weimar, Oct. 30, 1520. cf. P. Smith, Luther's Correspondence, V. I. Phila, 1913

2. John Lord, Beacon Lights of Hist., Vol III, Renaissance and Reformation, N.Y. 1884.

his citations, decrees of councils, opinions of eminent scholastics, the literature of the Church, its mighty authority. He was on the eve of triumph. Had the question been settled by authorities, as lawyers and pedants would settle the question, Luther would have been beaten. But his genius came to his aid, and the consciousness of truth. He appealed to the Scriptures as the ultimate ground of authority. He did not deny authority, but appealed to it in its highest form. This was unexpected ground. The Church was not prepared openly to deny the authority of St. Paul or St. Peter; and Luther, if he did not gain the case, was far from being beaten, and — what was of vital importance to his success — he had the Elector and the people with him."

C. Luther's Sermonizing as a Means of Education.

1. Early Preaching.

It was not long after Luther arrived at Wittenberg as instructor that he was drafted as preacher for the local Augustinian order, it being the custom for the younger monks to serve in that capacity. The idea of actually facing the audience and delivering a sermon had about the same effect on the young Luther as it has on many a youthful divine today. "Oh, how I trembled," Luther afterwards recounted, "when I was ascending the pulpit for the first time. I would fain have excused myself, but they made me preach." 1

1. Luther's Table Talk.

Not too complimentary to his listeners was Luther's remedy for stage-fright. He merely tried to forget that there were people before him by the simple expedient of imagining that they were all nothing but cabbage heads.¹

2. An Arduous Preacher.

After a hesitant beginning, Luther soon found himself in demand as a preacher, and so in addition to his teaching at Wittenberg, he gave much time to the pulpit. For weeks on end he preached daily, and during Lent he often spoke three times a day. He had little sympathy for the men who did less than he did, and condemned as luxurious and lazy the preacher who accepted \$200 a year to preach only twice a week.²

3. Type of Sermons.

An examination of extant sermons of Luther reveals that most of his preaching was expository and pedagogical. He taught as he preached presenting what the Bible had to say on the points under consideration. Faced as he was with the necessity of enlightening his fellow Germans on matters of doctrine and Christian living, it was natural that he used the pulpit as a teaching medium.

One series of thirteen of Luther's sermons are typical in showing the teaching aim he evidently had in mind. The texts we have preserved with the sermons, and after examining each sermon and giving it a ~~name~~ theme we find how

1. Luther's Table Talk.

2. A symposium on M. Luther by Professors of Union Theo. Seminary, N.Y. 1883

largely the teaching aim was present. It will be noticed how frequently "the what" and "the need" are mentioned.

Text and Theme of Thirteen of
Luther's Sermons. 1

Gal.4:1-7. Relation of Faith, Justification and Good Works.

Luke 10:23-37. The Great Commandment, including the story of the Good Samaritan.

Matt.1:1-16. Exposition of the Genealogy of Jesus.

Matt. 2:1-11. Christmas Story; Importance of Knowing Christ the Son of God.

No Text. Subject given by Luther: "Fruit and Virtue of Christ's Resurrection.

John 10:11-16. Christ Shows What Sort of Person He Is and What Sort of Kingdom He Has.

John 6:44-55. The Nature of Christian Faith.

Rom.13:11-14. The Need of Good Works, the Fruit of Faith.

Luke 6:36-42. The Importance of Exercising Forgiveness, Charity and Forbearance to One Another.

I Tim.1:5-7. The Christian Message of Love, Mercy and Charity.

Matt.18:23-35. The Need of Forgiveness.

Luke 1:68-79. The Nature of the Gospel and the Kingdom of Christ.

Philippians 4:4-7. The Duties of a Christian.

4. Simplicity in Preaching.

Though Luther taught his listeners as he preached, there was nothing of the learned scholar addressing a class of students, but rather a humble schoolmaster explaining carefully to his pupils. "I preach", said he, "as

1. cf. A Selection of the Most Celebrated Sermons of M.Luther and J. Calvin, Compiled and Pub.by R.Bantley, N.Y.1829

simply as I can that common men, children and servants may understand for the learned already know it all, and I do not preach for them." ¹ On one occasion, as much as he esteemed Staupitz, Luther took him to task: "Doctor Staupitz is a very learned man, yet he is a very irksome preacher, and the people would rather hear a plain brother preach that delivers his words simply to their understanding. In churches no praising or extolling should be sought after. Saint Paul never used such high and stately words as Demosthenes and Cicero did, but he spake properly and plainly, words which signified and showed high and stately matters, and he did well." ²

When Doctor Mayer bewailed Luther's simple kind of preaching the latter replied: "Loving brother, regard not the doctors and learned men, but regard the common people, to teach and instruct them clearly. In the pulpit we must feed the common people with milk, for each day a new church is growing up, which stands in need of plain and simple instruction. Keep to the catechism, the milk. High and subtle discourse, the strong wine, we will keep for the strong minded." ³

A like remark was made at another time when Luther declared: "We ought to direct ourselves in preaching according to the condition of the hearers, but most preachers commonly fail herein; they preach that which little edifies the poor and simple people. To preach plainly and simply is a great art; Christ himself talks of tilling the ground

1. A.C. McGiffert, M. Luther, the man and his work, N.Y. 1910

2. Luther's Table Talk

3. Ibid.

and of mustard seed etc.; he used altogether homely and simple similitudes." ¹

On still another occasion Luther expressed himself on this question of simplicity of sermonizing: "Albrecht Durer, the famous painter of Nuremburg, used to say that he took no pleasure in the works of art which were overladen with coloring and that he much preferred those which were plain and simple in their execution; and so say I of sermons. Let them be compact and lively, but not verbose and affected; and so of their delivery." ²

In one of his conversations Luther recalled that: "Christ had an extremely simple way of talking, and still he was eloquence itself. The prophets, to be sure, are not very rhetorical, but they are much more difficult. Therefore, simple speech is the best and truest eloquence." ³

In thus insisting that the preacher hold himself within the bounds of the audience's comprehension, Luther had hit upon the fundamental pedagogical principle of adapting subject matter to the intelligence of the individual being taught. While serving in the Wittenberg pulpit and elsewhere, any thought of ever being interested in a system of educational method was probably farthest from Luther's mind, but he showed a grasp of certain basic teaching principles nevertheless.

5. The Teaching Function of the Preacher.

Dr. H.H.Horne has made certain valuable suggestions of which alert ministers will avail themselves in order to

1. Luther's Table Talk
2. W. Carlos Martyn, Life and Times of Luther, N.Y. 1866
3. Conversations with Luther, Trans. and ed. by P. Smith and H.P. Gallinger. Boston 1872

really teach as they preach. It is interesting to note in how many instances Luther utilized the principles laid down by this modern educator.

After remarking that "an essential part of the burden of preaching is teaching", and that "the preacher is a teacher, willy-nilly", Doctor Horne goes on to say: "Of course the teaching element appears in many ... phases of the pulpit work of the minister, such as, the deft quickening of ideas, the interesting communication of information, the art of securing and keeping attention, logical and systematic presentation, finding and keeping the point of contact, having a definite objective to accomplish, utilizing the current situation, the effective telling of a story, availing oneself of the the experience of one's audience, pitching one's plane of thought and expression to match the capacities of one's auditors, the awakening of the motives, and many other like things. Once the minister conceives himself also a teacher of his people, all the arts of modern education are at his command." ¹

Luther was aware of this teaching burden which rests with the preacher. And though stated in much less complete manner than the passage just quoted, Luther did outline what he considered ten essential qualifications for a successful preacher:

1. The ability to teach.
2. A good mind.
3. Eloquence.
4. A good voice.
5. Good memory.
6. Power to leave off.
7. Diligence.
8. Whole souled devotion to his calling.
9. Willingness to be bothered by everyone.
10. Patience to bear all things. ²

¹ and ²: See bottom page --

6. Luther's Popularity as a Preacher.

Needless to say Luther's habit of accomodating his sermons to the understanding of the common people found ready response. It was not long before the town council of Wittenberg, glad to take advantage of the popularity of this professor-monk-preacher, appointed him as city chaplain. This office gave him the privilege of preaching in the large city church where "the energy of his genius, the animation of his style, and the excellence of his doctrine soon extended his reputation throughout Germany. On one occasion the Elector himself travelled to Wittenberg on purpose to hear him." ¹

However, all was not praise for Luther. Many criticized his homiletical methods. On one occasion a student who journeyed from Leipsic to hear the renowned preacher was heard to remark after the sermon that "if the monk spoke often like that, they ought to hit him on the tonsure with a stone." ²

But all the while Luther was increasing his body of adherents and eventually when the storm burst he was able to rally behind him the most of the German laity, and many of the clergy. His faithful co-worker Philip Melanchthon generously remarked: "One man is an interpreter, another a

Footnotes for Page 62.

1. The Teaching Function of the Ministry, The Biblical Review, Jan. 1926
2. Conversations with Luther, Trans. and ed. by P. Smith and H.P. Gallinger, Boston, 1915.

1. W. Carlos Martyn, Life and times of Luther, N.Y. 1866

2. Luther's Correspondence, Tr. and ed. by P. Smith, Phila. 1913

logician, and still another an orator, affluent and beautiful in speech; but Luther is all in all. Whatever he utters pierces the soul, fixes itself like arrows in the heart; he is a miracle among men." ¹

D. Luther's Educational Influence through His Hymns.

"The great Reformer, Martin Luther, was the father of Evangelical song." ² And Samuel Taylor Coleridge said: "Luther did as much for the Reformation by his hymns as by his translation of the Bible. In Germany his hymns are known by heart by every peasant; they advise, they argue from the hymns, and every soul in the Church praises God like a Christian with words which are natural and yet sacred to the mind." ³

Thus Luther not only used the classroom, the debating hall, and the pulpit as sounding boards to carry his message throughout Germany, but he moved into the realm of music. He had always been a capable musician and while at Erfurt had become expert on the guitar and flute. He possessed a good baritone voice, also, of which he made good use. He loved music and called it "the art of the prophets", and "it is the only other art which like theology can calm the agitations of the soul/ and/put the devil to flight." With such an appreciation for the music it is not surprising that he resorted to hymnology to further his purpose.

1. F.V.N. Painter, Luther on Education, Phila. 1889
2. J.F. Lambert, Luther's Hymns, Phila., 1917.
3. of. Ibid.

In a preface to a collection of hymns by John Walter, 1525, Luther expresses his reasons for interest in hymns: "These hymns have been set in four parts for no other reason than that I wished to provide our young people, who both will and ought to be instructed in music and other sciences, with something whereby they might rid themselves of amorous and carnal songs, and in their stead learn something wholesome and so apply themselves to what is good, with pleasure, as becometh the young.

"Besides this, I am not of the opinion that all sciences should be beaten down and made to cease by the Gospel, as some fanatics pretend, but I would fain see all the arts and music in particular used in the service of Him who hath given and created them. Therefore I entreat every pious Christian to give a favorable reception to these hymns, and to help forward my undertaking, according as God hath given him more or less ability. The world is, alas, not so mindful and diligent to train and teach our poor youth, wherefore we ought to be forward to promote the same. God grant us his grace. Amen." ¹

Thus we see Luther's educational interest in hymnology. He resorted to hymn writing not only to find a substitute for "the old Gregorian service, and the mediæval chants, monotonous and gloomy," ² but also to teach in melody some of the principles for which he and his movement stood. Fortunate the teacher that can enlist music to accomplish his purpose; and no wonder a Jesuit remarked: "The hymns of Luther have killed more souls than all his books and speeches." ³

1. J.F.Lambert, Luther's Hymns, Phila., 1917

2. John Lord, Beacon Lights of Hist., Vol. III. N.Y. 1884

3. of. F.V.N.Painter, Luther on Educ.. Phila 1889

But Luther's hymns did not stop with teaching, they soared into inspirational heights. It is said: "...though as a composer of hymns he mainly followed pedagogical purposes, he is at times, though but seldom, overcome by the impulse for once to let his powerful emotions flow forth freely in song. At such times he always sings like a really great poet in strains the like of which had never been heard before him in the German language." ¹

Luther was not anxious to monopolize the task of hymn writing, and he sought the aid of friends. To Spalatin he wrote in 1524: "I am willing to make German Psalms for the people ... that is, spiritual hymns whereby the Word of God, through singing, may conserve itself among the people. We are therefore seeking everywhere for poets. Since you are endowed with versatility and good taste in German expression ... I beg you to join hands with us and make the attempt to transform a Psalm into a hymn after the pattern I inclose.

"I desire that newfangled words, and courtly expressions be omitted in order that the language may be the simplest and most familiar to the people, and yet at the same time, pure and well suited to the sense of the Psalm.... Answer me now which of the Psalms I may expect from you." ²

Today the best known of Luther's hymns is that "battle song of the Reformation" entitled "Ein Feste Burg ist Unser Gott", ("A Mighty Fortress is Our God") ³ of which Doctor Schaff says: "It is the great Marseillaise

1. Heinrich Bohmer, Luther in the light of recent research, N.Y. 1916

2. Letter from Luther to Wittenberg Spalatin, cf. J.F. Lambert, Luther's Hymns, Phila., 1917.

3. Exact date of writing unknown; probably between 1521-1530.

of Protestantism, its notes and words thrill on the heart like bugle blasts from heaven."

