

# FRIEDRICH BENTE

HISTORICAL  
INTRODUCTIONS TO  
THE SYMBOLICAL  
BOOKS OF THE  
EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Friedrich Bente

**Historical Introductions to  
the Symbolical Books of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church**

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**Bente F.**

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# Содержание

I. The Book of Concord, or The Concordia	6
1. General and Particular Symbols	6
2. The German Book of Concord	7
3. The Latin Concordia	10
4. English Translations	11
5. Corpora Doctrinae Supplanted by Book of Concord	12
6. Subscription to Confessions	13
7. Pledging of Ministers to the Confessions	15
II. The Three Ecumenical or Universal Symbols	16
8. Ecumenical Symbols	16
9. The Apostles' Creed	17
10. Apostles' Creed and Early Christian Writers	18
11. Tertullian and Cyprian on Apostles' Creed	19
12. Variations of the Apostles' Creed	20
13. Present Form of Creed and Its Contents	21
14. The Nicene Creed	22
15. Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed	23
16. The Athanasian Creed	24
17. Luther on Ecumenical Creeds	25
III. The Augsburg Confession	27
18. Diet Proclaimed by Emperor	27
19. Apology Original Plan of Lutherans	28
20. Transformation of Apology into Confession Due to Eck's Slanders	29
21. Marburg, Schwabach, and Torgau Articles	30
22. Luther's Spokesman at Augsburg	31
23. Drafting the Confession	33
24. Public Reading of the Confession	34
25. Luther's Mild Criticism	36
26. Luther Praising Confession and Confessors	37
27. Manuscripts and Editions of Augustana	38
28. Signatures of Augsburg Confession	40
29. Tributes to Confession of Augsburg	42
IV. Melancthon's Alterations of the Augsburg Confession	43
30. Changes Unwarranted	43
31. Detrimental Consequences of Alterations	44
32. Attitude toward Variata	45
33. Alterations in Editions of 1531, 1533, 1540	47
34. Alterations Render Confession Ambiguous	48
35. Variata Disowned by Lutheran Church	49
V. The Pontifical Confutation of the Augsburg Confession	51
36. Papal Party Refusing Conciliation	51
37. Further Success Not Hoped for by Luther	53
38. Papal Peace Sought by Emperor	54
39. Compulsion Advocated by Theologians	55
40. Emperor Employs Mildness	57

41. Augustana Submitted to Catholic Party	58
42. Rabid Theologians Appointed as Confutators	59
43. Confutation Prepared	60
44. A Bulky, Scurrilous Document	61
45. Confutation Adopted and Read	63
46. Confutation Denounced by Lutherans	65
47. Luther on the Confutation	66
VI. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession	68
48. Emperor Demands Adoption of Confutation	68
49. Sustained by Luther	69
50. Copy of Confutation Refused to Lutherans	70
51. Lutherans on Roman Duplicity and Perfidy	72
52. Original Draft of Apology	73
53. Apology Presented, But Acceptance Refused	74
54. Apology Recast by Melanchthon	76
55. Completion of Apology Delayed	78
56. German Translation by Jonas	79
57. Alterations of Apology	80
58. Purpose, Arrangement, and Character of Apology	81
59. Moderate Tone of Apology	82
60. Symbolical Authority of Apology	85
VII. Smalcald Articles and Tract concerning Power and Primacy of Pope	87
61. General Council Demanded by Lutherans	87
62. Luther's Views Regarding the Council	89
63. Elector Opposed to Hearing Papal Legate	90
64. Elector Imbued with Luther's Spirit	91
65. Opinion of Theologians	92
66. Elector's Strictures on Opinion of Theologians	94
67. Counter-Council Disadvised	95
68. Articles Drafted by Luther	96
69. Articles Endorsed by Elector	98
70. Melanchthon's Qualified Subscription	99
71. Luther's Articles Sidetracked at Smalcald	100
72. Articles Not Discussed in Meeting of League	102
73. Meeting of Theologians	103
74. Luther's Articles Subscribed	105
75. Endorsed by Princes and Estates	107
76. Symbolical Authority of Smalcald Articles	108
77. Editions of Smalcald Articles	110
78. Tract on the Power and Primacy of the Pope	111
79. Authorship of Tract	112
80. A Threefold Criticism	113
VIII. Luther's Efforts at Restoring Catechetical Instruction	115
81. Modern Researches Respecting Luther's Catechisms	115
82. Meaning of the Word Catechism	116
83. Chief Parts of Catechism	118
84. Parts Inherited from Ancient Church	119
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	120

# Historical Introductions to the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church

## I. The Book of Concord, or The Concordia

### 1. General and Particular Symbols

Book of Concord, or Concordia, is the title of the Lutheran *corpus doctrinae*, i.e., of the symbols recognized and published under that name by the Lutheran Church. The word symbol, *symbolon*, is derived from the verb *sumballein*, to compare two things for the purpose of perceiving their relation and association. *Symbolon* thus developed the meaning of *tessara*, or sign, token, badge, banner, watchword, parole, countersign, confession, creed. A Christian symbol, therefore, is a mark by which Christians are known. And since Christianity is essentially the belief in the truths of the Gospel, its symbol is of necessity a confession of Christian doctrine. The Church, accordingly, has from the beginning defined and regarded its symbols as a rule of faith or a rule of truth. Says Augustine: "Symbolum est regula fidei brevis et grandis: brevis numero verborum, grandis pondere sententiarum. A symbol is a rule of faith, both brief and grand: brief, as to the number of words, grand, as to the weight of its thoughts."

Cyprian was the first who applied the term symbol to the baptismal confession, because, he said, it distinguished the Christians from non-Christians. Already at the beginning of the fourth century the Apostles' Creed was universally called symbol, and in the Middle Ages this name was applied also to the Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds. In the Introduction to the Book of Concord the Lutheran confessors designate the Augsburg Confession as the "symbol of our faith," and in the Epitome of the Formula of Concord, as "our symbol of this time."

Symbols may be divided into the following classes: 1. Ecumenical symbols, which, at least in the past, have been accepted by all Christendom, and are still formally acknowledged by most of the evangelical Churches; 2. particular symbols, adopted by the various denominations of divided Christendom; 3. private symbols, such as have been formulated and published by individuals, for example, Luther's Confession of the Lord's Supper of 1528. The publication of private confessions does not necessarily involve an impropriety; for according to Matt. 10, 32 33 and 1 Pet. 3, 15 not only the Church as a whole, but individual Christians as well are privileged and in duty bound to confess the Christian truth over against its public assailants. Self-evidently, only such are symbols of particular churches as have been approved and adopted by them. The symbols of the Church, says the Formula of Concord, "should not be based on private writings, but on such books as have been composed, approved, and received in the name of the churches which pledge themselves to one doctrine and religion." (CONC. TRIGL., 851, 2.)

Not being formally and explicitly adopted by all Christians, the specifically Lutheran confessions also are generally regarded as particular symbols. Inasmuch, however, as they are in complete agreement with Holy Scripture, and in this respect differ from all other particular symbols, the Lutheran confessions are truly ecumenical and catholic in character. They contain the truths believed universally by true Christians everywhere, explicitly by all consistent Christians, implicitly even by inconsistent and erring Christians. Christian truth, being one and the same the world over is none other than that which is found in the Lutheran confessions.

## 2. The German Book of Concord

The printing of the official German edition of the Book of Concord was begun in 1578 under the editorship of Jacob Andreae. The 25th of June, 1580, however, the fiftieth anniversary of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession to Emperor Charles V, was chosen as the date for its official publication at Dresden and its promulgation to the general public. Following are the contents of one of the five Dresden folio copies which we have compared: 1. The title-page, concluding with the words, "Mit Churf. G. zu Sachsen Befreiung. Dresden MDLXXX." 2. The preface, as adopted and signed by the estates at Jueterbock in 1579, which supplanted the explanation, originally planned, of the theologians against the various attacks made upon the Formula of Concord. 3. The three Ecumenical Symbols. 4. The Augsburg Confession of 1530. 5. The Apology of 1530. 6. The Smalcald Articles of 1537, with the appendix, "Concerning the Power and Supremacy of the Pope." 7. Luther's Small Catechism, omitting the "Booklets of Marriage and Baptism," found in some copies. 8. Luther's Large Catechism. 9. The Formula of Concord, with separate title-pages for the Epitome and the Solida Declaratio, both dated 1580. 10. The signatures of the theologians, etc., amounting to about 8,000. 11. The Catalogus Testimoniorum, with the superscription "Appendix" (found in some copies only). The Preface is followed by a *Privilegium* signed by Elector August and guaranteeing to Matthes Stoeckel and Gimel Bergen the sole right of publication, a document not found in the other copies we compared. The Formula of Concord is followed by a twelve-page index of the doctrines treated in the Book of Concord, and the list of signatures, by a page containing the trade-mark of the printer. The center of this page features a cut inscribed, "Matthes Stoeckel Gimel Bergen 1579." The cut is headed by Ps. 9, 1. 2: "Ich danke dem Herrn von ganzem Herzen und erzähle all deine Wunder. Ich freue mich und bin frohlich in dir und lobe deinen Namen, du Allerhöchster. I thank the Lord with all my heart and proclaim all Thy wonders. I am glad and rejoice in Thee, and praise Thy name, Thou Most High." Under the cut are the words: "Gedruckt zu Dresden durch Matthes Stoeckel. Anno 1580. Printed by Matthes Stoeckel, Dresden, 1580."

In a letter dated November 7, 1580, Martin Chemnitz speaks of two Dresden folio editions of the German Book of Concord, while Feuerlinus, in 1752, counts seven Dresden editions. As a matter of fact, the Dresden folio copies differ from one another, both as to typography and contents. Following are the chief differences of the latter kind: 1. Only some copies have the liturgical Forms of Baptism and of Marriage appended to the Small Catechism. 2. The Catalogus is not entitled "Appendix" in all copies, because it was not regarded as a part of the confession proper. 3. In some copies the passage from the Augsburg Confession, quoted in Art. 2, 29 of the Solida Declaratio, is taken, not from the Mainz Manuscript, but from the quarto edition of 1531, which already contained some alterations. 4. Some copies are dated 1580, while others bear the date 1579 or 1581. Dr. Kolde gives it as his opinion that in spite of all these and other (chiefly typographical) differences they are nevertheless all copies of one and the same edition, with changes only in individual sheets. (*Historische Einleitung in die Symbolischen Buecher der ev. – luth. Kirche*, p. 70.) Dr. Tschackert inclines to the same view, saying: "Such copies of this edition as have been preserved exhibit, in places, typographical differences. This, according to Polycarp Leyser's *Kurzer und gegruendeter Bericht*, Dresden, 1597 (Kolde, 70), is due to the fact that the manuscript was rushed through the press and sent in separate sheets to the interested estates, and that, while the forms were in press, changes were made on the basis of the criticisms sent in from time to time, yet not equally, so that some copies differ in certain sheets and insertions." (*Die Entstehung der luth. und der ref. Kirchenlehre*, 1910, p. 621.)

However, while this hypothesis explains a number of the variations in the Dresden folio copies, it does not account for all of them especially not for those of a typographical nature. In one of the five copies which we compared, the title-page, radically differing from the others, reads as follows:

"Formula Concordiae. Das ist: Christliche, Heilsame Reine Vergleichunge, in welcher die Goettliche Leer von den vornembsten Artikeln vnserer wahrhafftigen Religion, aus heiliger Schrift in kurtze bekanntnues oder Symbola vnd Leerhafte Schrifften,; welche allbereit vor dieser zeit von den Kirchen Gottes Augspurgischer Confession, angenommen vnd approbiert:, verfasst. Sampt bestendiger, in Gottes wort wolgegruendeter, richtiger, endlicher widerholung, erklerung und entscheidung deren Streit, welche vnter etlichen Theologen, so sich zu ermelter Confession bekant, fuergefallen. Alles nach inhalt der heiligen Schrifft, als der einigen Richtschnur der Goettlichen wahrheit, vnd nach anleitung obgemeldter in der Kirchen Gottes, approbierten Schrifften. Auff gnedigsten, gnedigen, auch guetigsten beuehl, verordnung und einwilligung nach beschriebener Christlichen Churfuersten, Fuersten vnd Stende des heiligen Roemischen Reichs Deutscher Nation, Augspurgischer Confession, derselben Landen, Kirchen, Schulen vnd Nachkommen zum trost vnd besten in Druck vorfertigt. M. D. LXXIX." ("Formula of Concord, that is, Christian, wholesome, pure agreement, in which the divine doctrine of the chief articles of our true religion have been drawn up from the Holy Scripture in short confessions or symbols and doctrinal writings, which have already before this time been accepted and approved by the Churches of God of the Augsburg Confession, together with a firm, Scripturally well-founded, correct, final repetition, explanation and decision of those controversies which have arisen among some theologians who have subscribed to said Confession, all of which has been drawn up according to the contents of Holy Scripture, the sole norm of divine Truth, and according to the analogy of the above-named writings which have the approval of the Churches of God. Published by the most gracious, kind, and benevolent command, order, and assent of the subscribed Christian Electors, princes, and estates of the Holy Roman Empire, of the German nation, of the Augsburg Confession, for the comfort and benefit of said lands churches, schools, and posterity. 1579.")

Apart from the above title this copy differs from the others we examined in various ways. Everywhere (at four different places) it bears the date 1579, which, on the chief title-page, however, seems to have been entered in ink at a later date. Also the place of publication, evidently Dresden, is not indicated. Two variations are found in the Preface to the Book of Concord, one an omission, the other an addition. The signatures of the princes and estates to the Preface are omitted. Material and formal differences are found also on the pages containing the subscriptions of the theologians to the Formula of Concord; and the Catalogus is lacking entirely. The typography everywhere, especially in the portions printed in Roman type, exhibits many variations and divergences from our other four copies, which, in turn, are also characterized by numerous typographical and other variations. The copy of which, above, we have given the contents is dated throughout 1580. Our third copy bears the same date 1580, excepting on the title-page of the Solida Declaratio, which has 1579. In both of these copies the typography of the signatures to the Book of Concord is practically alike. In our fourth copy the date 1580 is found on the title-page of the Concordia, the Catalogus, and the appended Saxon Church Order, which covers 433 pages, while the title-pages of the Epitome and the Declaratio and the page carrying the printer's imprint are all dated 1579. In this copy the typography of the signatures closely resembles that of the copy dated everywhere 1579. In our fifth Dresden folio copy, the title-page of the Book of Concord and the Catalogus are dated 1580, while the title-pages of the Epitome and Solida Declaratio are dated 1579. This is also the only copy in which the Catalogus is printed under the special heading "Appendix."

In view of these facts, especially the variation of the Roman type in all copies, Kolde's hypothesis will hardly be regarded as firmly established. Even if we eliminate the copy which is everywhere dated 1579, the variations in our four remaining Dresden folio copies cannot be explained satisfactorily without assuming either several editions or at least several different compositions for the same edition, or perhaps for the two editions mentioned by Chemnitz. Feuerlinus distinguishes seven Dresden editions of the Book of Concord – one, printed for the greater part in 1578, the second, third, and fourth in 1580, the fifth in 1581, the sixth also in 1581, but in quarto, and the seventh in



1598, in folio. (*Bibliotheca Symbolica*, 1752, p. 9.) A copy like the one referred to above, which is everywhere dated 1579, does not seem to have come to the notice of Feuerlinus.

In the copy of the Tuebingen folio edition which is before us, the Index follows the Preface. The appendices of the Small Catechism are omitted, likewise the superscription Appendix of the Catalogus. Our copy of the Heidelberg folio edition of 1582 omits the Catalogus and adds the Apology of the Book of Concord of 1583, as also the Refutation of the Bremen Pastors of the same year. A copy of the Magdeburg quarto edition lying before us has the year 1580 on the title-pages of the Book of Concord, the Epitome, the Declaratio, and the Catalogus. The Preface is followed by three pages, on which Joachim Frederick guarantees to "Thomas Frantzen Buchvorlegern" (Thomas Frantzen, publishers) the sole right of publication for a period of five years, and prohibits the introduction of other copies, excepting only those of the Dresden folio edition of 1580. Luther's Booklets of Marriage and of Baptism are appended to the Small Catechism, and to the Large Catechism is added "Eine kurze Vermahnung zu der Beicht, A Brief Exhortation to Confession." (None of the Dresden folio copies we compared contain these appendices, nor are they found in the Latin editions of 1580 and 1584.) The index is followed by a page of corrected misprints. The last page has the following imprint: "Gedruckt zu Magdeburg durch Johann Meiszner und Joachim Walden Erben, Anno 1580, Printed at Magdeburg by John Meissner's and Joachim Walden's heirs. In the year 1580."

### 3. The Latin Concordia

Even before the close of 1580, Selneccer published a Latin Concordia containing a translation of the Formula of Concord begun by Lucas Osiander in 1578 and completed by Jacob Heerbrand. It was a private undertaking and, owing to its numerous and partly offensive mistakes, found no recognition. Thus, for instance, the passage of the Tractatus "De Potestate et Primatu Papae" in sec. 24: "Christ gives the highest and final judgment to the church," was rendered as follows: "Et Christus summum et ultimum ferculum apponit ecclesiae." (p. 317.) Besides, Selneccer had embodied in his Concordia the objectionable text of the Augsburg Confession found in the octavo edition of 1531, which Melanchthon had altered extensively.