In this hymn Luther brings forth certain doctrines of his creed which he desired to pass on to others for their instruction. As the hymn progresses we learn that God is our fortress and never failing bulwark, and yet the devil's "craft and power are great" and "on earth is not his equal"; without Christ's help "our striving would be losing"; and "though the world with devils filled should threaten to undo us, we will not fear for God hath will^{ed} his truth to triumph through us; God's word is eternal and though "goods and kindred go, and this mortal life also," "God's truth abideth still, his Kingdom is forever."

It is all beautifully put, and yet clear enough for a peasant to understand.

"A mighty fortress is our God,
A Bulwark never failing:
Our helper he, amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seem to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal."

"Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right Man on our side,
The Man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth is his name,
From age to age the same,
And he must win the battle. "

"And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us;
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim -
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him."

"That word above all earthly powers -
 No thanks to them - abideth;
 The Spirit and the gifts are ours
 Through him who with us sideth.
 Let goods and kindred go,
 This mortal life also.
 The body they may kill:
 God's truth abideth still,
 His Kingdom is forever."

(Taken from The Sanctuary Hymnal,
 Dayton, Ohio, 1914.
 Hymn translated by Frederick H.
 Hedge, 1853.)

E. Luther as a Pamphleteer.

When numbering the causes of the Reformation's success we must include the printing press which was an essential instrument in stabilizing and popularizing the Protestant movement. If Luther had been limited to words spoken from platform and pulpit, or laboriously written by hand he could never have mustered behind him the force of public opinion. As it was, through the widespread distribution of printed works the humblest peasant was able to acquaint himself with the teachings of the monk of Wittenberg.

Luther was not reluctant to take advantage of the printing press. No sooner had he begun his dissension with Rome than he began issuing pamphlets and books in an unending stream. Pamphlets in those days served as do the newspapers and periodicals of today. They were media for the exchange of opinions and convictions. We can no more ignore the educational force of Luther's written work, therefore, than ignore the modern press as a powerful teaching factor.

Records so far as available show that there were

sixteen printers in the town of Wittenberg during Luther's life ¹, and of this number the Reformer kept three presses going all the time, and yet they could not keep up with his pen. "His lightening speed was the despair of his friends and foes alike. Wonderful that so hastily done, his writing should so richly repay reading after the lapse of four centuries. The physical and mental vitality of the man was one of the most amazing things about him, and one of the secrets of his tremendous power." ²

Luther's pamphlets are numbered, not by scores, but by hundreds. A catalogue ³ of many of the tracts which appeared from 1511 to 1598 written by Luther and his contemporaries gives a list of 402 printed works from the pen of the Reformer. These works vary in size from a few pages to over 200 pages. The subjects dealt with were usually doctrinal, but occasionally Luther took a short flight into other realms, and among his non-religious writings we have two strictly educational writings, "The Letter to Mayors and Aldermen on the Establishment of Christian Schools", and "Sermon on Compelling School Attendance".

One account says: "Every sermon or speech Luther made was immediately printed. A feature of these pamphlets was their humble proportions, and their consequent cheapness. They could be rapidly printed, were easily hawked about, and the public was thus kept in touch with every stage of

1. Catalogue of tracts by Luther and his contemporaries, (1511-1598) Aberdeen Univ. Press. Privately printed by Lord Crawford.

3. Ibid.

2. J.B. Remensnyder, What the World Owes Luther, N.Y. 1917.

the contest. The pamphlets themselves made history. Luther's activities were great. His silence could have been sold for a great price, but he continued his attacks upon his opponents."¹

This voluminous writing was not in vain. People read his productions eagerly. One citizen of Basle lamented: "Believe me, I have scoured the whole of Basle without finding Luther's works, as they were all sold out long ago. They say they will soon be printed again at Strassburg."²

People of all classes read Luther. The poor folk idolized him, and his clear, trenchant style, his apt illustrations and keen humor, which often drifted into biting sarcasm, moved scholars as well as plain people. Erasmus admitted that he learned more from "a single small page of Luther than from all the works of Thomas Aquinas."³

The wide reading which Luther's writings had is illustrated by a letter received from a printer in a German city⁴:

February 14, 1519.
Basle.

"Blasius Salmonius, a printer of Leipsic, gave me some of your books which he had bought at the last Frankfort Fair, (the great book-mart of Germany) which as they were approved by all the learned I immediately reprinted. We have sent 600 copies to France and Spain; they are sold at Paris and are even read and approved by the doctors of the Sorbonne; for some of the most learned say that they have hitherto missed among those who treat Scripture the same freedom that you show.

"John Calvus, also a bookseller of Pavia, a most learned man, one devoted to the Muses, has taken a good part of your books to Italy to distribute among all the cities.

"We have exported your books to Brabant and England. We only printed 300 copies of your "Reply to Prierias" ... We sold out all these books except 10 copies, and never remember to have sold any more quickly.

"Farewell, Reverend Father."

(Signed) John Froben

1. Catalogue of Tracts by Luther and his contemporaries, Aberdeen Univ. Press.
2. Letter, C. Cantuincula to H. Agrippa, from P. Smith's, Luther's Correspondence, Vol I. Phila 1913.
3. Albert Ryma, Christian Renaissance, N.Y. 1925
4. Luther's Correspondence & other letters, Smith and Jacobs. Phila '18

The spread of Luther's writings was as rapid as it was wide. In 1517 at the time of the posting of the theses Luther was scarcely known outside of his immediate neighborhood, but by 1521 official complaint was made to Cardinal Wolsey in England "that the University of Oxford is infected with the heresies of Luther, divers students having a great number of books of the said perverse doctrine."¹

F. The Educational Aspects of Luther's Translation of the Scriptures.

From the standpoint of the educator, especially the religious educator, Luther's translation and popularization of the Scriptures stand near the top of the list of his educational achievements. Educationally his Scriptural translations are of interest because they reveal the scholarship of the translator, and on account of the part played by the Bible in the advancement of the education of the German people.

1. First Appearance of Luther's New Testament.

On the 21st of September, 1522, on the streets of Wittenberg there appeared for sale an edition of 3000 copies of a book with the simple inscription, "The New Testament - Germany - Wittenberg." The copies sold for a florin apiece, which was about \$8.00. In a short time the first edition was sold out completely. "A second, third and fourth followed until by the year 1533 seventeen editions had been printed, and sold at Wittenberg, thirteen at Augsberg, twelve at

1. J. H. Kurtz, Church History Vol II, N. Y. 1889.

Basle, one at Erfurt, one at Grimma, one at Reipsio, and thirteen at Strassburg — 58 editions in 11 years. Such was the appetite with which the greedy Germans devoured the German translation of the Scriptures.* ¹

This large demand for his Scriptural translations was mentioned by Luther and he seemed dubious as to whether the people were really able to absorb properly the sacred writings as they rapidly came off the press in quick succession. He said: "Before I translated the New Testament out of the Greek, all longed for it; when it was done their longing scarce lasted four weeks. Then they desired the Books of Moses; when I translated these they had enough thereof in a short time. After that they would have the Psalms; of these they were soon weary and desired other books. So it will be with the Book of Ecclesiasticus which they now long for, and about which I have taken great pains. All is acceptable until our giddy brains be satisfied; afterwards we let things go and seek after the new." ²

2. Previous German New Testaments Compared with Luther's.

Prior to Luther's translation, there had been other German editions of the New Testament. But these translations had been written in an odd Latinized German which was at times so intricate as to be unintelligible.³ Consequently the public had not responded readily even where they might have had opportunity to read. But Luther gripped the popular mind. Whereas the preceding translations had been from the

1. W. Carlos Martyn, Life and times of Luther, N.Y. 1866

2. Luther's Table Talk.

3. A.C. McGiffert, M. Luther, the man and his work, N.Y. 1910

Latin Vulgate, making the German really a secondhand translation, Luther with his command of Greek translated straight from the original. He thus was able to breathe a genuine German spirit and style into his work. He knew the Bible, he knew German, he knew how to combine the two, and to this day his German Scriptures stand as a classic. He had a command of idiomatic, racy and colloquial German seldom equalled and never surpassed. ¹

3. Care in Translation.

The hours Luther spent on his translations gave him great trial. He later reviewed his experience: "Alas! what a difficult task it is to make these Hebrew writers speak German; how reluctant they are to forsake their Hebrew ways and suit themselves to rude German, just as if you could compel a nightingale to cease from her melodious strains and imitate the monotonous, odious cry of the cuckoo." ²

In his translation of the whole Bible which was finished in 1534, Luther continued his painstaking methods. He and Melancthon together often spent two and three weeks hunting for exactly the right word for a certain passage. Later Luther reminisced that he and Melancthon, and Aurogullus, encountered ^{ex} so many difficulties in the Book of Job that sometimes they scarcely finished three lines in four days. ³

1. A.C. McGiffert, Martin Luther, the man and his work, N.Y. 1910
2. F.V.N. Painter, Luther on Education, Phila., 1889
3. Ibid.

4. The Educational Effect of Luther's Translation of the Bible.

Luther was eager to have his fellow countrymen study the Bible. In certain portions, by means of commentaries, he strove to instruct readers so that the Bible would prove a real educator. In the preface to various volumes on different portions of Scripture, Luther usually included brief suggestions on how to proceed with the study of the material under consideration. A typical instance is his preface to the Book of Psalms in which he said: "Before I commence my summaries I would desire the reader to bear in mind that the Psalms are five different kinds:

1. Prophecies; 2. Psalms which teach us what we ought to do and what we ought not to do according to the law of God; 3. Consolation; 4. Supplication; 5. Thanksgiving. Knowing these five things about the Psalms is a great help not only in the understanding of them, but to the perceiving of their order, to the bearing of them in memory, and to the perfect knowledge of them." ¹

Moreover, Luther's translations were educational in effect not only because of their teaching value, but also for their contribution to literature. In publishing his new edition of the Bible, Luther had not only given the public a religious book, but he also had standardized the German language. "He discovered resources in the German language unknown before. He used it as it had never been used. He was one of the founders of German literature. He did more than record what he found. He infused into his work

1. Luther's Preface to his Manual of the Book of Psalms, trans. by Henry Wole, London 1887.

a quality which affected the nature of the tongue with which he dealt. He welded people and spirit in a speech whose direct human grip and lofty noble power no one can deny."¹

As has been suggested the German people eagerly received a version of the Bible which they could read and understand. Catholicism today scoffs ² the idea that the Scriptures were inaccessible. The Roman Church brands as untrue the statement that Luther was 30 years old before seeing a Bible, and that Carlstadt received his Doctor's degree without ever seeing inside the Scriptures. But even if Bibles were accessible, evidence points to the fact that for the common people at least they were unknown volumes in the unfamiliar Latin tongue.

Luther, in his later life, made the comparison: "For not many years ago, during that barbarous and blindness and ignorance, what a treasure should we have had if we had possessed one Bible only, really and truly understood and set forth; but we had not so much as one! And now we are blessed with such an abundance of revelation - 'Blessed therefore are the eyes which see the things that we see, and the ears which hear the things what we hear'." ³

The desire of the Germans to read and study the Bible in their own tongue had a most beneficial effect on the general learning of the common/ man, woman and child of sixteenth Germany. "It's educational effect in getting the masses to read and reflect must have been great." ⁴

1. Lynn Harold Hough, A living book in a living age, N.Y. 1918
2. cf. Catholic Encyclopedia on "Luther".
3. Luther's preface to his Manual of the Book of Psalms, trans. by Henry Cole, London, 1887.
4. F.P. Graves, Hist. of Educ., Vol II, N.Y. 1916.