The necessary revision of the Latin text was made at the convention in Quedlinburg during December, 1582, and January, 1583, Chemnitz giving material assistance. The revised edition, which constitutes the Latin *textus receptus* of the Formula of Concord, was published at Leipzig in 1584. Aside from many corrections, this edition contains the translation of the Formula of Concord as already corrected by Selneccer in 1582 for his special Latin-German edition, and afterwards thoroughly revised by Chemnitz. The texts of the Augsburg Confession and the Apology follow the *editio princeps* of 1531. The 8,000 signatures, embodied also in the Latin edition of 1580, were omitted, lest any one might complain that his name was appended to a book which he had neither seen nor approved. In keeping herewith, the words in the title of the Book of Concord: "*et nomina sua huic libro subscripserunt*— and have subscribed their names to this book," which Mueller retained in his edition, were eliminated. The title-page concludes as in the edition of 1580, the word "denuo" only being added and the date correspondingly changed. On the last two pages of this edition of 1584 Selneccer refers to the edition of 1580 as follows: "Antea publicatus est liber Christianae Concordiae, Latine, sed privato et festinato instituto, Before this the Book of Concord has been published in Latin, but as a private and hasty undertaking." In the edition of 1584, the text of the Small Catechism is adorned with 23 Biblical illustrations.

Among the later noteworthy editions of the Book of Concord are the following: Tuebingen 1599; Leipzig, 1603, 1622; Stuttgart 1660, 1681. Editions furnished with introductions or annotations or both: H. Pipping, 1703; S.J. Baumgarten, 1747; J.W. Schoepff, Part I, 1826, Part II, 1827; F.A. Koethe, 1830; J.A. Detzer, 1830; F.W. Bodemann, 1843. In America the entire Book of Concord was printed in German by H. Ludwig, of New York, in 1848, and by the Concordia Publishing House of St. Louis, Mo., in 1880. In Leipzig, Latin editions appeared in the years 1602, 1606, 1612, 1618, 1626, 1654, 1669, 1677. Adam Rechenberg's edition "with an appendix in three parts and new indices" (*cum appendice tripartita et novis indicibus*) saw five editions – 1678, 1698, 1712, 1725, 1742. We mention also the edition of Pfaffius, 1730; Tittmann, 1817; H.A.G. Meyer, 1830, containing a good preface; Karl Hase, in his editions of 1827, 1837, and 1845, was the first to number the paragraphs. Reineccius prepared a German-Latin edition in 1708. This was followed in 1750 by the German-Latin edition of Johann Georg Walch. Mueller's well-known German-Latin Concordia saw eleven editions between 1847 and 1912. Since 1907 it appears with historical introductions by Th. Kolde.

## 4. English Translations

All of the Lutheran symbols have been translated into the English language repeatedly. In 1536 Richard Taverner prepared the first translation of the Augsburg Confession. Cranmer published, in 1548, "A Short Instruction into the Christian Religion," essentially a translation of the Ansbach-Nuernberg Sermons on the Catechism. In 1834 a translation of the German text of the Augsburg Confession with "Preliminary Observations" was published at Newmarket, Va., by Charles Henkel, Prof. Schmidt of the Seminary at Columbus O., assisting in this work. The Introduction to the Newmarket Book of Concord assigns Henkel's translation of the Augsburg Confession to the year 1831. Our copy, however, which does not claim to be a second edition, is dated 1834. In his *Popular Theology* of 1834, S.S. Schmucker offered a translation of the Latin text, mutilated in the interest of his *American Lutheranism*. Hazelius followed him with a translation in 1841. In 1848, Ludwig, of New York, issued a translation of the German text of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, as well as of the Introduction, prepared by C.H. Schott, together with the Ecumenical Symbols, also with introductions. The title-page of our copy lists the price of the book at 12 1/2 cents. C.P. Krauth's translation of the Augsburg Confession appeared in 1868. The first complete translation of the German text of the entire Book of Concord was published in 1851 by the publishing house of Solomon D. Henkel & Bros., at Newmarket, Va. In this translation, however, greater stress was laid on literary style than upon an exact reproduction of the original. Ambrose and Socrates Henkel prepared the translation of the Augsburg Confession, the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, the Appendix, and the Articles of Visitation. The Small Catechism was offered in the translation prepared by David Henkel in 1827. The Large Catechism was translated by J. Stirewalt; the Epitome, by H. Wetzel; the Declaratio, by J.R. Moser. The second, improved edition of 1854 contained a translation of the Augsburg Confession by C. Philip Krauth, the Apology was translated by W.F. Lehmann, the Smalcald Articles by W.M. Reynolds, the two Catechisms by J.G. Morris, and the Formula of Concord together with the Catalogus by C.F. Schaeffer. In both editions the historical introductions present a reproduction of the material in J.T. Mueller's *Book of Concord*.

In 1882 a new English translation of the entire Book of Concord, together with introductions and other confessional material, appeared in two volumes, edited by Dr. H.E. Jacobs. The first volume of this edition embraces the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church. It contains C.P. Krauth's translation of the Augsburg Confession as revised for Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*. Jacobs translated the Apology (from the Latin, with insertions, in brackets, of translations from the German text), the Smalcald Articles (from the German), the Tractatus (from the Latin), and the Formula of Concord. The translation of the Small Catechism was prepared by a committee of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. The Large Catechism was done into English by A. Martin. A reprint of this edition appeared in 1911, entitled "People's Edition," in which the Augsburg Confession is presented in a translation prepared by a committee of the General Council, the General Synod, the United Synod in the South, and the Ohio Synod. The second volume of Jacobs's edition of the Book of Concord embodies historical introductions to the Lutheran symbols, translations of the Marburg Articles, the Schwabach Articles, the Torgau Articles, the Altered Augsburg Confession of 1540 and 1542, Zwingli's Ratio Fidei, the Tetrapolitana, the Romish Confutatio, Melancthon's Opinion of 1530, Luther's Sermon on the Descent into Hell of 1533, the Wittenberg Concordia, the Leipzig Interim the Catalogus Testimoniorum, the Articles of Visitation, and the Decretum Upsaliense of 1593. The Principles of Faith and Church Polity of the General Council and an index complete this volume. A Norwegian and a Swedish translation of the Book of Concord have also been published in America.

## 5. Corpora Doctrinae Supplanted by Book of Concord

More than twenty different Lutheran collections of symbols or *corpora doctrinae* (a term first employed by Melanchthon), most of them bulky, had appeared after the death of Luther and before the adoption of the Formula of Concord, by which quite a number of them were supplanted. From the signatures to its Preface it appears that the entire Book of Concord was adopted by 3 electors, 20 princes, 24 counts, 4 barons, and 35 imperial cities. And the list of signatures appended to the Formula of Concord contains about 8,000 names of theologians, preachers, and schoolteachers. About two-thirds of the German territories which professed adherence to the Augsburg Confession adopted and introduced the Book of Concord as their *corpus doctrinae*. (Compare Historical Introduction to the Formula of Concord.)

Among the *corpora doctrinae* which were gradually superseded by the Book of Concord are the following: 1. Corpus Doctrinae Philippicum, or Misnicum, or Wittenbergense of 1560, containing besides the Three Ecumenical Symbols, the following works of Melanchthon: Variata, Apologia, Repetitio Augustanae Confessionis, Loci, Examen Ordinandorum of 1552, Responsio ad Articulos Bavaricae Inquisitionis, Refutatio Serveti. Melanchthon, shortly before his death, wrote the preface for the Latin as well as the German edition of this Corpus. 2. Corpus Doctrinae Pomeranicum of 1564 which adds Luther's Catechisms, the Smalcald Articles, and three other works of Luther to the Corpus Doctrinae Philippicum, which had been adopted 1561. 3. Corpus Doctrinae Prutenicum, or Borussicum, of Prussia, 1567, containing the Augsburg Confession, the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, and Repetition of the Sum and Content of the True, Universal Christian Doctrine of the Church, written by Moerlin and Chemnitz. 4. Corpus Doctrinae Thuringicum in Ducal Saxony, of 1570, containing the Three Ecumenical Symbols, Luther's Catechisms, the Smalcald Articles, the Confession of the Landed Estates in Thuringia (drawn up by Justus Menius in 1549), and the Prince of Saxony's Book of Confutation (*Konfutationsbuch*) of 1558. 5. Corpus Doctrinae Brandenburgicum of 1572, containing the Augsburg Confession according to the Mainz Manuscript, Luther's Small Catechism, Explanation of the Augsburg Confession drawn from the postils and doctrinal writings "of the faithful man of God Dr. Luther" by Andreas Musculus, and a Church Agenda. 6. Corpus Doctrinae Wilhelminum of Lueneburg, 1576, containing the Three Ecumenical Symbols, the Augsburg Confession, the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Catechisms, Formulae Caute Loquendi (Forms of Speaking Cautiously) by Dr. Urbanus Regius, and Formulae Recte Sentiendi de Praecipuis Horum Temporum Controversiis (Forms of Thinking Correctly concerning the Chief Controversies of These Times) by Martin Chemnitz. 7. Corpus Doctrinae Iulium of Duke Julius of Braunschweig-Wolfenbuettel, 1576, containing the documents of the Wilhelminum, with the sole addition of the Short Report of Some Prominent Articles of Doctrine, from the Church Order of Duke Julius, of 1569. 8. The Hamburg Book of Confession of 1560, which was also adopted by Luebeck and Lueneburg, and contained a confession against the Interim drawn up by Aepinus in 1548, and also four declarations concerning Adiaphorism, Osiandrisism, Majorism, and the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, drawn up since 1549. 9. The Confessional Book of Braunschweig, adopted in 1563 and reaffirmed in 1570, containing, The Braunschweig Church Order of 1528, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology thereof, the Smalcald Articles, Explanation, etc., drawn up at Lueneburg in 1561 against the Crypto-Calvinists. 10. The Church Order of the city of Goettingen 1568, containing the Church Order of Goettingen of 1531, Luther's Small Catechism, the Smalcald Articles, the Augsburg Confession, and the Apology. (Tschackert, *l. c.*, 613f.; Feuerlinus, *l. c.*, 1f.)