G. Educational Value of Luther's Catechisms.

Luther translated the Scriptures for a religious purpose, though they had a direct educational effect nevertheless. However, in an effort to supplement the Bible, and "for further instruction of the people whom he found exceedingly ignorant, Luther produced in 1529 two catechisms, one for adults and one for children."¹

Luther set great store by the Catechism and declared: "The Catechism is the first and most important instruction for children. Catechization ought to be practiced diligently by every parent at home and by every pastor in the Church. No one can become master of the whole Catechism (note: he refers to the Large Catechism) and hence all the members of the church should continue to study it. Let no one be ashamed of it but adhere to it steadfastly, for it must remain and attain the ascendancy in the Church, though all earth and hell rage against it."²

The Small Catechism, written especially for children, "contained a most beautiful summary of Christian faith and duty wholly devoid of polemics of every kind and so simple and concise as to be easily understood and memorized by every child."³

It was through instruction and examination on the Catechism that Luther expected the church to rely for its specific religious instruction, and he counselled: "Sermons very little edify children who learn little thereby; it is more needful that they be taught and well instructed //

1. F.P.Graves, His. of Educ., Vol II. N.Y. 1916.

2. J.B.Remenenyder, The Lutheran Manual, Phila., 1916.

3. A.C.McGiffert, M.Luther, the man and his work, N.Y. 1910

in schools and at home that they be heard and examined what they have learned; this way profite much; 'tis very wearisome, but very necessary. The papists avoid such pains so that their children are neglected and forsaken." ¹

Luther's Catechism² has formed the basis of religious instruction for German youth even since. Though it was preceded by other catechisms, Luther's displaced them all because of its authorship and of its superlative merit. The versatility of the Reformer in adapting himself with such success to the needs of the young and immature is no less than extraordinary. Such a little book as this it is that reveals most clearly the genius of the man." ²

Luther prepared the Small Catechism for educational purposes. His preface to this catechism strongly insists on "the necessity of using precisely the same form of words and going over and over them again and again, until they are well committed to memory and well understood." ³

The Small Catechism is written in the usual question and answer form, and is divided into five parts, namely: I. The Ten Commandments, II. The Creed, III. The Lord's Prayer, IV. The Sacrament of Holy Baptism, V. The Sacrament of the Altar. Under the heading of each part Luther emphasizes the teaching aim of the Catechism by inscribing: "In the plain form in which the head of the family should teach them to his household." ⁴

The Large Catechism, which was the first one written, is a "continuous exposition rather than a catechism, and it is not divided into questions and answers; moreover it grew

1. Luther's Table Talk.

2. A.C. McGiffert, M. Luther, the man and his work, N.Y. 1910

3. Luther's Small Catechism, pub. by Lutheran Pub. Soc'y, Phila

4. Ibid.

so much under his hands that it became altogether unsuitable for the instruction of the young."¹ Hence the Small Catechism soon followed it.

It was the Small Catechism which had the greater educational influence. It was translated into Latin and Greek, and even into Hebrew and Syriac. It is said by Lutherans to have had a wider circulation than any other book except the Bible.² Thirty-seven years after its appearance Matthesius says it had reached a circulation of over 100,000 copies, quite an achievement in those days of hand presses and wide illiteracy.

Doctor Schaff comments on the Small Catechism as follows:³ "It marks an epoch in the history of religious instruction..... As it left far behind all former catechisms, it has in its own order of excellence and usefulness never been surpassed.... Luther himself wrote no better book excepting his translation of the Bible, and it (the Catechism) alone would have immortalized him as one of the great benefactors of the human race. Few books have elicited such enthusiastic praise, and even to this day such grateful admirers."

H. Luther's Apparent Coarseness and Indecency.

We wish to touch on a matter which has been for many people a stumbling block to a proper estimate of Luther's life and work. Perusal of Luther's Table Talk and his personal correspondence leave little to be desired if one is

1. Philip Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol I, N.Y. 1899

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

looking for coarse habits of speech which often border on the indecent to our modern way of thinking. It is often suggested that this looseness of expression can be but a reflection of personal conduct and attitudes.

If these charges are true then they are an unwelcome smirch on the career and influence of a man who posed as a God-led reformer in religion. Furthermore if the charges are true then we may question the theories on religion and education that came from a mind so polluted. If Luther was immoral in his thinking, his religious, educational and political doctrines could hardly have escaped taint.

However, if we can clear up these often heard accusations to our own satisfaction, it will free our minds of prejudice and we can appraise his educational theories without bias.

The Catholics find Luther's coarse, harsh expressions a stumbling block to their estimate of Luther. They admit they are not able to reconcile Luther's manner of expression with an alleged reformer, and this attitude is not without cause. Luther certainly went to extremes so that his best admirers are forced to overlook much. For instance there seems to be little of the spirit of brotherly love expressed in Luther's attitude at the time of the Peasant's Revolt when he sided with the land-lords and urged the princes "to smite, strangle, stab, secretly and publicly, for there is nothing more poisonous and derelict than a rebellious man."¹

But in judgement of Luther we must not lift him out of his environment. It is unjust to judge any man apart from his day and age. What passes as indecent today may have

1. W.K. Boyd, Polit. and Soc. Aspects of Luther's Message,
S. Atl. Quart., Vol 17, pp. 18-31, 1918, (Pub. Durham, N.C.)

been common talk in the past. Our standards vary in these things through succeeding generations.

In considering this question Heinrich Bohmen says ¹: "We must transport ourselves back 400 years and see that the tone at Luther's table and in his writings was not at all at variance with polite manners in Germany, France, England and Italy, in the society of the day." John Lord defends Luther on the grounds ²: "That age was prodigal in offensive epithets; kings and prelates and doctors alike used hard words. They are like angry women and children and pugilists. Their vocabulary of abuse is amusing and inexhaustible. See how prodigal Shakespeare and Ben Jonson are in the language of vituperation. They were all defiant and earnest, for the age was rough and earnest."

However, certain writers are ready to point out that not all 16th century writers descended to the language of the saloon and slum to express themselves cogently. Henry O'Conner, S.J. defies "anyone to lay his hands on a single unbecoming word in the letters and writings of Ignatius Loyola, the great Catholic reformer of the 16th century." ³

Furthermore O'Conner says ⁴: "I am glad of the opportunity thus afforded of publicly admitting the truth of the remark made to me in a friendly spirit by a Protestant author, viz., that in general the style of writing was incomparably coarser at Luther's time than it is at present. But while impartially conceding this much, I must distinctly assert that the degree of coarseness which we repeatedly come across in Luther's works is entirely incom-

1. Luther in the Light of Recent Research, N.Y. 1916.

2. Beacon Lights of History, Vol III N.Y. 1884.

3. Luther's own statements concerning his teaching and its results, N.Y. 1884.

4. Ibid.

patible with the spirit of a true reformer. Luther surpasses himself in vulgarity in his famous work "Against the Popery of Rome, instituted by the Devil", published one year previous to his death.... Even supposing Protestantism was right and the Catholic Church was wrong, such a book would be a lasting disgrace to any author."

Turning again to the other side, A.C. McGiffert and Lynn Harold Hough, both of whom have made intimate studies of the man, after admitting his imperfections, are inclined to be generous with the Reformer.

Doctor Hough speaks after this fashion: "Luther had the raw, crude qualities of the life out of which he came. He is sometimes amazingly coarse. And he indulges in a quality of speech which is quite inconceivable in our more reticent and restrained age. In thinking of this we must remember that the 16th century was not characterized by a chaste and delicate refinement. Shakespeare's plays when not expurgated startle us in quite the same fashion as does Luther."¹

Doctor McGiffert in his interpretation of Luther comments thus: "He was very human, this hero of ours, fiery tempered, passionate, imperious, lovable withal, warmhearted and generous to a fault. Full of contradictions, he had frankness and carelessness of genius, and what he was he showed, and what he thought he said without concealment or diplomacy."²

But what was Luther's own attitude? He realized his

1. A living book in a living age. N.Y. 1918.

2. Martin Luther, the man and his work, N.Y. 1910.

uncouthness and tried to pardon his bluntness : "I can easily cut a willow or a hazel wand with my trencher knife, but for a hard oak a man must use an axe." ¹ And on another occasion he wrote: "I am accustomed to use very severe language in my writing, in the pulpit and in the lecture room, but God knows that my heart is not bitter or envious, nor vindictive toward my enemies." ²

Moreover, Luther preached: "But some may say, one who is my enemy is also the enemy of God; for he doth many things that are ^{worse} displeasing to God, than they are impious to me; must I love him who is a transgressor and an evil person ? I answer, we are all transgressors, and do many things displeasing to God, but because my neighbor is evil is one reason why my love should be extended toward him. It is my duty to pray for him, and I may rebuke and admonish him through love, that he may repent and escape punishment. I must not be an enemy to him nor do him evil in any manner; for no profit would redound to me thereby, and I should certainly be made no better, but should make him worse." ³

Facing the question openly, therefore, we admit Luther's crudeness and rashness. However he was never lewd for its own sake, nor did he use indecorous phrases for mere amusement. His harsh terms were a means to end; he used them to drive home his points more forcibly. In it all he seems to have been quite unconscious of wrong and probably would have been greatly surprised to know that 20th century posterity should worry over his morals.

1. Symposium on Luther by Professors of Union/Theo. Seminary, N.Y. Nov. 1883.

2. J. Yutzy, M. Luther as Preacher, Luth. Quat. Vol 28, 1898.

3. Sermon on I Tim. 1:5-7. Pub. by R. Bentley in Selection of most celebrated sermons by Luther and Calvin, N.T. 1829.

I. Conclusion to Part Two.

This concludes our discussion of the channels through which Martin Luther's educational influence found expression. Our purpose has been to suggest the different aspects of his versatile career which served him as teaching media through which he reached his fellow Germans, his contemporary world, and posterity.

These events through which the Reformer passed formed a comprehensive canvas, and on it he sketched in bold outline using as a crayon his own insight and initiative. On this canvas, as a painter might alter an unsatisfactory landscape, Luther completely obliterated some existing conditions with one broad sweep; other features he changed by sketching in new suggestions that were completely new to his day and generation, and which today are beginning to be appreciated.

In the ensuing pages it shall be our purpose to analyze and appraise these special contributions of Martin Luther to the field of education.

III. LUTHER'S THEORY OF EDUCATION.

Introduction.

As has been suggested repeatedly in these pages, Luther never considered himself primarily an educator in the technical sense. As a reformer of religious faith he felt himself divinely called, but in the field of education it was a different matter. Realizing that the success of the reformation movement depended on a literate, intelligent laity, Luther was forced into the field of education.

As long as a people cannot read, the Bible is an unintelligible book; as long as the Bible is unintelligible, people are dependent on some one else for their content of belief; and this injection of a third person between the individual and God was the one thing against which Luther fought with determination. The "universal priesthood of believers" was a cardinal Reformation doctrine.

The fact that Luther was only secondarily an educator explains why there are extant so few of his written works devoted wholly to the educational problem. But the fact that Luther was interested mightily in education as a reenforcement to his religious movement explains why we find a great deal of Luther's speeches, conversations and written work containing suggestions which we can cull and arrange so as to get an adequate idea of his educational theories.

Aside from his explicit statements on education, there are certain aspects of Luther's ~~life~~ and work which implicitly

reveal his attitude toward educational theory and practice. Before taking up Luther's more definite, explicit statements on education, therefore, we shall consider his less definite, but nonetheless important influence which he had implicitly.

A. Luther's Theory of Education as Expressed Implicitly in His Life and Work.

1. The Importance of Duty Considering the Child.

Upon children Luther lavished great affection. "Luther stands alone of all public men in history for his tender sympathy with childhood."¹

Luther himself marvelled at the grip a child's love secured on his own life. When little Elizabeth, his second child died in infancy, he mourned: "My little daughter is dead. I am surprised how sick at heart she has left me..... I could not believe that a father's soul would have been so tender toward his child."²

A man who was thus responsive to child life would likely think of the child, as did Pestalozzi for instance, in the evolution of his educational theories. A modern child centered curriculum, while by no means fully anticipated by Luther, yet was in a measure foreshadowed by him in his desire to form a course of study always within reach of a child's intelligence.

F.V.N.Painter suggests that Luther was a firm believer in the necessity of adult instructors adapting themselves to the ways of children, illustrated by Luther's statement: "we must prattle with them (children) and enter into their play."³

1. J.B.Remensnyder, What the world owes Luther, N.Y. 1917.

2. Symposium on Luther by Professors of Union Theo.Seminary,

3. Luther on Education. Phila. 1882. Nov. 1883. N.Y.

How much he appreciated the value of childhood, and how he bewailed the current disregard for child personality is revealed by Luther's comment: "But the sad thing is that all of us live as though God gave us children for our own pleasure and amusement..... without any concern on our part as to what they learn or how they live. For there is no need so great as to be anxious about our children. For if we wish to have proper and excellent persons both for civil and ecclesiastical government, we must spare no diligence, time or cost in teaching and educating the children."¹ On another occasion Luther added: "Pilgrimages to Rome and Jerusalem are nothing in comparison with the right training of children, for that is the road to heaven."²

To say that because a man loves children he consequently achieves rank as a great educator is an unfounded assumption. However it cannot be gainsaid that any man who embarks into elementary education and hopes to make a contribution thereto has an invaluable asset if he estimates childhood at its true worth. Luther then, though he certainly could not have passed even an elementary examination in modern child psychology, had this basic, essential love for children. His whole private life is often explicit, and always implicit proof of this fact.

2. The Importance of the Family.

Closely allied to Luther's evaluation of childhood was his regard for family life. Wisely the Reformer asked: "What

1. Luther's Letter to Mayors and Aldermen of German Cities in Behalf of Christian Schools.
3. F.V.N.Painter, Luther on Education, Phila, 1889

is a city other than a collection of families? How can a city be well governed where there is no government in the family? ... Where now the families are badly governed, how can a whole district be well governed? ..For the son will become a father, judge, mayor, premier, king, emperor, preacher, schoolmaster; if he has been badly brought up, the subjects will become like their master, the members like the head." ¹

In this enlightened year of 1927 Luther's statement concerning the importance of family training sounds quite pertinent. The breakdown of modern family life is a problem perplexing educators today. It is a question whether the school can hope to undo and counteract the malevolent influence of the modern disorganized family with its lack of parental supervision and discipline.