## 6. Subscription to Confessions

The position accorded the symbols in the Lutheran Church is clearly defined by the Book of Concord itself. According to it Holy Scripture alone is to be regarded as the sole rule and norm by which absolutely all doctrines and teachers are to be judged. The object of the Augustana, as stated in its Preface, was to show "what manner of doctrine has been set forth, in our lands and churches from the Holy Scripture and the pure Word of God." And in its Conclusion the Lutheran confessors declare: "Nothing has been received on our part against Scripture or the Church Catholic," and "we are ready, God willing, to present ampler information according to the Scriptures." "Iuxta Scripturam" – such are the closing words of the Augsburg Confession. The Lutheran Church knows of no other principle.

In the Formula of Concord we read: "Other writings, however, of ancient or modern teachers, whatever name they bear, must not be regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures, but all of them together be subjected to them, and should not be received otherwise or further than as witnesses, [which are to show] in what manner after the time of the apostles, and at what places, this doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved." (777, 2.) In the Conclusion of the Catalog of Testimonies we read: "The true saving faith is to be founded upon no church-teachers, old or new, but only and alone upon God's Word, which is comprised in the Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles, as unquestionable witnesses of divine truth." (1149.)

The Lutheran symbols, therefore, are not intended to supplant the Scriptures, nor do they do so. They do, however, set forth what has been at all times the unanimous understanding of the pure Christian doctrine adhered to by sincere and loyal Lutherans everywhere; and, at the same time, they show convincingly from the Scriptures that our forefathers did indeed manfully confess nothing but God's eternal truth, which every Christian is in duty bound to, and consistently always will, believe, teach, and confess.

The manner also in which Lutherans pledge themselves confessionally appears from these symbols. The Augsburg Confession was endorsed by the princes and estates as follows: "The above articles we desire to present in accordance with the edict of Your Imperial Majesty, in order to exhibit our Confession and let men see a summary of the doctrine of our teachers." (95, 6.) In the preamble to the signatures of 1537 the Lutheran preachers unanimously confess: "We have reread the articles of the Confession presented to the Emperor in the Assembly at Augsburg, and by the favor of God all the preachers who have been present in this Assembly at Smalcald harmoniously declare that they believe and teach in their churches according to the articles of the Confession and Apology." (529.) John Brenz declares that he had read and reread, time and again, the Confession, the Apology, etc., and judged "that all these agree with Holy Scripture, and with the belief of the true and genuine catholic Church (*haec omnia convenire cum Sacra Scriptura et cum sententia verae kai gnesies catholicae ecclesiae*)." (529.) Another subscription – to the Smalcald Articles – reads: "I, Conrad Figenbotz, for the glory of God subscribe that I have thus believed and am still preaching and firmly believing as above." (503, 13.) Brixius writes in a similar vein: "I ... subscribe to the Articles of the reverend Father Martin Luther, and confess that hitherto I have thus believed and taught, and by the Spirit of Christ I shall continue thus to believe and teach." (503, 27.)

In the Preface to the Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord the Lutheran confessors declare: "To this Christian Augsburg Confession, so thoroughly grounded in God's Word, we herewith pledge ourselves again from our inmost hearts. We abide by its simple, clear, and unadulterated meaning as the words convey it, and regard the said Confession as a pure Christian symbol, with which at the present time true Christians ought to be found next to God's Word... We intend also, by the grace of the Almighty, faithfully to abide until our end by this Christian Confession, mentioned several times, as it was delivered in the year 1530 to the Emperor Charles V; and it is our purpose, neither in this nor in any other writing, to recede in the least from that oft-cited Confession, nor

to propose another or new confession." (847, 4. 5.) Again: "We confess also the First, Unaltered Augsburg Confession as our symbol for this time (not because it was composed by our theologians, but because it has been taken from God's Word and is founded firmly and well therein), precisely in the form in which it was committed to writing in the year 1530, and presented to the Emperor Charles V at Augsburg." (851, 5.)

In like manner the remaining Lutheran symbols were adopted. (852. 777.) Other books, the Formula of Concord declares, are accounted useful, "as far as (*wofern, quatenus*) they are consistent with" the Scriptures and the symbols. (855, 10.) The symbols, however, are accepted "that we may have a unanimously received, definite, common form of doctrine, which all our Evangelical churches together and in common confess, from and according to which, because (*cum, weil*) it has been derived from God's Word, all other writings should be judged and adjusted, as to how far (*wiefern, quatenus*) they are to be approved and accepted." (855, 10.)

After its adoption by the Lutheran electors, princes, and estates, the Formula of Concord, and with it the entire Book of Concord, was, as stated, solemnly subscribed by about 8,000 theologians, pastors, and teachers, the pledge reading as follows: "Since now, in the sight of God and of all Christendom, we wish to testify to those now living and those who shall come after us that this declaration herewith presented concerning all the controverted articles aforementioned and explained, and no other, is our faith, doctrine, and confession in which we are also willing, by God's grace to appear with intrepid hearts before the judgment-seat of Jesus Christ, and give an account of it; and that we will neither privately nor publicly speak or write anything contrary to it, but, by the help of God's grace, intend to abide thereby: therefore, after mature deliberation, we have, in God's fear and with the invocation of His name, attached our signatures with our own hands." (1103, 40.)

Furthermore, in the Preface to the Book of Concord the princes and estates declare that many churches and schools had received the Augsburg Confession "as a symbol of the present time in regard to the chief articles of faith, especially those involved in controversy with the Romanists and various corruptions of the heavenly doctrine." (7.) They solemnly protest that it never entered their minds "either to introduce, furnish a cover for, and establish any false doctrine, or in the least even to recede from the Confession presented in the year 1530 at Augsburg." (15.) They declare: "This Confession also, by the help of God, we will retain to our last breath when we shall go forth from this life to the heavenly fatherland, to appear with joyful and undaunted mind and with a pure conscience before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ." (15.) "Therefore we also have determined not to depart even a finger's breadth either from the subjects themselves or from the phrases which are found in them (*vel a rebus ipsis vel a phrasibus, quae in illa habentur, discedere*), but, the Spirit of the Lord aiding us, to persevere constantly, with the greatest harmony, in this godly agreement, and we intend to examine all controversies according to this true norm and declaration of the pure doctrine." (23.)

## 7. Pledging of Ministers to the Confessions

Such being the attitude of the Lutherans towards their symbols, and such their evaluation of pure doctrine, it was self-evident that the public teachers of their churches should be pledged to the confessions. In December 1529, H. Winckel, of Goettingen, drew up a form in which the candidate for ordination declares: "I believe and hold also of the most sacred Sacrament ... as one ought to believe concerning it according to the contents of the Bible, and as Doctor Martin Luther writes and confesses concerning it especially in his Confession" (of the Lord's Supper, 1528). The Goettingen Church Order of 1530, however, did not as yet embody a vow of ordination. The first pledges to the symbols were demanded by the University of Wittenberg in 1533 from candidates for the degree of Doctor of Divinity. In 1535 this pledge was required also of the candidates for ordination. The oath provided that the candidate must faithfully teach the Gospel without corruption, steadfastly defend the Ecumenical Symbols, remain in agreement with the Augsburg Confession, and before deciding difficult controversies consult older teachers of the Church of the Augsburg Confession. Even before 1549 the candidates for philosophical degrees were also pledged by oath to the Augsburg Confession.