Unquestionable Luther would not have hesitated to take present-day fathers and mothers to task for their parental negligence. There is need today for just the admonition he gave to the parents of his own generation when he urged: "Right training of children is a divine requirement. Parents are not free to do with their children as they please. They are entrusted with parental authority that they may train up their offspring for society and the church, and they are held in strict account for the manner in which they discharge their duty." ²

And what effect would the following statement have today? Would Luther be laughed to scorn on account of it, or would people ponder it seriously, when he said: "No one should be-

1. Luther's Letter to Mayors and Aldermen of German Cities in Behalf of Christian Schools.

2. Ibid.

come a father unless he is able to instruct his children in the Ten Commandments and in the gospel so that he may bring up true Christians. But many enter the state of matrimony who cannot say the Lord's Prayer, and knowing nothing themselves they were utterly incompetent to instruct their children." ¹

However, Luther did not stop with religious training and education as an argument for integrated family life. That the state too depends on family life is a sociological principle of which Luther was aware, and as we shall see later he acted definitely according to this principle.

B. Luther's Theory of Education as Expressed Explicitly in Speech and Writing.

1. Introductory.

There is a vast amount of material in our records of Luther's speeches and conversations and in his writings by which he either purposely or incidentally made suggestions concerning the aims, needs, methods and so forth of education.

Luther's Table Talk which Carlyle characterized as the "most interesting of all books proceeding from Luther" furnishes a fertile field for discovering the real Luther. Luther's extensive correspondence is another source to which one can refer frequently. In fact, the person interested in Luther as an educator can delve into almost any records of his life and work and the effort will not go unrewarded.

1. F.V.N.Painter, Luther on Educ., Phila., 1889.

3. Luther's Two Treatises on Education.

a. Letter to Mayors and Aldermen of all Cities of Germany in Behalf of Christian Schools.

There are two extant pamphlets which Luther wrote expressly to encourage education. The first of these appeared in 1524 as a letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of all the cities of Germany in behalf of Christian schools. In this message Luther touches upon a variety of interests.

The letter opens with a lament on the condition of the schools in Germany, blaming the parents for their lethargy and averring that "if they were deeply in earnest to secure the salvation and blessedness of their children they could not lose interest in education."

Thereupon Luther reminds Christians of their duty to educate the young, saying, "for the right instruction of youth is a matter in which Christ and all the world are concerned."

Luther then reminds his fellow Protestants that the state as well as the church is interested in intelligent men and women, hence the state has every right to support and control the schools. Says he: "The highest welfare, safety and power of a city consists in able, learned and wise and upright, cultivated citizens," and it naturally follows: "Since then a city must have well trained people we must see to it and spare no trouble or expense to educate and form them ourselves."

He then proceeds to suggest the type of curriculum necessary to a well rounded educational system. Detailed mention of these suggestions will be made when Luther's theories as to curriculum are considered. Suffice it to say that in his

"Letter" Luther advocates education for both boys and girls which would fit them for some later vocation.

The Letter concludes with a reference to "teachers who have known nothing themselves" which condition he blames on the lack of books except for "the senseless trash of the monks and sophists." He asks, "How could the teachers differ from the books they studied?" This question leads to an appeal for the establishment of libraries which in the first place should contain the Holy Scriptures in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, German and other languages. Then the best and most ancient commentators in German, Hebrew and Latin. In the second place "such books as are useful in acquiring the languages"; third, books of arts and sciences; and last, books on jurisprudence and medicine.

This Letter to Mayors and Aldermen is called "the most important educational treatise ever written."¹

b. Sermon on Duty of Sending Children to School.

In 1530 Luther circulated among the Protestant churches of Germany this sermon in pamphlet form to be read before all congregations. This Sermon is much longer than the Letter though it is not so broad in its scope.

There had been a falling away from the schools inasmuch as parents thought an education was unnecessary since the priesthood was in disfavor. Luther takes pains to make it clear that the Protestant church is dependent on an educated ministry, and he concludes by showing the benefits derived by secular government from an educated people.

1. F.V.N.Painter, History of Education, N.Y.1913.

The first of the two divisions of the sermon is titled "Spiritual Benefit or Injury Arising from the Support or Neglect of Schools". Luther opens by urging all people to "educate with your means and your labor a son who will become a pious Christian preacher..... There is no more precious treasure, no nobler thing on earth, than a pious, faithful pastor and preacher.... We must say that temporal peace — the greatest good on earth in which all other temporal blessings are comprehended — is really a fruit of the ministerial office."

Luther continues by showing the grandeur of the ministerial office, and how people should try to prepare sons for the ministry. But children are not to be trained exclusively for the church: "I do not mean that everyone is obliged to bring up children to such an office (ministry), for all boys are not to become pastors, preachers or schoolmasters; for it is well to know that the children of lords and nobles are to be thus employed, since society needs them for secular authority and social order."

The great need for educated churchmen is pointed out: Consider for yourselves how many pastorates, schools and other offices are daily becoming vacant..... I should like to know where in three years we are to get pastors, teachers and sextons? If we remain idle, and if the princes in particular do not see to it that both preparatory schools and universities are properly maintained there will be such a want of educated persons that three or four cities will have to be assigned one pastor."

The second division of the Sermon concerns itself with "Temporal Benefit or Injury arising from the Support or Neglect of Schools". A firm believer ⁱⁿ ~~of~~ civil government, Luther writes: "Since then it is certain that civil government is a divine ordinance, an office and institution necessary for man in the present life, who will maintain it except us men to whom God has committed it?"

Fathers are urged to prepare their sons for government service: "For great works can your son do, and such a useful person he become if you direct him to the civil service and send him to school." And Luther even goes so far as to announce as traitorous the practice of withholding boys from school: "Now if you have a son capable of learning; if you can send him to school, but do not do it, and go your way asking nothing about temporal government, law, peace and so on; you are to the extent of your ability opposing civil authority like the Turk, yea, like the devil himself."

Moreover, according to Luther, education has great compensations through broader contacts and experience. This is emphasized: "I will not speak of the pleasure a scholar has, apart from any office, in that he can read at home all kinds of books, talk and associate with learned men, and travel and transact business in foreign lands. For this pleasure, perhaps, will move few; but since you are seeking Mammon and worldly possessions, consider what great opportunities God has provided for schools and scholars Behold emperors and kings must have chancellors, secretaries, counsellors, jurist and scholars"

Quite a democratic spirit is reflected in part of the Sermon where Luther suggests: "Without anxiety then, let your son study, and if he should have to beg bread for a time, you give our God material out of which he can make a lord. It will remain true that your son^f and mine, that is to say the children of the common people, will rule the world, both in spiritual and secular stations."

But the whole responsibility of compelling children to attend school does not rest with the parents, for Luther assures them: "I maintain that the civil authorities are under obligation to compel the people to send their children to school, especially such as are promising ..."

Thus Luther took his stand on education. Who can doubt his whole hearted interest and devotion to the cause of training and instructing the younger generation?

3. Luther's Appreciation of the Need of Education.

The Need in Germany

Luther had a realization of the need of education thrust upon him. During the first quarter of the 16th century learning had fallen into contempt for many causes; the principle reason was that learning had so far outgrown the schools that people no longer had respect for either the method or content of the educational system.¹ In his "Letter to Mayors and Alderman" Luther recognized that "throughout Germany the schools are declining, the universities becoming weak, and the cloisters ruined."

On one occasion after the Reformation was underway, Luther and his aide, Melancthon, went on a tour of inspection

1. cf. P. Smith, *Life & Letters of M. Luther*, N.Y. 1911.

to look into the actual state of affairs in the schools of Germany. They found conditions very disheartening. Many of the teachers were priests who had not broken ^{with} the Roman Church; many of the instructors were ignorant, one or two not knowing the Ten Commandments or the Lord's Prayer.

This disorganized system, or rather lack of system, brought Luther face to face with the problem either of seeing his beloved Germany and his cherished Reformation movement wrecked on rocks of ignorance, or of getting behind a vigorous educational program which would enable the masses as well as the elite to receive at least the rudiments of learning. "It will be an evil day, said he, "when her (Germany's) schools are permitted to decay, or if they should ever be neglected or despised." ¹

As for the place of education in the progress of the Reformation, it resolved itself into the question of the impossibility of forcing through reforms as long as people were too ignorant to appreciate or want them." ²

b. Need of Education as Mentioned in Luther's "Sermon".

In his "Sermon on the Duty of Sending Children to School" Luther bears in mind the two-fold temporal and spiritual need of education. He wrote: "God needs pastors, preachers, school teachers in his spiritual kingdom and who can provide them? If you do not, you do not rob a poor man of his coat, but the Kingdom of God of many souls. In secular government you can serve your country better by training children than by building castles and cities.... for what good can these do without learned, wise and pious people?"

1. M. Michelet, Life of Luther (as written by himself) London 1888

2. P. Smith, Life and letters of M. Luther, N.Y. 1911.

a. The Need of Education as Mentioned in Luther's "Letter".

In the Letter to Mayors and Aldermen Luther considers the need for education under the following points.

(1) The Danger of Ignorance.

"People fear the Turks, wars and floods, for in such matters they can see what is injurious or beneficial; but what the devil has in mind no one sees or hears. Yet where we would give a florin to defend ourselves against the Turk, we should give a hundred florins to protect against ignorance, even if only one boy could be taught to be a truly Christian man; for the good such a man can accomplish is beyond all computation."

(2) Sin of Neglecting Education.

"...what would it avail if we possessed and performed all else, and became perfect saints, if we neglect that for which we chiefly live, namely, to care for the young? In my judgment there is no other outward offense that in the sight of God so heavily burdens the world, and deserves such heavy chastisement, as the neglect to educate children."

(3) Education Must Do What parents Neglect.

"Parents neglect this duty from various causes. In the first place there are some who lack piety, so they harden themselves against their offspring and do nothing for them. In the second place, the great majority of parents are unqualified for it, and do not understand how children should be taught and brought up. In the third place, even if parents were qualified and willing to do it themselves, yet on

account of other employments and duties, they have to time for it. So necessity requires that we have teachers for public schools."

(4) Civic Need for Education.

"Now the welfare of a city does not consist alone in great treasure,..... but the highest welfare, safety and power of a city consist in able, learned, wise, upright, cultivated citizens, who can secure, preserve, and utilize every treasure and advantage.

"Since then a city must have well trained people and since the greatest need, lack and lament is that such are not to be found, we must not wait until they grow up of themselves; neither can they be hewn out of stone or cut out of wood; nor will God work miracles so long as men can attain their object through means within their reach. Therefore we must see to it, and spare no trouble or expense to educate and form them ourselves."

(5) Laity Need Education as Well as Clergy.

"I am ashamed of Christians who are such blockheads and brutes that they can say: 'Pray what is the use of schools if one is not to become a priest? Yet we ought to know how necessary and useful a thing it is and how acceptable to God when a prince, lord, counsel, or other ruler is well trained and skillful in discharging in a Christian way the function of his office."

The above plainly indicates Luther's lack of sympathy with the current view that while education was all very well for those entering the church, the rank and file had little need for schooling. On this point Luther stood firmly

throughout his career. He ever championed the right of the common man to the opportunities of education.

d. Need of an Educational System to Replace the Monastic Schools.

In modern times we must not condemn indiscriminately the educational system of mediaeval Catholicism. To the Church of Rome the world owes a debt for its part in preserving the spark of learning that was to burst forth in the Revival of Learning and the Reformation.

But at the time of the Reformation, as had been the condition for many years before, most of the schools had dropped into formal, decadent ways so that Roman Catholic youth fared ill in striving to gain a coveted schooling in the church institutions of learning. Luther bitterly condemned the monastic schools with his accustomed imprecations: "For the monks have imprisoned the youth whom they have had in charge, as men put birds in a dark cage, so they could neither see nor converse with any one. But it is dangerous for youth to be thus alone, thus debarred from social intercourse. Wherefore we ought to permit young people to see and hear and know what is taking place around them in the world, yet so that you hold them under discipline and teach them self-respect. Your monkish strictness is never productive of any good fruit. It is an excellent thing for a young man to be frequently in society of others; yet he must be honorably trained to adhere to the principles of integrity, and virtue, and to shun the contamination of vice. This

monkish tyranny is moreover an absolute injury to the young, for they stand in quite as much need of pleasure and recreation as of eating and drinking; their health too will be firmer and the more vigorous by this means." ¹

e. Need of Education for a Better Understanding of the Bible

We have already touched on the close relation which existed between the Bible, which Luther placed in the hands of the common man, and education, which enabled the common man to read the Book. Thus an interest in education was at the heart of Protestantism, and everything which can contribute to the understanding of the Bible must be promoted to assure an enlightened Protestantism.