In 1535, at the Diet of Smalcald, it was agreed that new members entering the Smalcald League should promise "to provide for such teaching and preaching as was in harmony with the Word of God and the pure teaching of our [Augsburg] Confession." According to the Pomeranian Church Order which Bugenhagen drew up in 1535, pastors were pledged to the Augsburg Confession and the Apology thereof. Capito, Bucer, and all others who took part in the Wittenberg Concord of 1536, promised, over their signatures, "to believe and to teach in all articles according to the Confession and the Apology." (*Corpus Reformatorum*, opp. Melanthonis, 3, 76.) In 1540, at Goettingen, John Wigand promised to accept the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, and to abide by them all his life. "And," he continued, "if I should be found to do otherwise or be convicted of teaching and confessing contrary to such Confession and Apology, then let me, by this signature, be condemned and deposed from this divine ministry. This do I swear, so help me God." Also at Goettingen, Veit Pflugmacher vowed, in 1541, that he would preach the Gospel in its truth and purity according to the Augsburg Confession and the contents of the postils of Anton Corvinus. He added: "Should I be found to do otherwise and not living up to what has been set forth above, then shall I by such act have deposed myself from office. This do I swear; so help me God."

In 1550 and 1552, Andrew Osiander attacked the oath of confession which was in vogue at Wittenberg, claiming it to be "an entanglement in oath-bound duties after the manner of the Papists." "What else," said he, "does this oath accomplish than to sever those who swear it from the Holy Scriptures and bind them to Philip's doctrine? Parents may therefore well consider what they do by sending their sons to Wittenberg to become Masters and Doctors. Money is there taken from them, and they are made Masters and Doctors. But while the parents think that their son is an excellent man, well versed in the Scriptures and able to silence enthusiasts and heretics, he is, in reality, a poor captive, entangled and embarrassed by oath-bound duties. For he has abjured the Word of God and has taken an oath on Philip's doctrine." Replying to this fanatical charge in 1553, Melancthon emphasized the fact that the doctrinal pledges demanded at Wittenberg had been introduced chiefly by Luther, for the purpose of "maintaining the true doctrine." "For," said Melancthon, "many enthusiasts were roaming about at that time, each, in turn, spreading new silly nonsense, *e. g.*, the Anabaptists, Servetus, Campanus, Schwenckfeld, and others. And such tormenting spirits are not lacking at any time (*Et non desunt tales furiae ullo tempore*)." A doctrinal pledge, Melancthon furthermore explained, was necessary "in order correctly to acknowledge God and call upon Him to preserve harmony in the Church, and to bridle the audacity of such as invent new doctrines." (*C.R.* 12, 5.)

## II. The Three Ecumenical or Universal Symbols

### 8. Ecumenical Symbols

The Ecumenical (general, universal) Symbols were embodied in the Book of Concord primarily for apologetic reasons. Carpzov writes: "The sole reason why our Church appealed to these symbols was to declare her agreement with the ancient Church in so far as the faith of the latter was laid down in these symbols, to refute also the calumniations and the accusations of the opponents, and to evince the fact that she preaches no new doctrine and in no wise deviates from the Church Catholic." (*Isagoge*, 37.) For like reasons Article I of the Augsburg Confession declares its adherence to the Nicene Creed, and the first part of the Smalcald Articles, to the Apostles' and Athanasian Creeds. The oath introduced by Luther in 1535, and required of the candidates for the degree of Doctor of Divinity, also contained a pledge on the Ecumenical Symbols. In 1538 Luther published a tract entitled, "The Three Symbols or Confessions of the Faith of Christ Unanimously Used in the Church," containing the Apostles' Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and the Te Deum of Ambrose and Augustine. To these was appended the Nicene Creed.

In the opening sentences of this tract, Luther remarks: "Whereas I have previously taught and written quite a bit concerning faith, showing both what faith is and what faith does, and have also published my Confession [1528], setting forth both what I believe and what position I intend to maintain; and whereas the devil continues to seek new intrigues against me, I have decided, by way of supererogation, to publish conjointly, in the German tongue, the three so-called Symbols, or Confessions, which have hitherto been received, read, and chanted throughout the Church. I would thereby reaffirm the fact that I side with the true Christian Church, which has adhered to these Symbols, or Confessions, to the present day, and not with the false, vainglorious church, which in reality is the worst enemy of the true Church, having introduced much idolatry beside these beautiful confessions." (St. L. 10, 993; Erl. 23, 252.) Luther's translation of the Ecumenical Symbols, together with the captions which appeared in his tract, were embodied in the Book of Concord. The superscription, "Tria Symbola Catholica seu Oecumenica," occurs for the first time in Selnecker's edition of the Book of Concord of 1580. Before this, 1575, he had written: "Quot sunt Symbola fidei Christianae in Ecclesia? Tria sunt praecipua quae nominantur oecumenica, sive universalia et authentica, id est, habentia auctoritatem et non indigentia demonstratione aut probatione, videlicet Symbolum Apostolicum, Nicaenum et Athanasianum." (Schmauk, *Confessional Principle*, 834.)



## 9. The Apostles' Creed

The foundation of the Apostles' Creed was, in a way, laid by Christ Himself when He commissioned His disciples, saying, Matt. 28, 19, 20: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The formula of Baptism here prescribed, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," briefly indicates what Christ wants Christians to be taught, to believe, and to confess. And the Apostles' Creed, both as to its form and contents, is evidently but an amplification of the trinitarian formula of Baptism. Theo. Zahn remarks: "It has been said, and not without a good basis either, that Christ Himself has ordained the baptismal confession. For the profession of the Triune God made by the candidates for Baptism is indeed the echo of His missionary and baptismal command reechoing through all lands and times in many thousand voices." (*Skizzen aus dem Leben der Kirche*, 252.)

But when and by whom was the formula of Baptism thus amplified? – During the Medieval Ages the Apostles' Creed was commonly known as "The Twelve Articles," because it was generally believed that the twelve apostles, assembled in joint session before they were separated, soon after Pentecost drafted this Creed, each contributing a clause. But, though retained in the Catechismus Romanus, this is a legend which originated in Italy or Gaul in the sixth or seventh (according to Zahn, toward the end of the fourth) century and was unknown before this date. Yet, though it may seem more probable that the Apostles' Creed was the result of a silent growth and very gradual formation corresponding to the ever-changing environments and needs of the Christian congregations, especially over against the heretics, there is no sufficient reason why the apostles themselves should not have been instrumental in its formulation, nor why, with the exception of a number of minor later additions its original form should not have been essentially what it is to-day.

Nathanael confessed: "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel," John 1, 49, the apostles confessed: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Matt. 16, 16; Peter confessed: "We believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God," John 6, 69; Thomas confessed: "My Lord and my God," John 20, 28. These and similar confessions of the truth concerning Himself were not merely approved of, but solicited and demanded by, Christ. For He declares most solemnly: "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven," Matt. 10, 32, 33. The same duty of confessing their faith, *i. e.*, the truths concerning Christ, is enjoined upon all Christians by the Apostle Paul when he writes: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," Rom. 10, 9.

In the light of these and similar passages, the trinitarian baptismal formula prescribed by Christ evidently required from the candidate for Baptism a definite statement of what he believed concerning the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, especially concerning Jesus Christ the Savior. And that such a confession of faith was in vogue even in the days of the apostles appears from the Bible itself. Of Timothy it is said that he had "professed a good profession before many witnesses," 1 Tim. 6, 12. Heb. 4, 14 we read: "Let us hold fast our profession." Heb. 10, 23: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." Jude urges the Christians that they "should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," and build up themselves on their "most holy faith," Jude 3, 20. Compare also 1 Cor. 15, 3, 4; 1 Tim. 3, 16; Titus 1, 13; 3, 4-7.

## 10. Apostles' Creed and Early Christian Writers

The Christian writers of the first three centuries, furthermore, furnish ample proof for the following facts: that from the very beginning of the Christian Church the candidates for Baptism everywhere were required to make a confession of their faith; that from the beginning there was existing in all the Christian congregations a formulated confession which they called the rule of faith, the rule of truth, etc.; that this rule was identical with the confession required of the candidates for Baptism; that it was declared to be of apostolic origin; that the summaries and explanations of this rule of truth, given by these writers, tally with the contents and in part, also with the phraseology of the Apostles' Creed; that the scattered Christian congregations, then still autonomous, regarded the adoption of this rule, of faith as the only necessary condition of Christian unity and fellowship.