Luther expressed the need of understanding how to read the Bible in the charming words: "language is the scabbard in which the word of God is sheathed; the casket in which the jewel is enshrined; the cask in which this wine is kept; the chamber in which this food is stored." ²

4. The Aim of Education as Luther Saw It.

a. Introduction.

With Luther education was not an end in itself. Learning for its cultural value was not in Luther's mind when he advocated extensive educational reforms. Rather, Luther had a quite utilitarian view of education — education was a means to an end, and that end was two-fold: first, better Christians, and second, better citizens.

1. Paul Monroe, Textbook in Hist. Educ., N.Y. 1906

2. cf. R. M'Cheyne Edgar, The Genius of Protestantism, London 1900

b. Religious Aim of Education.

Says Levi Seeley: "Luther's watchword was, 'Make the people acquainted with the Word of God'. But the Bible was useless unless people could read, therefore Luther set to work to improve the schools."¹

This statement is brief and to the point, and it sums up the close relation which Luther's high regard for Bible as a sine qua non of Christian faith had to his interest in education. Placing the individual's contact with his God, not through sacerdotalism, but through an understanding of the Scriptures, at the center of Protestantism it followed as the night the day that the individual must be able to read and correctly interpret the Bible. This led logically to a desire for education for the masses.

c. Civic Aim of Education.

But Luther did not stop with the religious motive for education. He saw in education a civic purpose also. As we have already noted he expressly states in his "Letter" "the highest welfare, safety and power of a city consist in able, learned, wise, upright, cultivated citizens ... we must see to it, and spare no trouble or expense to educate and form them..."

5. Luther's Educational Methods.

a. Introduction.

It would be inaccurate to assert that Luther had a carefully wrought out theory of educational method. We can,

1. Hist. Educ. N.Y. 1899.

however, by culling here and there gain a knowledge of certain fundamentals of pedagogy of which Luther was aware.

We must remember that Luther was no mean teacher. His success at the University of Wittenberg testified to that. Furthermore, Luther was a lover of children. With two such qualifications with which to start, an educational method of some value is likely to ensue even though a well developed psychology and philosophy of education may be altogether lacking.

b. Simplicity in teaching.

"Let no man think himself too wise. When Christ taught men he became a child. If we are to teach children we must become childlike." ¹ Again he admonished in the Preface to his Large Catechism: "since we are preaching to children we must prattle with them."

In standing as an exponent of simplicity in education Luther foreshadowed the later innovators such as Pestalozzi and Froebel with their nicely developed theory and practice of adapting method and material to the child's level of understanding.

With Luther and the Reformation keener regard for individuality was given impetus. Such regard for individuality transferred into the realm of education quite naturally placed the child, the pupil, in the spotlight of attention. And once the child rather than the curriculum was regarded as the center of educational procedure, it followed that simple methods

1. F.V.W.Painter, Luther on Education, Phila, 1889.

which the child could comprehend would be brought into play. Martin Luther can be accredited, therefore, with the modern idea of simplicity in curricula for children,

c. Repetition.

Another modern principle of education which Luther understood was the importance of repetition. In his preface to the Small Catechism, Luther says: "Let the preacher take care to avoid changes and variations in the wording of the Ten Commandments etc. for the young and inexperienced cannot be instructed unless we adhere to the same text or the same forms of expression." He goes on to say, "in teaching children, use simplicity and repetition."

How similar to this was Ratich's theory 100 years later when he advocated: "Teach only one thing at a time, and often repeat the same thing." ¹

Modern educators recognize the importance of repetition in learning. Dr. Herman Harrell Horne says ²: "if necessary deepen the impression by repetition. This is like wearing out a plain path through a virgin meadow by much travel." Likewise Dr. E.L. Thorndike sums up under the Law of Exercise the importance of repetition stating that the repeated use of neural connections strengthens the connections and aids memory. ³

Repetition with Luther may have meant little more than learning by rote, a mechanical process. To him it certainly did not have the full modern meaning of an "aid to compre-

1. F.V.W. Painter, Luther on Education, Phila., 1889

2. Psychological Principles of Educ., N.Y. 1910.

3. Educational Psychology, Vol I (Orig. Nat. of Man) N.Y. 1913.

hension, judicious, ... and increasingly acquisitive." ¹
 However, the Reformer had insight enough to understand the importance of this principle even though his theory may have fallen short judged by modern standards.

d. Luther's Belief in Observation.

Great credit is ~~ascribed~~^{given} the educators of the 18th century for originating the practice of teaching through observation, and for having given genesis to the idea of instructing children by experience and observation rather than by abstract statements and words. From them emphasis on observation and experience as a method of teaching has come down to us.

But 200 years earlier in a more or less degree Luther foreshadowed the theory of observation which his predecessors brought into full realization. For instance, Luther attacked the practice of studying nature, not from observation of nature itself, but from books, many of which had come down from the Greeks. The revival of interest in nature was hailed by the Reformer: "We are at the dawn of a new era for we are beginning to recover a knowledge of the outside world.... Erasmus is indifferent. He does not know how a fruit is developed from the germ. ... Erasmus passes by all and takes not account of it, and looks on external objects as a cow looks upon a new gate."

Likewise, Luther seems to have in a degree shared the view-point of the sense-realists who followed him when he said: "Things are our teachers. He who does not know things

1. H.H.Horne, Psychol. Principles of Educ., N.Y. 1910.

is unable to draw forth the sense of words....I have explained more texts through the knowledge of things than through the knowledge of grammar. If lawyers did not know things no one would understand their words. Wherefore it is the study of things that achieves results." ¹

e. Luther's Suggested Method of Study.

In considering Luther's educational method it is well to note the suggestions he had to make in presenting a method of study. In the Preface to an early edition of his Bible, Luther takes pains to note certain points to be kept in mind in studying the Scriptures.

We give below Luther's "Instruction on How to Read the Holy Bible". In the parentheses will be found our own attempt to name the principle which Luther is evidently commending.

1. (Clarity of thought) Implore God for enlightening grace.
 2. (Openmindedness) He should bring to it (study) a mind free from all notions or affections which he may previously have entertained or encouraged.
 3. (Consideration of background.) He should diligently consider, especially at the commencement of each Bible work, the occasion, time, persons, and other circumstances; nay even the title of the work itself; and therefore not read it in a cursory manner, but make it a matter of subsequent reflection.
 4. (Consideration of context) He should examine, not merely the objects of the chapters, but of the books taken as a whole and should generally consider the points to which I have alluded, reading them attentively and repeatedly; for nothing contributes more to the acquisition of a clear and intelligible meaning than a knowledge of the object.
 5. (Study relationship of portion studied.) He should look to the special object of the chapter or section and attend to the context as it connects and illustrates
1. Conversations with Luther, Trans. by P. Smith and H.P. Gallinger, Boston, 1915.

both what precedes and what follows; and this it is obvious requires thought and care.

6. (Care to avoid "reading into" the passage) We should not lightly deviate from the literal meaning of the words, particularly in matters of history and in cases of doctrine.
7. (Be sure to ascertain original meaning of words.) We have likewise to consider that the language in which the Holy Scriptures have been written has its own peculiar instruction; and that consequently individual words, as well as collective idioms, must be separated and solicitously examined.
8. (Care to avoid misinterpretation.) When a word in a discourse or narrative is clear and simple we need not go beyond the obvious meaning and subject the Scriptures to the imputation of darkness and difficulty.
9. (Careful comparison for sake of clarity.) Obscure, perspicuous passages, when they both related to the same object, should be compared.
10. (Careful comparison of obscure passages aids in interpretation of the whole.) At the same time corresponding words and idioms taken in their literal sense may by their connection with the context shed much light upon the subject.

f. Summary of Luther's Educational Methods.

We discover that Luther foreshadowed a new age in education. To read into Luther's concepts all that is meant today is out of place, to be sure. He merely touched on the border of the field of educational practice; he did not explore to any extent.

Certain other theories of modern education, such as education for girls, universal education, state support and control, were advocated by Luther also. These will be considered in subsequent sections of this paper.

1. The Preface to the Early Editions of Martin Luther's Bible, Edited by T.A. Readwin, London, 1863.

8. The Place of Discipline in Education.

Modern education which tends to rule out physical punishment altogether as a means of discipline goes much further than Luther would have been willing to go. However, Luther was ahead of common practice in his day when he suggested that severity be tempered with kindness.

In his boyhood, it will be remembered, he was whipped 15 times in a single morning, so he knew whereof he spoke when later he complained: "It is a miserable thing when on account of severe punishments children learn to dislike parents, or pupils learn to dislike teachers." ¹

But the stern Reformer was not willing to completely abolish physical punishment as a means of discipline. "We must whip children, but we must love them," he declared, ² and again he said: "It is better not to spare the rod with children even from the very cradle, than to let them grow up without any punishment at all; it is pure mercy to young folks to bend their wills, even though it costs labor and trouble and leads to threats and blows." ³

But not all modern educators rule out punishment entirely, though the beatings and whippings of yore none ~~would~~ would countenance today. Dr. H.H. Horne submits his view: "The painful sensations and discomforting feelings are occasionally really necessary in the modern school, but they are there as incidental, not as regular experiences, and as corrective and reformative, not vindictive or even retributive." ⁴

1. Henry Eyster Jacobs, Martin Luther, N.Y. 1898

2. W. Carlos Martin, Life and times of M. Luther, N.Y. 1866.

3. Julius Kostlin, Life of Luther, (trans. from German) London 1883

4. Psychological Principles of Education, N.Y. 1910.

Evidently Luther was aware of the folly of trying to coerce learning under threat of blows, judging from his statement: "For what must only be forced with rods and blows will have no good results, for at farthest under such treatment children will remain godly no longer than the rod descends on their backs."¹

7. The Importance of the Teacher in Luther's Estimation.

The history of education reveals that a high regard for education is accompanied by a high regard for the teacher. This is a natural event, and it was true in Luther's case.

The average teacher in the average school of the early 16th century was far from an estimable character. Knowledge either of pupil or teaching material was rare. The teacher's task consisted in the main of pounding formalized knowledge into the victim. This low function of the teacher was the natural accompaniment of the low estate to which learning had fallen during that time.

Luther, with his esteem for education, held a correspondingly high regard for the teacher and his place in society. "Where would preachers, lawyers, physicians come from," he asked, "if the liberal arts were not taught?.... No one can ever sufficiently remunerate the industrious and pious teacher that faithfully educates children."²

Luther realized, moreover, that good teachers do not spring up out of the ground like mushrooms. He knew how much poor teaching was due to poor training and preparation, and this lack of training he attributed to a scarcity of good books of which teachers could avail themselves. "Everywhere we have

1. Preface to Luther's Large Catechism.

2. F.V.N. Painter, History of Education, N.Y. 1903.

had such teachers," he pointed out, "who have been able to teach nothing useful. How is it come about? No books have been available, and how could the teachers and pupils differ from the books they studied? A jackdaw does not hatch a dove, nor a fool make a wise man." ¹

Recognizing the value of books, Luther came forward with definite suggestions as to what he considered essential for the 16th century teacher's "Five-Foot Shelf".

"In the first place a library should contain the Holy Scriptures in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, German and other languages. Then the best and most ancient commentators in Greek, Hebrew and Latin.

"Secondly, such books as are useful in acquiring the languages, as the poets and orators, without considering whether they are heathen or Christians, Greek, or Latin, for it is from such works that grammar must be learned.

"Thirdly, books treating of all the arts and sciences.

"Lastly, books on jurisprudence and medicine, though here discrimination is necessary.

"A prominent place should be given to chronicles and histories in whatever languages they may be obtained; for they are wonderfully useful in understanding the course of the world and in disclosing the marvellous works of God," ²

1. F.V.N.Painter, Great Pedagogical Essays, N.Y. 1905.

2. Luther's Letter to Mayors and Aldermen of All German Cities on the Importance of Christian Schools.

8. The Curriculum as Formulated by Luther.

a. Introduction.

Luther's interest in the curriculum lay not so much in revolutionizing it as in the addition of certain subjects and in the teaching of old subject matter in new relationships.

The subjects which Luther suggested as suitable additions to the ordinary curriculum were history and gymnastics. As to the readjusting of old relationships in the curriculum, we should expect Luther to stand for a central place given to the Bible. Also he advised the teaching of history and the classics from a social and practical point of view, and not simply as cultural.

b. Central Place Given to the Bible.

Luther advised ¹: "... in schools the Bible should be supreme and other works duly subordinated". He further urges that "each city should have schools for boys and girls where the gospel should be read to them either in Latin or German." ²

F.P.Graves quotes Luther as saying: "Where the Holy Scriptures are not the rule, I would advise no one to send a child." ³

Considering that ability to read and interpret the Bible was Luther's primary purpose in education, it is not surprising to find him strongly advocating a Biblio-centric curriculum.

1. Luther's Letter to Mayors and Alderman of All German Cities in Behalf of Christian Schools.
2. Ibid.
3. History of Education, Vol I., N.Y. 1916.

c. The Place Given to Classical Languages.

Enthusiastic as he was for the Scriptures, Luther had no desire to exclude other elements from the curriculum or in any way to minimize their importance.