The manner in which Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin, Aristides, and other early Christian writers present the Christian truth frequently reminds us of the Apostles' Creed and suggests its existence. Thus Justin Martyr, who died 165, says in his first Apology, which was written about 140: "Our teacher of these things is Jesus Christ, who also was born for this purpose and was crucified under Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea, that we reasonably worship Him, having learned that He is the Son of the true God Himself, and holding Him in the second place, and the prophetic Spirit in the third." "Eternal praise to the Father of all, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Similar strains, sounding like echoes of the Second Article, may be found in the Epistles to the Trallians and to the Christians at Smyrna written by Ignatius, the famous martyr and bishop of Antioch, who died 107.

Irenaeus, who died 189, remarks: Every Christian "who retains immovable in himself the rule of the truth which he received through Baptism (*ho ton kanona tes altheias akline en eauto katechon, hon dia tou baptismatos eilephe*)" is able to see through the deceit of all heresies. Irenaeus here identifies the baptismal confession with what he calls the "rule of truth, *kanon tes eiltheias*" i. e., the truth which is the rule for everything claiming to be Christian. Apparently, this "rule of truth" was the sum of doctrines which every Christian received and confessed at his baptism. The very phrase "rule of truth" implies that it was a concise and definite formulation of the chief Christian truths. For "canon, rule," was the term employed by the ancient Church to designate such brief sentences as were adopted by synods for the practise of the Church. And this "rule of truth" is declared by Irenaeus to be "the old tradition," "the old tradition of the apostles": *he te apo ton apostolon en te ekklesia paradosis*. (Zahn, *l. c.*, 379f.) Irenaeus was the pupil of Polycarp the Martyr; and what he had learned from him, Polycarp had received from the Apostle John. Polycarp, says Irenaeus, "taught the things which he had learned from the apostles, and which the Church has handed down, and which alone are true." According to Irenaeus, then, the "rule of truth" received and confessed by every Christian at his baptism was transmitted by the apostles. The contents of this rule of truth received from the apostles are repeatedly set forth by Irenaeus. In his *Contra Haereses* (I, 10, 1) one of these summaries reads as follows: "The Church dispersed through the whole world, to the ends of the earth has received from the apostles and their disciples the faith in one God, the Father Almighty, who has made heaven and earth and the sea and all things that are in them, and in one Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who has proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations, and the advents, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the bodily assumption into heaven of the beloved Christ Jesus our Lord, and His manifestation from heaven in the glory of the Father." It thus appears that the "rule of truth" as Irenaeus knew it, the formulated sum of doctrines mediated by Baptism, which he, in accordance with the testimony of his teacher Polycarp, believed to have been received from the apostles, at least approaches our present Apostolic Creed.

## 11. Tertullian and Cyprian on Apostles' Creed

A similar result is obtained from the writings of Tertullian, Cyprian, Novatian, Origen and others. "When we step into the water of Baptism," says Tertullian, who died about 220, "we confess the Christian faith according to the words of its law," *i. e.*, according to the law of faith or the rule of faith. Tertullian, therefore, identifies the confession to which the candidates for Baptism were pledged with the brief formulation of the chief Christian doctrines which he variously designates as "the law of faith," "the rule of faith," frequently also as *tessara*, watchword and *sacramentum*, a term then signifying the military oath of allegiance. This Law or Rule of Faith was, according to Tertullian, the confession adopted by Christians everywhere, which distinguished them from unbelievers and heretics. The unity of the congregations, the granting of the greeting of peace, of the name brother, and of mutual hospitality, – these and similar Christian rights and privileges, says Tertullian, "depend on no other condition than the similar tradition of the same oath of allegiance," *i. e.*, the adoption of the same baptismal rule of faith. (Zahn, 250.)

At the same time Tertullian most emphatically claims, "that this rule of faith was established by the apostles, aye, by Christ Himself," inasmuch as He had commanded to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Zahn, 252.) In his book *Adversus Praxeam*, Tertullian concludes an epitome which he gives of "the rule of faith" as follows: "That this rule has come down from the beginning of the Gospel, even before the earlier heretics, and so, of course before the Praxeas of yesterday, is proved both by the lateness of all heretics and by the novelty of this Praxeas of yesterday." (Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, 2, 18.) The following form is taken from Tertullian's *De Virginibus Velandis*: "For the rule of faith is altogether one, alone (*sola*), immovable, and irreformable, namely, believing in one God omnipotent the Maker of the world, and in His Son Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate, raised from the dead the third day, received into the heavens, sitting now at the right hand of the Father who shall come to judge the living and the dead, also through the resurrection of the flesh." Cyprian the Martyr, bishop of Carthage, who died 257, and who was the first one to apply the term *symbolum* to the baptismal creed, in his Epistle to Magnus and to Januarius, as well as to other Numidian bishops, gives the following as the answer of the candidate for Baptism to the question, "Do you believe?": "I believe in God the Father, in His Son Christ, in the Holy Spirit. I believe the remission of sins, and the life eternal through the holy Church."

## 12. Variations of the Apostles' Creed

While there can be no reasonable doubt either that the Christian churches from the very beginning were in possession of a definite and formulated symbol, or that this symbol was an amplification of the trinitarian formula of Baptism, yet we are unable to ascertain with any degree of certainty what its exact original wording was. There has not been found in the early Christian writers a single passage recording the precise form of the baptismal confession or the rule of truth and faith as used in the earliest churches. This lack of contemporaneous written records is accounted for by the fact that the early Christians and Christian churches refused on principle to impart and transmit their confession in any other manner than by word of mouth. Such was their attitude, not because they believed in keeping their creed secret, but because they viewed the exclusively oral method of impartation as the most appropriate in a matter which they regarded as an affair of deepest concern of their hearts.

It is universally admitted, even by those who believe that the apostles were instrumental in formulating the early Christian Creed, that the wording of it was not absolutely identical in all Christian congregations, and that in the course of time various changes and additions were made. "Tradition," says Tertullian with respect to the baptismal confession, received from the apostles, "has enlarged it, custom has confirmed it, faith observes and preserves it." (Zahn, 252. 381.) When, therefore, Tertullian and other ancient writers declare that the rule of faith received from the apostles is "altogether one, immovable, and irreformable," they do not at all mean to say that the phraseology of this symbol was alike everywhere, and that in this respect no changes whatever had been made, nor that any clauses had been added. Such variations, additions, and alterations, however, involved a doctrinal change of the confession no more than the Apology of the Augsburg Confession implies a doctrinal departure from this symbol. It remained the same Apostolic Creed, the changes and additions merely bringing out more fully and clearly its true, original meaning. And this is the sense in which Tertullian and others emphasize that the rule of faith is "one, immovable, and irreformable."

The oldest known form of the Apostles' Creed, according to A. Harnack, is the one used in the church at Rome, even prior to 150 A.D. It was, however, as late as 337 or 338, when this Creed, which, as the church at Rome claimed, was brought thither by Peter himself, was for the first time quoted as a whole by Bishop Marcellus of Ancyra in a letter to Bishop Julius of Rome, for the purpose of vindicating his orthodoxy. During the long period intervening, some changes, however, may have been, and probably were, made also in this Old Roman Symbol, which reads as follows: —

*Pisteuo eis theon patera pantokratora; kai eis Christon Iesoun [ton] huion autou ton monogene, ton kupion hemon, ton gennethenta ek pneumatou hagiou kai Marias tes parthenou, ton epi Pontiou Pilatou staurothenta kai taphenta, te trite hemera anastanta ek [ton] nekron, anabanta eis tous ouranous, kathemenon en dexia tou patros, hothen erchetai krinai zontas kai nekrous; kai eis pneuma hagion, hagian ekklesian aphasin hamartion, sapkos anastasini.* (Herzog, R. E. 1, 744.)

### 13. Present Form of Creed and Its Contents

The complete form of the present *textus receptus* of the Apostles' Creed, evidently the result of a comparison and combination of the various preexisting forms of this symbol, may be traced to the end of the fifth century and is first found in a sermon by Caesarius of Arles in France, about 500. – In his translation, Luther substituted "Christian" for "catholic" in the Third Article. He regarded the two expressions as equivalent in substance, as appears from the Smalcald Articles, where he identifies these terms, saying: "Sic enim orant pueri: Credo sanctam ecclesiam catholicam sive Christianam." (472, 5; 498, 3.) The form, "I believe a holy Christian Church," however, is met with even before Luther's time. (Carpzov, *Isagoge*, 46.) – In the Greek version the received form of the Apostles' Creed reads as follows: —

*Pisteuo eis theon patera, pantokratora, poieten ouranou kai ges. Kai eis Iesoun Christon, huion autou ton monogene, ton kurion hemon, ton sullephthenta ek pneumatos hagiou, gennethenta ek Marias tes parthenou, pathonta epi Pontiou Pilatou, staurothenta, thanonta, kai taphenta, anastanta apo ton nekron, anelthonta eis tous ouranous, kathezomenon en dexia theou patros pantodunamou, ekeithen erchomenon krinai zontas kai nekrous. Pisteuo eis to pneuma to hagion, hagian ekklesian, hagion koinonian, aphesin hamartion sarkos anastasin, zoen aionion, Amen.*

As to its contents, the Apostles' Creed is a positive statement of the essential facts of Christianity. The Second Article, says Zahn, is "a compend of the Evangelical history, including even external details." (264.) Yet some of the clauses of this Creed were probably inserted in opposition to prevailing, notably Gnostic, heresies of the first centuries. It was the first Christian symbol and, as Tertullian and others declare, the bond of unity and fellowship of the early Christian congregations everywhere. It must not, however, be regarded as inspired, much less as superior even to the Holy Scriptures; for, as stated above, it cannot even, in any of its existing forms, be traced to the apostles. Hence it must be subjected to, and tested and judged by, the Holy Scriptures, the inspired Word of God and the only infallible rule and norm of all doctrines, teachers, and symbols. In accordance herewith the Lutheran Church receives the Apostles' Creed, as also the two other ecumenical confessions, not as *per se* divine and authoritative, but because its doctrine is taken from, and well grounded in, the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments. (CONC. TRIGL. 851, 4.)