He regarded the liberal arts and languages as necessary embellishments to equip a well educated man. Said he: "You say again if we shall and must have schools, what is the use to teach Latin, Greek, Hebrew and other liberal arts? Is it not enough to teach the Scriptures which are necessary to salvation in the mother tongue? ... To which I answer ... but why do we not say: of what use to us are silk, wine, spice and other foreign articles, since we have in abundance wine, corn, wool, flax and wood in the German states, not only for necessities, but also for embellishments." ¹

Graves² remarks that Luther was interested in the humanities only for the sake of the light they could throw on the Scriptures, and this is right in line with what Luther himself advanced as a reason for studying Greek and Hebrew: "It is foolish to attempt to learn the Scriptures through the comments of the fathers and the study of many books and glosses. For that purpose we ought to give ourselves to the study of the languages. For the beloved fathers, because they were not versed in the languages have often failed in spite of their verbose expositions to give the meaning of the text. You peruse their writings with great toil, and yet with a knowledge of the languages you can get the meaning of the Scriptures better than they do." ³

1. Luther's Letter to Mayors and Aldermen.

2. F.P.Graves, History of Educ. Vol II, N.Y. 1916.

3. of. F.V.W.Painter, Luther on Education, Phila., 1889.

d. Certain Additions to the Usual Curriculum(1) History.

Luther advised the study of history not only for the sake of illustrating moral truth, as was common with the Humanists, but also to understand social institutions as well.¹ His broad conception of the subject is shown by his statement: "When you consider the matter, it is from history as from a living fountain that have flowed all laws, sciences, counsel, warning, threatening, comfort, strength, virtue, foresight, knowledge, wisdom, and all the virtues; that is to say, history is nothing else than an indication, recollection, and monument of divine works and judgements, showing how God maintains, governs, hinders, advances, punishes, and honors men according as each one has deserved good or evil."²

We have noticed in Luther's "Letter"³ his advice: "...a prominent place should be given to chronicles and histories, in whatever language they may be obtained, for they are wonderfully useful in understanding the course of the world, and in disclosing the marvellous works of God."

The Reformer regretted the lack of history in his own education: "How sorry I am that I did not read more poetry and history and that they were not taught me. Instead of them I had to spend my time on devil's filth, the philosophers and sophists, with great labor and damage so that I had enough to get rid of."⁴

1. cf. F.P.Graves, Hist. of Educ. Vol II, N.Y. 1916.

2. F.V.N.Painter, Luther on Educ., Phila., 1889

3. Luther's Letter to Mayors and Aldermen of All German Cities in Behalf of Christian Schools.

4. cf. A.C.McGiffert, M.Luther, the man and his work, N.Y. 1910

(2) Nature Study.

Perceiving the fallacy of studying nature exclusively from books when the world immediately at hand furnished an unlimited laboratory, Luther stood for nature study in school, because "we recognize in the most delicate flower the wonders of divine goodness and omnipotence. We see in his creatures the power of His Word."

e. Luther's Opinion of Astronomy.

Luther had great regard for the study of astronomy. He found a true command in Genesis 15:15 in the words: "And He brought him forth abroad and said, Look now toward heaven and number the stars if thou be able to number them."¹

The Reformer was amazed at the knowledge disclosing the rapid movement of the universe, whereby he ventured the opinion that "every moment the whole firmament moves swiftly around thousand of leagues, which is doubtless due to some angel."² Repeatedly he expressed his delight with astronomy, but as for astrology, "... 'tis nothing" he said,³ and he was heard to remark, "No one will persuade me, neither Paul, not an angel from heaven, nor even Melancthon, to believe in the predictions of astrology which are mistaken so many times that nothing is more unreliable."⁴

f. Music in the Curriculum.

"Music is a noble gift of God, next to theology," said Luther, "and I would not change my little knowledge of music for a great deal."

1. Luther's Table Talk.

2. Ibid,

3. Ibid.

4. cf. F.V.N.Painter, Luther on Educ., Phila, 1889.

With this fondness for music, added to which was a native musical ability, Luther was able to appreciate music's physiological and psychological values, although he did not think of it in those terms. He recognized music as a means of "driving away all care and melancholy from the heart;"¹ and how closely related to the modern educational psychologist's view of music is Luther's opinion that music is a "good antidote against temptation and evil thoughts,"² and that "music is a semi-disciplinarian and schoolmaster; it makes man more gentle and tender hearted, more modest and discreet."³

Luther urged that music have a place in every school, and he advised: "We must teach music in the schools; a schoolmaster ought to have skill in music, or I would not regard him; neither should we ordain young men as preachers unless they have been well exercised in music."⁴

Perhaps it is Luther's appreciation of music that explains the difference which the Reformation had on music in Germany and Scotland. In Germany the Reformation fostered music, whereas "in Scotland the Reformation dealt such a blow to the humanizing art of music ... that the legislature of Glasgow had to pass a special act with a view to reviving it, and from 1669 to 1691, that large city was altogether destitute of a teacher of music."⁵

1. F.P.Graves, Hist. of Educ., Vol II, N.Y. 1918.

2. of. F.V.N.Painter, Luther on Educ., Phila, 1889.

3. Ibid

4. Luther's Table Talk.

5. Geo.Fielder, Luther's Views and Influence on Schools and Education, Mod. Quat.of Lang. and Liter. Vol I, 1898, London.

g. The Place of Gymnastics in the Curriculum.

In Luther's day gymnastics were quite unknown to the average school. A few of the earlier educators, such as Vittorino of Mantua, had paid attention to the physical development of pupils, but on the whole since the time of the early Greeks and Romans, little particular attention had been accorded gymnastics as a part of education.

Today a sound mind in a sound body is a recognized principle, but for Luther the inclusion of exercise as a part of schooling was an innovation. His inclusion of physical exercise as a part of education was his consistent with his belief that the practice of gymnastics prevented pupils from falling "into revelling, unchastity, intemperance and gaming," and when he said that exercise produces/ "elasticity of body and preserves health." ¹

h. Luther's Foreshadowing of Modern Cooperative and Continuation Schools.

One of the most helpful contributions of modern educators has been the establishment of cooperative and continuation schools, thus enabling boys and girls, who early are forced into wage-earning, to receive the same educational preparation eventually as the more fortunate pupils who are able to spend full time in school.

In advocating universal, compulsory education Luther met the same opposition that modern educators must meet. Certain parents felt that they could not spare their children from labor at home, in the field, or at the apprentice's bench.

1. cf. F.V.N.Painter, Luther on Education, Philadelphia, 1889.

In his "Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen" Luther meets these objectors by making certain definite proposals which are suggestive of present day schemes. Luther wrote: "But you say, who can do without his children and bring them up in this matter to be gentlemen? It is not my idea that we should establish schools as they have been heretofore, where a boy studies Donatus or Alexander for 20 or 30 years and yet has learned nothing. The world has changed and things go differently. My idea is that boys should spend an hour or two a day in school, and the rest of the time work at home, learn some trade, or do whatever is desired so that study and work may go on together, while the children are young and can attend to both. They now spend two-fold as much time in shooting with crossbows, playing ball, running and tumbling about.

"In like manner a girl has time to go to school an hour a day, and yet attend to her work at home, for she sleeps, dances and plays away more than that. The real difficulty is found in the lack of earnest desire to educate the young and to aid and benefit mankind with accomplished citizens." ¹

1. Summary of Luther's Curriculum.

Recapitulating Luther's idea of a curriculum we discover that he placed the Bible as central and fundamental to any system of education; he believed in the classics as having cultural and disciplinary value; history should be included and taught chiefly from a religious point of view, but not

1. Luther's Letter to Mayors and Aldermen.

so as to wholly exclude the practical and social applications; the study of astronomy was to be included for the sake of revealing God, and because of the astounding wonders of the universe it included; music was good for the soul, and contributed to the character of pupils; exercise through gymnastics was an innovation; moreover, Luther suggested a plan whereby boys and girls who could not spend full time in school were able to cooperate with the home and study and work at the same time.

9. Education for Girls.

Occasionally in the trend of ancient and mediaeval education women and girls were included in the educational system, but usually education was provided only for men.

Wherever the home plays an important role in society the worth of woman is recognized. Protestantism stressed the importance of home life with its consequent training, necessarily therefore importance was laid on the education of girls.

Luther called the family, the church and the state, the three hierarchies established by God. Family government, in the Reformer's estimation, is the basis for all good civil government and where the root is bad, the trunk and fruit cannot be good.

Then too, Luther was interested in the education of women for their own sake, and though he did say that "there is no gown or garment that worse becomes a woman than when she will be wise,"¹ nevertheless he maintained "he who

1. Luther's Table Talk.

insults preachers and women will never meet with much success. Whoever condemns them, condemns alike God and man." ¹

Luther went so far as to urge the appointment of female teachers: "In the school regulations drawn up for the little town of Leisenig, Saxony, he exhorted the magistrates to appoint not only male teachers, but also female teachers who should teach girls to read and write and understand their own language, and bring them up in virtue, honor, and godly discipline. This is, as far as we know, the first time that we hear of female teachers in the public schools." ²

Again Luther said: "The world has need of educated men and women to the end that the men may govern the country properly, and that the women may properly bring up their children, care for their domestics, and direct the affairs of their families." ³ To this end he urged: "would to God each town had also a girls' school in which girls might be taught the gospel for an hour daily." ⁴

10. Luther's Desire for Universal Education.

a. Elementary and Grammar Schools.

Neither Luther's theology nor his educational policies left any doubt but that he was no respecter of persons. Just as all classes of men and women could find God through the Scriptures, so he believed that all classes stood in need of education of some kind or other.

"One great educational influence of the Reformation was the establishment of a system of schools based on the idea

1. M. Michelet, Life of Luther (written by himself) London 1888
2. Geo. Fielder, Luther's Views and Influence on Schools and Educ. Mod. Quat. of Lang. and Liter. Vol I, 1898, London
3. Paul Monroe, Textbook on Hist. of Educ., N.Y. 1906
4. of. Luther's Letter to Mayors and Aldermen.

of universal education. The basis of universal education was the Reformation doctrine that eternal welfare for each individual depended on the application of his or her own reason to the revelation contained in the Scriptures." ¹

To care for the education of children of both sexes of all ages in all ranks of society, which is ~~characterized~~ ^{characterized} as a "remarkable advance" ², Luther favored a system of schools for the common people ~~which~~ such as have already been described as to curriculum, method, and ~~character~~ ^a of teachers.

Moreover, Luther favored such a school system as took form in the Saxony Plan which was prepared originally by Melancthon and revised with Luther's collaboration. The Saxony Plan drawn up in 1528 was the first state school system in history since the time of the ancients, and the Saxony Plan was the basis for educational reform in other cities and provinces which "called for a religious and elementary training for the children of the common people in every village." ³

b. Universities.

In addition to the Latin schools, such as provided for in the Saxony Plan, Luther was interested in the universities which he wanted reformed as to curriculum and method of instruction.

We quote from two letters of Luther's in which he manifests his interest in the universities. In the first letter he asserts the general importance which he attaches to university education: "It were a pity if such as school (Wittenberg University) were to go down and if when men are needed

1. Paul Monroe, Textbook on Hist. of Educ., N.Y. 1906.

2. Ibid.

3. F.P. Graves, Student's Hist. of Educ., N.Y. 1926

tary studies do not accomplish this, but common studies do, for where many are together one gives the other incentive and example.

" it is well that in all your towns and villages good primary schools should be established out of which could be chosen those who are fit for the universities out of which can then be taken the men who are to serve your land and people.

"If some of the scholars who are trained in these schools take service and hold office in the dominions of other princes, and the objection is made that you are training people for other lords, it must be remembered that ~~this~~ does no harm, for beyond a doubt these men will promote the founding and endowing of schools in the lands of other princes and peoples." ¹

11. Luther's Opinion as to the State's Interest in Education.

Luther took an advanced step in advocating that the State had an interest in education. The church and the school had been inseparable for so long a time that the idea that the state should interest itself in education and make itself financially responsible for the schools and compel attendance was quite startling.

Luther felt strongly that it was the duty of civic authorities to insist that each child have at least an elementary training and in this way the tendency toward universal, free, and compulsory received stimulus.

In our own day we stand for free, compulsory education because of the feeling that if democracy is to endure, then the people who are the rulers themselves must be able to govern intelligently. This truth which is self-evident today was foreseen and felt by the Reformer of the 16th century. #
1. Letter, Luther to Margrave George of Brandenburg, from Wittenberg, July 18, 1529.

In both his leading treatises on education¹, Luther took up the question of the state's vital interest in providing schools and in compelling attendance. In the "Sermon" Luther included the following statement: "I hold it incumbent on those in authority to command their subjects to keep their children in school; for it is their duty to insure the permanence of the schools, so that preachers, jurists, curators, scribes, physicians and schoolmasters and the like may not fail from among us. If they (those in authority) have the right to command their subjects in time of war, to handle the musket and pike how much the more reason ought they compel the people to keep their children in school, inasmuch as here upon the earth the most terrible contest is going on, with the devil himself.... Wherefore let magistrates lay these things to heart, and let them keep a vigilant look-out; and wherever they see a promising lad, have him pledged at school."