## 14. The Nicene Creed

In the year 325 Emperor Constantine the Great convened the First Ecumenical Council at Nicaea, in Bithynia, for the purpose of settling the controversy precipitated by the teaching of Arius, who denied the true divinity of Christ. The council was attended by 318 bishops and their assistants, among whom the young deacon Athanasius of Alexandria gained special prominence as a theologian of great eloquence, acumen, and learning. "The most valiant champion against the Arians," as he was called, Athanasius turned the tide of victory in favor of the Homoousians, who believed that the essence of the Father and of the Son is identical. The discussions were based upon the symbol of Eusebius of Caesarea, which by changes and the insertion of Homoousian phrases (such as *ek tes ousias tou patrous; gennetheis, ou poietheis; homoousios to patri*) was amended into an unequivocal clean-cut, anti-Arian confession. Two Egyptian bishops who refused to sign the symbol were banished, together with Arius, to Illyria. The text of the original Nicene Creed reads as follows:

—  
*Pisteuomen eis hena theon, patera pantokratora, panton oraton te kai aoraton poieten. Kai eis hena kurion Iesoun Christon, ton huion tou theou, gennethenta ek tou patros monogene, toutestin ek tes ousias tou patros, theon ek theou, phos ek photos, theon alethinon ek theou alethinou, gennethenta, ou poiethenta, homoousion to patri, di' ou ta panta egeneto, ta te en to ourano kaita epi tes ges; ton di' hemas tous anthropous kai dia ten hemeteran soterian katelthonta kai sarkothenta kai enanthropesanta, pathonta, kai anastanta te trite hemera, kai anelthonta eis tous ouranous, kai erchomenon palin krinai zontas kai nekrous. Kai eis to pneuma to hagion. Tous de legontas, hoti pote hote ouk en, kai hoti ex ouk onton egeneto, en ex heteras hupostaseos e ousias phaskontas einai, e ktiston, e alloioton, e trepton ton huion tou theou, toutous anathematizei he katholike kai apostolike ekklesia. (Mansi, Amplissima Collectio, 2, 665 sq.)*

## 15. Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed

In order to suppress Arianism, which still continued to flourish, Emperor Theodosius convened the Second Ecumenical Council, in 381 at Constantinople. The bishops here assembled, 150 in number, resolved that the faith of the Nicene Fathers must ever remain firm and unchanged, and that its opponents, the Eunomians, Anomoeans, Arians, Eudoxians, Semi-Arians, Sabellians, Marcellians, Photinians, and Apollinarians, must be rejected. At this council also Macedonius was condemned, who taught that the Holy Spirit is not God: *elege gar auto me einai theon, alla tes theontos tou patros allotrion*. (Mansi, 3, 568. 566. 573. 577. 600.) By omissions, alterations, and additions (in particular concerning the Holy Spirit) this council gave to the Nicene Creed its present form. Hence it is also known as the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed. The Third Ecumenical Council, which assembled at Toledo, Spain, in 589, inserted the word "Filioque," an addition which the Greek Church has never sanctioned, and which later contributed towards bringing about the great Eastern Schism. A. Harnack considers the Constantinopolitanum (CPanum), the creed adopted at Constantinople, to be the baptismal confession of the Church of Jerusalem, which, he says, was revised between 362 and 373 and amplified by the Nicene formulas and a rule of faith concerning the Holy Ghost. (Herzog, *R. E.*, 11, 19f.) Following is the text of the CPanum according to Mansi:

*Pisteuomen eis hena theon patera, pantokratora, poietai ouranou kai ges, oratwn te pantwn kai aoratwn. Kai eis hena kurion Iesoun Christon ton huion tou theou ton monogene, ton ek tou patros gennethenta pro panton ton aionon, phos ek photos, theon alethinon ek theou alethinou, gennethevta, ou poiethenta, homoousion to patri, di' ou ta panta egeneto, ton di' hemas tous anthropous kai dia ten hemeteran soterian katelthovnta ek tou ouranon, kai sarkothenta ek pneumatos hagiou kai Marias tes parthenou, kai enanthropesanta, staurothenta te huper hemon epi Pontiou Pilatou, kai pathonta, kai taphenta, kai anastanta te trite hemera kata tas graphas, kai anelthonta eis tous ouranous, kai kathezomenon ek dexion tou patros, kai palin erchomenon meta doxes krinai zontas kai nekrous; ou tes basileias ouk estai telos. Kai eis pneuma to hagion, to kurion, to zoopoion, to ek tou patros ekporeuomenon, to sun patri kai huio sumproskunoumenon kai sundoxazovmenon, to lalesan dia ton propheton, eis mian hagian katholiken kai apostoliken ekklesian. Homologoumen hen baptisma eis aphesis hamartion; prosdokomen anastasin nekron, kai zwn tou mellontos aionos. Amen. (3, 565.)*

## 16. The Athanasian Creed

From its opening word this Creed is also called *Symbolum Quicunque*. Roman tradition has it that Athanasius, who died 373, made this confession before Pope Julius when the latter summoned him "to submit himself to him [the Pope], as to the ecumenical bishop and Supreme arbiter of matters ecclesiastical (*ut ei, seu episcopo oecumica et supremo rerum ecclesiasticarum arbitro, sese submitteret*)." However, Athanasius is not even the author of this confession, as appears from the following facts: 1. The Creed was originally written in Latin. 2. It is mentioned neither by Athanasius himself nor by his Greek eulogists. 3. It was unknown to the Greek Church till about 1200, and has never been accorded official recognition by this Church nor its "orthodox" sister churches. 4. It presupposes the post-Athanasian Trinitarian and Christological controversies. – Up to the present day it has been impossible to reach a final verdict concerning the author of the *Quicunque* and the time and place of its origin. Koellner's *Symbolik* allocates it to Gaul. Loofs inclines to the same opinion and ventures the conjecture that the source of this symbol must be sought in Southern Gaul between 450 and 600. (Herzog, *R. E.*, 2, 177.) Gieseler and others look to Spain for its origin.

Paragraphs 1, 2, and 40 of the Athanasian Creed have given offense not only to theologians who advocate an undogmatic Christianity, but to many thoughtless Christians as well. Loofs declares: The *Quicunque* is unevangelical and cannot be received because its very first sentence confounds *fides* with *expositio fidei*. (H., *R. E.*, 2, 194.) However, the charge is gratuitous, since the Athanasian Creed deals with the most fundamental Christian truths: concerning the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and His work of redemption, without the knowledge of which saving faith is impossible. The paragraphs in question merely express the clear doctrine of such passages of the Scriptures as Acts 4, 12: "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved;" John 8, 21: "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins"; John 14, 6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." In complete agreement with the impugned statements of the Athanasian Creed, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession closes its article "Of God" as follows: "Therefore we do freely conclude that they are all idolatrous, blasphemers, and outside of the Church of Christ who hold or teach otherwise." (103)

In the early part of the Middle Ages the *Quicunque* had already received a place in the order of public worship. The Council of Vavre resolved, 1368: "Proinde Symbolum Apostolorum silenter et secrete dicitur quotidie in Completorio et in Prima, quia fuit editum tempore, quo nondum erat fides catholica propalata. Alia autem duo publice in diebus Dominicis et festivis, quando maior ad ecclesiam congregatur populus, decantantur, quia fuere edita tempore fidei propalatae. Symbolum quidem Nicaenum post evangelium cantatur in Missa quasi evangelicae fidei expositio. Symbolum Athanasii de mane solum cantatur in Prima, quia fuit editum tempore quo maxime fuerunt depulsa et detecta nox atra et tenebrae haeresium et errorum." (Mansi, 26, 487.) Luther says: "The first symbol, that of the apostles, is indeed the best of all, because it contains a concise, correct and splendid presentation of the articles of faith and is easily learned by children and the common people. The second, the Athanasian Creed, is longer ... and practically amounts to an apology of the first symbol." "I do not know of any more important document of the New Testament Church since the days of the apostles" [than the Athanasian Creed]. (St. L. 10, 994; 6, 1576; E. 23, 253.)