Prior to this in the "Letter" (1524) Luther urged the importance of the state taking interest in youth. He pointed out that education was a/matter of wide importance: "For the right instruction of youth is a matter in which Christ and all the world are concerned..... If we must annually spend large sums on muskets, roads, dams, etc., to have temporal peace and comfort, why should we not apply as much to our poor, neglected youth in order that we may have a skillful schoolmaster or two?"

In another portion of the "Letter" Luther pleads for the state to care for education to insure its own self-preservation: "Even if there were not a soul, and men did not need

1. Sermon on Duty of Sending Children to School (1530).
Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of All German Cities in
Behalf of Christian Schools (1524).

schools for the sake of Christianity and the Scriptures, still for the establishment of the best schools everywhere, both for boys and for girls, this consideration is sufficient, namely that society for the maintenance of civil order and the proper regulation of the household needs accomplished and well trained men and women."

On another occasion Luther wrote to the Elector Frederick concerning education. In this letter the Reformer states frankly his opinions on both the state's obligations to support schools and on the state's right to compel attendance. "Since all of us, particularly the rulers are commanded above all else to educate the young, who are born daily and are growing up among us, and to keep them in order and in the fear of God, schools and preachers and pastors are necessary. If the parents won't see to it, let them go to the devil. If the young remain uncared for and uneducated the fault is the government's. Moreover, the land becomes full of wild and loose persons so that not only God's command, but our common need, obliges us to find some way to meet the situation. Since Papal and clerical law and order are now at an end in your Grace's realm and all cloisters and foundations have fallen into the hands of your Grace as chief ruler, you have also the duty and responsibility of looking after these affairs. Where a city or village has the means, your Grace has the right to require them to support schools, pulpits and churches. If they will not do it for their own good, it is the duty of your Grace, who is chief guardian of the young and of all in need, to compel them by force to do it, just as they are compelled to contribute money and labor for the building of bridges and

and roads and for other needed improvements."

In all this insistence of Luther on the state's part in education, however, it is well remember that " his principles were not fully realized in Luther's own day, nor are they today." ¹

12. Luther's Omission of Vernacular in his Educational System.

One of the omissions in Luther's school system was his failure to include minstruction in the vernacular. Boyd ² suggests that it is especially surprising that Luther did not provide for vernacular instruction inasmuhh as his whole Reformation program hinged on the Bible in the people's own tongue.

The fact is, though, that Luther deemed it unnecessary for the schools to teach the German language. Said he: "Vernacular is best learned from ordinary speech at home, in the market place, in the pulpit." The Bible being the only important book written in German, all the rest being in Latin, the Reformer evidently concluded that informal education in the home and on the street sufficed to acquire sufficient vernacular training.

If Luther had included German in his schools, he would have foreshadowed, in some measure at least, practically every modern educational movement, and would have been in agreement in one way or another with that famous coterie of educators who followed him 200 years later, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Herbart and Froebel.

But though he omitted the vernacular in his formal

1. W.K. Boyd, Polit. and Soc. Aspects of Luther's Message, South Atlan. Quart., Vol 17, 1918, Durham, N.C.
2. Wm. Boyd, Hist. Western Educ., N.Y. 1920.

system of education, he gave great impetus to the German language through translating and broadcasting the Bible in the native tongue. Furthermore, he wrote his hymns in German; and he changed the whole of the public church service into German so it could be understood by the people.

So in spite of the fact that Luther held to Latin as the approved tongue in the schools, his contribution to the vernacular was considerable, and his disinterest in the native language was more apparent than real.

13. Summary of Luther's Theory of Education.

We have surveyed Luther's theory of education. Our treatment has not been exhaustive, but it has been sufficient to show Luther's breadth and farsightedness. He was not a philosopher on educational problems, and he would have wondered what educational psychology was, but in spite of unavoidable shortcomings due to the day in which he lived, Luther's educational theories paralleled those of today in many instances. In few cases, if any, did he have his theories worked out to a nicety. Even ^{while} ~~when~~ he lived he left to such co-workers as Melancthon the task of working out the details of organization. But those fundamental principles of education, which have been proved as valid in recent years, lay in the rough in the mind of the sixteenth Reformer.

Was Luther, then, in any way responsible for certain theories that later educators such as Rousseau and Froebel held? There is no evidence to show that he was. In fact there is little in modern theory and practice that can be traced directly to Luther, unless it be his position to

compulsory and state education. As we shall see later there were many reasons why Luther's direct influence on education was marred by events over which neither he nor his successors had any control.

F.V.N.Painter submits the following appraisal of Luther's place in education and his influence on it's progress:

"There is scarcely any phase of education that Luther left untouched. Everywhere he exhibited the same strong, good sense. Says Dittes: 'If we survey the pedagogy of Luther in all its extent, and imagine it fully realized in practice, what a splendid picture the schools and education of the 16th century would present! We should have courses of study, textbooks, teachers, methods, principles, and modes of discipline, schools and school regulations that could serve as models for our own age. But alas! Luther like all great men was little understood by his age and adherents; and what was understood was inadequately esteemed, and what was esteemed was only imperfectly realized.'" ¹

In final summation of Luther's theory of education we recall that the Reformer, as we have shown, stood for the following propositions in the field of education:

(1) The importance of the child and the family in the educational process must never be overlooked.

(2) There was dire need for an adequate educational system in Germany.

(3) Though education was primarily religious in aim, yet the cultural and social implications were to be recognized also.

(4) Educational method should include simplicity, repetition and observation.

(5) Discipline was to include the ~~rod~~^{rod} as a last resort, and all punishment was to be tempered by kindness.

(6) Teachers have a position second to none in importance in society.

(7) The curriculum was to include the Bible, the classics, history, nature study by studying nature directly, astronomy, music, gymnastics, in addition to the seven liberal arts taught in the scholastic schools, and where necessary schools were to be conducted allowing children to do outside work along with their schooling.

(8) Education of girls^{is} as important to the church and state as the education of boys.

(9) Universal education was essential to both the maintenance and progress of church and state.

(10) Vernacular was omitted from the curriculum, but the informal training of the home and daily contacts was expected to give sufficient foundation in vernacular to enable Bible reading in the native tongue.

IV. LUTHER'S PERMANENT CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD OF EDUCATION.

A. Introduction.

We come now to a consideration of Luther's permanent influence in education. Only insofar as his touch upon education has proved lasting does Luther deserve to take his place among the great educators.

If Luther's contribution as professor, writer, pastor and reformer gave him only temporary, local educational influence then we are forced to dismiss the man from consideration in the history of education. But if we discover some of the innovations which Luther advocated coming to fruition either in his own day or later, then we are bound to admit the man to a place among the historic leaders of educational progress.

What then are some of the principles for which he stood and some of the contributions which he initiated that make his educational reforms something more than a tempest in a teapot and give a truly cosmopolitan and lasting importance to Martin Luther as an Educator?

B. Immediate Results in His Own Day.

When we regard the sincere and frequent attention which Luther gave to problems of education, one wonders why there were not more immediate results to show for his efforts. We must remember however "that Luther's educational ideas could be but partially carried out..... There were but a few among his followers who could understand such progressive

proposals, they were entirely too advanced for his time; there was not body of vernacular teachers, or method of preparing them, the importance of such training was not understood; the religious wars which followed made any educational advances impossible for a long time to come."¹

Luther himself in later years was filled with the deepest anxiety when he heard men decriing education, and when he even found the town school of Wittenberg transformed into a bakery.²

However, in spite of a great deal of lethargy, there were certain improvements in educational practice which were encouraging.

1. Improvement of Contemporary Conditions.

One of the important forward steps in Luther's own day came as a result of his "Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of all German Cities in Behalf of Christian Schools"³. This pamphlet bore good fruit: popular schools according to his ideas were established in many towns and in numerous cases the magistrates came to him for advice in the appointment of teachers and the general arrangements.⁴ In April 1525, Luther wrote Spalatin: "... for I am just now setting out with Philip and Master Agricola for Eisleben whither we have been summoned by Count Albert to establish a Christian school. I am beginning to hope and to make some efforts that Philip may begin a similar school at Nuremberg."⁵

1. Elwood P. Cubberly, Hist. of Educ., N.Y. 1920

2. Chas. E. Hay, Luther the Reformer, Phila, 1898.

3. See page 89 of this thesis.

4. cf. Geo. Fielder, Luther's Views and Influence on Schools and Education, Mod. Quat. Rev. of Lang. and Lit. Vol. I 1898

5. Luther's Corres. and Other Contemp. Letters, Trans. and ed. by P. Smith and C.M. Jacobs, Phila, 1918.

Luther's "Sermon on the Duty of Sending Children to School" ¹ likewise was effective. In the "Sermon" Luther advocated the transfer of wealth and endowments from the monasteries to educational purposes by which the common people could be served. In only one instance was this actually done, so far as records show. The monasteries of Pforta, Meissen, and Frimma, all in Saxony, were turned into free public schools, and the so-called "Frustenschulen" are still flourishing there and are the only German schools which can be compared with the great English public schools where the boys are in residence. ²

"The German common schools, dating from Luther may claim to be the oldest in Europe and America", says one authority ³, and another asserts: "If it be true that during the period immediately following the Reformation the German system of Education was far in advance of that of all other countries, this was entirely due to the great Reformer and to his fellow-workers such as Philip Melancthon, and to their immediate successors." ⁴

Though improvement in conditions was slow, it was not so gradual that Luther was not able to say: "The youth now have good and convenient times to study for every art is taught orderly and uprightly, inasmuch as they may soon and easily comprehend them, except they be blockheads. Neither are the boys so strictly and harshly treated as in former times, when they were called martyrs of the schools;

1. See page 90 of this thesis.

2. Geo. Fielder, Luther's Views and Influ. on Schs. and Educ., Mod. Quat. Rev. of Lang. and Lit. Vol I, 1898, London.

3. J.M. Gregory, Address to Nat. Educ. Assn of U.S., circulated by U.S. government as an official paper. Quoted in Lutheran

Manual, J. B. Remensnyder, Phila, 1916.

4. Ibid footnote 2.

they were plagued with things that were altogether irksome and unprofitable and unpleasing, wherewith they consumed time, and spoiled many a fine and expert brain."¹

The widespread effect of the Reformation on the schools of Germany is considered by F.P. Graves in the following: "Though the increase in elementary schools was the most important educational outcome of the Reformation, the effect of the Reformation movement was also evident~~ly~~ in secondary schools whose ideals had been largely fixed by humanism.

"As the Reformation advanced Latin schools and Gymnasias came under the control of princes and the State rather than the Church, and these schools gradually became the backbone of a state school system.

"Luther's "Letter" suggested establishing secondary schools as well as elementary under the management of the civil authority and there was a speedy response. Religious spirit remained and the schools were taught and supervised by representatives of the Protestant Church."²

2. Luther Gave Impetus to Other Educators in Germany.

Of the men whom Luther aroused to action, first of all must be mentioned Melancthon who was Luther's collaborer in all things and particularly in the work of reorganizing the schools of Germany. "Melancthon was the rising humanist at the time of the Reformation. He was never an ordained minister, but this did not hinder him becoming the leading

1. Luther's words, from Michelet, Life of Luther (written by himself), London 1888

2. F.P.Graves, Hist. of Educ., Vol II, N.Y. 1916.

theologian of the Lutheran party. He soon became recognized as the great author on educational subjects. He is named with justice "The Praeceptor of Germany". He had a genius for organization. It was he who carried out the educational program launched by Luther."¹

In 1525, the first year after the "Letter to Mayors and Aldermen", the Duke of Mansfeld commissioned Luther to establish two schools in his native town of Eisleben, one primary and one secondary. In due time the course of study and method employed in these schools became models after which other were formed.²

In 1528, Johann, Elector of Saxony, engaged Melanchthon to reorganize the schools of his state³, and about the same time Valentin Trotzendorf (1490-1556), a collaborator of Luther's and a pupil of Melanchthon's, made some striking improvements in the schools of Goldberg, Silesia. He modelled his school on the basis of ideas obtained from Melanchthon, and during the 25 years he was rector at Goldberg the institution became very famous as a humanistic and religious center.⁴

Further, upon the recommendation of Melanchthon, Michael Neander (1525-1595) was made rector of a school at Ilfeld which he conducted on the plan of the Reformers. He made the building up of this school his life work and proved himself the most daring schoolmaster in northern Germany.

1. R.M'Cheyne Edgar, *Genius of Protestantism*, London 1900

2. cf. F.P.Graves, *Hist. of Educ.*, Vol II, N.Y. 1916.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

Neander ventured to question the place of Greek and Latin in the curriculum, and he added history and geography, science and music. He published 39 books, and prepared manuscripts for 14 others. Melancthon rated him as the best educator in the country. ¹

Another educator upon whom Luther's influence was marked was Johann Burgenhagen, who in 1520 was attracted to Wittenberg by Luther's teaching, and who three years later became a professor of theology there. Formerly he had taught in classical schools, but he became ^{interested} in the reorganization of churches in the cities and states of northern Germany. Every place he went he made ample provision for schools. His school at Hamburg in 1520 was particularly influential. He organized in that city a single Latin school with a rector and seven teachers together with a German school for boys, and one for girls, in every parish. The curriculum of the Latin school seemed to be taken directly from Luther's pattern being composed of Latin, Greek and Hebrew, dialectic, rhetoric, mathematics, catechism and singing. Within 6 years the Hamburg plan had spread to Brunswick, Lubeck, Minden, Gottingen, Soest, Bremen, Osnabruck and other cities to which were added the entire states of Holstein and Pomerania. In 1537 the Hamburg system was officially introduced into Denmark. ²

The greatest single educator given impetus by the Reformation was Johann Sturm, whose municipal Latin school or "gymnasium" at Strassburg became internationally famous.

1. F.P. Graves, Hist. of Educ., Vol II, N.Y. 1916.

2. Ibid.

Sturm's ideals for his school were broad. While he recognized piety, he was eager for scholarship as a distinguishing feature. This educator stated his own ideals as: "A wise and pervasive piety should be the aim of our studies. But were all pious then the student should be distinguished from him who is unlettered by science, culture and the art of speaking. Hence, knowledge, culture, and purity of diction should become the aim of scholarship, and toward its attainment both teachers and pupils should sedulously bend every effort." ¹

"Sturm was the greatest and most successful schoolman of his day. Graded instruction, good teaching, and sound scholarship enabled his school to surpass all others." ²

Sturm's "gymnasium" was divided into ten classes. Beginning with the 10th class for pupils of 7 years in which was laid a good foundation, correct pronunciation emphasized, easy Latin studied, and the German catechism memorized, the curriculum became more difficult and comprehensive by degrees. The culmination was reached in the 1st class for students of 15 and 16 years of age. In this grade was included continuation of the study of logic and rhetoric, advanced reading, much translation in Greek and Latin, drama, Epistles of Paul expounded like the old rhetoricians, Euclid's first book in geometry, and elementary astronomy. ³

1. F.P.Graves, Hist. of Educ., Vol II., N.Y. 1916.

2. Elwood P. Cubberly, Hist. of Educ., N.Y. 1920

3. Elwood P.Cubberly, Readings in the Hist. of Educ. N.Y. 1920.

Thus we see the wholesale effect that Luther had on the progress of Germany through his stimulating other outstanding men who institutionalized the educational principles for which the Reformer stood.

"Though no complete system of education was established, the foundation was laid. To this result Luther contributed more than any other man of his time; and this fact makes him the leading educational reformer of the 16th century." ¹

C. Broad and Lasting Results

1. World Wide Influence.

If it be true that the Reformation ultimately had a most salutary effect on political and educational conditions in Germany then we must realize that "a step in advance made by any nation in any direction in the end proves beneficial to the whole of mankind; the blessings of Luther's church reform were not confined to Germany nor to the Protestant church, and the influence of his educational reform has been felt far beyond the boundaries of his own country." ²

Just how diversified and far-reaching was the influence of the Reformation beyond the borders of Germany is suggested by Prof. J. Yutzy ³: "Luther's voice was heard in the sacred desk in the constitutional struggle in England, in the revolution in France, and in the revolution of freedom in the United States. It was the influence of his teaching that led George Buchanan to declare: 'The will of the people is the only legitimate source of power.' It is due to the same influence that in our own Declaration of Independence we are

1. F.V.W. Painter, Hist. of Educ., N.Y. 1903.

2. Geo. Fielder, Luther's Views and Influ. on Schs. and Educ., Mod. Quat. Rev. of Lang. and Lit. Vol I 1898.

3. M. Luther as a preacher, Luth. Quat., Vol 28, 1898, Gettysburg.

taught 'that all men are created free and equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; than among these are life, liberty and happiness.' In short the effects of Luther's faithful preaching are seen in the marvelous revival of religion, learning, literature, sociology, morality and political economy found among all nations since the pious monk became a famous preacher."

One example of the Reformation's influence on education in America as early as 1647 was shown in Massachusetts where in that year the General Court passed an Order, which in its insistence upon education as a necessary corollary to the Scriptures, as an essential means of combatting Satan, and as a needed accompaniment to Church and State, sounds quite Luther-like in its content and mode of expression. Said the early Massachusetts fathers: "It being one chief object of the old deluder, Satan, to keep men from the knowledge of the Scriptures as in former times by keeping them in an unknown tongue, so in these later times by persuading from the use of tongues, that so at least the true sense and meaning might be clouded by false glosses and saint-seeming deceivers; that learning may not be buried in the grave of our fathers in the church and commonwealth, the Lord assisting our endeavors, it is therefore ordered that every township in this jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to the number of 50 householders, shall then forthwith appoint one within their town to teach all such children as shall resort to him to write, read, etc."

A modern statement of the influence of Luther on education

today says: "The first to liberate the human mind from mediaeval darkness and error, the Lutheran church has always fostered thorough intellectual culture. Her scholars have within the present century restored the glories of the best age of Christian learning. Her wonderful literature, her great universities, her systems of popular education are felt by the world."¹

2. Luther Advanced Beyond Humanism in Education

"At Erfurt Luther was fond of the classics, but he was not a humanist,"¹ and he never became one.

We have already mentioned Luther's agreements and conflicts with Erasmus, the champion of the Humanists. Luther was not so much antagonistic toward Humanism, as he was dissatisfied with it. Though Humanism was an infinite step beyond scholasticism, yet Luther wanted to go still further than the humanists were willing to go. He became disgusted with the failure of the humanists to strike boldly against the prevailing intellectual bondage and ecclesiastical domination that characterized every walk of life.

It was this indecisiveness and vacillation in particular that aroused Luther's antagonism against Erasmus and led him to say: "I hold Erasmus of Rotterdam to be Christ's most bitter enemy. In his catechism which is of all his writings the one which I can least endure, he teaches nothing decided; not one word says do this, or do not this;

1. J.B. Remensnyder, The Lutheran Manual, Phila, 1916.

he only therein throws error and dispair into youthful consciences.... Erasmus is the true enemy of religion, the open adversary of Christ, the complete and faithful picture and image of Epicurus and of Lucian."¹

In like manner Luther stated: "Erasmus is very pitiful with his prefaces, though he tries to smooth them over; he appears to see no difference between Jesus Christ our Savior and the wise pagan legislator, Solon. He sneers at St. Paul and St. John; and ventures to say that the Epistle to the Romans whatever it might have been at a former period is not applicable to the present state of things. Shame upon thee cursed wretch. 'Tis a mere Momus making his vows and mocking at everything and everybody, at God and man, at Papist and Protestant, but all the while using such shuffling and double meaning terms that no one can lay hold of him to any effectual purpose...."²

Among modern writers, one vividly pictures the difference which existed between Luther and Erasmus in their mutual efforts to better conditions as they ~~existed~~ were: "Erasmus thought he would laugh the evils of the age out of court. He did yeoman's service, but the situation needed something more than the graceful thrust of a satirist's pen. Humanism was as beautiful as a shimmering moonlight. But only the burning sunlight can dry up miasmatic swamps. And what Humanism could not do Luther did. He came with the awful roar and rush of an avalanche, and many refined spirits were so bewildered by the noise and confusion that they could not

1. Luther's Table Talk

2. Ibid.

see the service. But only a moral and spiritual avalanche could do the destructive work which needed to be done before the great constructive work could be achieved." ¹

A similar thought from another source says: "It is said even today that the propaganda of the Christian Humanists led by Erasmus would have brought about the Reformation without any such 'tumult' such as Erasmus wished to avoid. Such an assertion is just as true as the claim that the Napoleonic Empire would of necessity have come about even without Napoleon, or that the unity of Germany would have been achieved without Bismark. Critics and rhetoricians can call forth and strengthen a world-historical movement, but they can never create a new order of things. This can be done alone by a heroic will which calmly and resolutely takes up the struggle with the forces of the old order of things, and by exerting to the fullest all the powers of intellect and soul, carried it through to the final end. The possession of such a heroic will, this most rare and most mighty of the creative forces of history, cannot certainly be denied to Luther." ²

3. Luther's Insistence on Intellectual Freedom.

Philip Brooks suggested that while Luther was ostensibly at Worms on an ecclesiastical mission, he really was there to insist that human intelligence must be free. When he maintained: "Unless I be convicted of error by the Scriptures or by powerful reasons, neither can nor dare I to

1. L.H.Hough, A living book in a living age, N.Y. 1918

2. Heinrich Bohmer, Luther in the light of recent research, N.Y. 1916

retract anything," the Reformer was asserting that he dare not be a slave to intellectual authority.

Though Luther believed implicitly in the Bible, yet behind the Bible lay the convictions, rights and claims of his own individual conscience. "Luther's action at Worms put one individual over against the organized political and ecclesiastical life of the period. That insistence on the right of the individual to be true to his deepest life against all organized power had the very genius of democracy in it. In that sense we may say that Luther was a democrat before the day of democrats."¹

This same contribution of Luther's is reemphasized in the carefully weighed words: "Luther was not a philosopher. He was not keen mentally like Erasmus, nor was he intellectually broad like Melancthon. Neither was he a clear thinker theoretically. Luther's merit lies in the stress he laid upon the individuality of man."²

1. L. H. Hough. *A Living Book in a Living Age*, N.Y. 1918
2. A. B. D. Alexander, *Thinkers of the Church*. London. [no date]

V. CONCLUDING APPRAISAL OF LUTHER AS AN EDUCATOR.

What was Luther after all? Was he a scalawag rebel, or a demi-god reformer? Was he a genuine innovator, or only a clever plagiarist? Was ^{he} the true mouth-piece of God, or was he "foul mouthed and scurrilous" ¹.

Was there ever a man over whom opinion is so diverse? First an author claims: "Luther is too great to be claimed by any one sect of opinion, or by any single nationality. Some men tower so high that they belong to the whole race. Who thinks of St. Paul as a Hebrew? Or of Dante as an Italian? Or of Shakespeare as an Englishman? Luther was not simply the product of his time. He was a distinct and mighty force moving the age onward; leading it not following it; generating the tide of reform, not simply riding on it." ²

~~Then~~ ^{the same} again, after praising him, ~~another~~ writer admits: "He had his faults; they were glaring, on the surface, patent to all men. He was hasty, he was often violent in temper and intemperate in language. Meekness and gentleness were virtues he did not attain. His Christian character, though genuine and sincere, was not symmetrical, nor was his intellectual stature the loftiest or the most completely developed. Neither as a writer or as a thinker was he of the first order. The scientific intellect and the philosophical faculty did not shine out in him at all." ³

Another investigator sees absolutely no good in Martin Luther and insists: "Luther was not an ideal sponsor of a

1. Bishop Bewick (Nov. 1883) quoted by Rt. Rev. Patrick O'Hare, The Facts about Luther, N.Y. 1916.

2. Rand. McKim, Present day problems of Christian thought, N.Y. 1900

3. Ibid.

new religion; he was a master of billingsgate and the least saintly of men. At times in reading Luther one is drawn to say to him what Herrick so frankly says of himself: 'Luther, thou art too coarse to love'.¹

On the other hand Goethe acclaimed "there is nothing interesting in the whole Reformation except the character of Luther".²

What shall we say therefore about Luther as an educator? Is his career in this field so bound up with his life as a religious reformer that to disparage one is to cast reflection on the other?

Disregarding for the moment his religious interests, and ignoring as much as possible his break with the Roman Church, can we impartially regard Martin Luther as an educator?

Consider his ideals, his methods, his definite accomplishments, his impetus to his successors — can we cast him aside as unworthy of a front rank position in the field of education?

Luther found education generally neglected and formalized; he found the schooling of the common people completely overlooked; he found education regarded as a luxury to be taken up or laid down at will; he found the school completely dominated by the Church.

To meet such situations Luther as an educator pressed the importance of education upon the minds of all, especially upon those in authority and power; he urged universal education and mapped out a course of study adapted for the

1. Patrick O'Hare, The Facts about Luther, N.Y. 1916.

2. A.B.D. Alexander, Thinkers of the Church, London.

children of the common folk; he pointed the fallacy of regarding education as a luxury for the favored few; he showed how statecraft and commerce, as well as the Church, stood in need of education; he denounced the iron hand of the Church in the realm of education, and proposed that education was within the province of the secular power of the state.

Any man with such a roster of achievements cannot be called insignificant as an educator, not matter what opinion we hold of him as a religionist. Thus we are forced to admit, indeed, we ought to welcome, Martin Luther as an educator, to assume his seat among the famous, historic leaders in educational progress.

"List ye men and be advised,
No more in shackles the spirit lies.
Remember Luther, the faithful one,
Who hath this freedom for you won.
Guard well the light, the light of Truth,
Guard well the flame, profane it not."¹

1. Nightwatchman's hymn for the year 1817. Taken from Heinrich Bohmer's "Luther in the Light of Recent Research, N.Y. 1916.

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