## 17. Luther on Ecumenical Creeds

The central theme of the Three Ecumenical Symbols is Christ's person and work, the paramount importance of which Luther extols as follows in his tract of 1538: "In all the histories of the entire Christendom I have found and experienced that all who had and held the chief article concerning Jesus Christ correctly remained safe and sound in the true Christian faith. And even though they erred and sinned in other points, they nevertheless were finally preserved." "For it has been decreed, says Paul, Col. 2, 9, that in Christ should dwell all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, or personally, so that he who does not find or receive God in Christ shall never have nor find Him anywhere outside of Christ, even though he ascend above heaven, descend below hell, or go beyond the world." "On the other hand, I have also observed that all errors, heresies, idolatries, offenses, abuses, and ungodliness within the Church originally resulted from the fact that this article of faith concerning Jesus Christ was despised or lost. And viewed clearly and rightly, all heresies militate against the precious article of Jesus Christ, as Simeon says concerning Him, Luke 2, 34, that He is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and for a sign which is spoken against; and long before this, Isaiah, chapter 8, 14, spoke of Him as 'a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.'" "And we in the Papacy, the last and greatest of saints, what have we done? We have confessed that He [Christ] is God and man; but that He is our Savior, who died and rose for us, etc., this we have denied and persecuted with might and main" (those who taught this). "And even now those who claim to be the best Christians and boast that they are the Holy Church, who burn the others and wade in innocent blood, regard as the best doctrine [that which teaches] that we obtain grace and salvation through our own works. Christ is to be accorded no other honor with regard to our salvation than that He made the beginning, while we are the heroes who complete it with our merit."

Luther continues: "This is the way the devil goes to work. He attacks Christ with three storm-columns. One will not suffer Him to be God; the other will not suffer Him to be man, the third denies that He has merited salvation for us. Each of the three endeavors to destroy Christ. For what does it avail that you confess Him to be God if you do not also believe that He is man? For then you have not the entire and the true Christ, but a phantom of the devil. What does it avail you to confess that He is true man if you do not also believe that He is true God? What does it avail you to confess that He is God and man if you do not also believe that whatever He became and whatever He did was done for you?" "Surely, all three parts must be believed, namely, that He is God, also, that He is man, and that He became such a man for us, that is, as the first symbol says: conceived by the Holy Ghost born of the Virgin Mary, suffered, was crucified, died, and rose again, etc. If one small part is lacking, then all parts are lacking. For faith shall and must be complete in every particular. While it may indeed be weak and subject to afflictions, yet it must be entire and not false. Weakness [of faith] does not work the harm but false faith – that is eternal death." (St. L. 10, 998; E. 23, 258.)

Concerning the mystery involved in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the chief topic of the Ecumenical Creeds, Luther remarks in the same tract: "Now, to be sure, we Christians are not so utterly devoid of all reason and sense as the Jews consider us, who take us to be nothing but crazy geese and ducks, unable to perceive or notice what folly it is to believe that God is man, and that in one Godhead there are three distinct persons. No, praise God, we perceive indeed that this doctrine cannot and will not be received by reason. Nor are we in need of any sublime Jewish reasoning to demonstrate this to us. We believe it knowingly and willingly. We confess and also experience that, where the Holy Spirit does not, surpassing reason, shine into the heart, it is impossible to grasp, or to believe, and abide by, such article; moreover, there must remain in it [the heart] a Jewish, proud, and supercilious reason deriding and ridiculing such article, and thus setting up itself as judge and master of the Divine Being whom it has never seen nor is able to see and hence does not know what it is passing judgment on, nor whereof it thinks or speaks. For God dwells in a 'light which no man

can approach unto,' 1 Tim. 6, 16. He must come to us, yet hidden in the lantern, and as it is written, John 1, 18: 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him,' and as Moses said before this, Ex. 33: 'There shall no man see Me [God] and live.'" (St. L. 10, 1007; E. 23, 568.)

### **III. The Augsburg Confession**

#### **18. Diet Proclaimed by Emperor**

January 21, 1530, Emperor Charles V proclaimed a diet to convene at Augsburg on the 8th of April. The manifesto proceeded from Bologna, where, three days later, the Emperor was crowned by Pope Clement VII. The proclamation, after referring to the Turkish invasion and the action to be taken with reference to this great peril, continues as follows: "The diet is to consider furthermore what might and ought to be done and resolved upon regarding the division and separation in the holy faith and the Christian religion; and that this may proceed the better and more salubriously, [the Emperor urged] to allay divisions, to cease hostility, to surrender past errors to our Savior, and to display diligence in hearing, understanding, and considering with love and kindness the opinions and views of everybody, in order to reduce them to one single Christian truth and agreement, to put aside whatever has not been properly explained or done by either party, so that we all may adopt and hold one single and true religion; and may all live in one communion, church, and unity, even as we all live and do battle under one Christ."

In his invitation to attend the diet, the Emperor at the same time urged the Elector of Saxony by all means to appear early enough (the Elector reached Augsburg on May 2 while the Emperor did not arrive before June 16), "lest the others who arrived in time be compelled to wait with disgust, heavy expenses and detrimental delay such as had frequently occurred in the past." The Emperor added the warning: In case the Elector should not appear, the diet would proceed as if he had been present and assented to its resolutions. (Foerstemann, *Urkundenbuch*, 1, 7 f.)

March 11 the proclamation reached Elector John at Torgau. On the 14th Chancellor Brueck advised the Elector to have "the opinion on which our party has hitherto stood and to which they have adhered," in the controverted points, "properly drawn up in writing, with a thorough confirmation thereof from the divine Scriptures." On the same day the Elector commissioned Luther, Jonas, Bugenhagen, and Melanchthon to prepare a document treating especially of "those articles on account of which said division, both in faith and in other outward church customs and ceremonies, continues." (43.) At Wittenberg the theologians at once set to work, and the result was presented at Torgau March 27 by Melanchthon. On April 4 the Elector and his theologians set out from Torgau, arriving at Coburg on the 15th, where they rested for eight days. On the 23d of April the Elector left for Augsburg, while Luther, who was still under the ban of both the Pope and the Emperor, remained at the fortress Ebernburg. Nevertheless he continued in close touch with the confessors, as appears from his numerous letters written to Augsburg, seventy all told about twenty of which were addressed to Melanchthon.

## 19. Apology Original Plan of Lutherans

The documents which the Wittenberg theologians delivered at Torgau treated the following subjects: Human Doctrines and Ordinances, Marriage of Priests, Both Kinds, Mass, Confession, Power of Bishops, Ordination, Monastic Vows, Invocation of the Saints, German Singing, Faith and Works, Office of the Keys (Papacy), Ban, Marriage, and Private Mass. Accordingly, the original intention of the Lutherans was not to enter upon, and present for discussion at Augsburg, such doctrines as were not in controversy (Of God, etc.), but merely to treat of the abuses and immediately related doctrines, especially of Faith and Good Works. (66 ff.) They evidently regarded it as their chief object and duty to justify before the Emperor and the estates both Luther and his protectors, the electors of Saxony. This is borne out also by the original Introduction to the contemplated Apology, concerning which we read in the prefatory remarks to the so-called Torgau Articles mentioned above: "To this end [of justifying the Elector's peaceable frame of mind] it will be advantageous to begin [the projected Apology] with a lengthy rhetorical introduction." (68; *C. R.*, 26, 171.) This introduction, later on replaced by another, was composed by Melanchthon at Coburg and polished by him during the first days at Augsburg. May 4 he remarks in a letter to Luther: "I have shaped the Exordium of our Apology somewhat more rhetorical (*hretorikoteron*) than I had written it at Coburg." (*C. R.*, 2, 40; Luther, *St. L.* 16, 652.) In this introduction Melanchthon explains: Next to God the Elector builds his hope on the Emperor, who had always striven for peace, and was even now prepared to adjust the religious controversy in mildness. As to the Elector and his brother Frederick, they had ever been attached to the Christian religion, had proved faithful to the Emperor, and had constantly cultivated peace. Their present position was due to the fact that commandments of men had been preached instead of faith in Christ. Not Luther, but Luther's opponents, had begun the strife. It was for conscience' sake that the Elector had not proceeded against Luther. Besides, such action would only have made matters worse, since Luther had resisted the Sacramentarians and the Anabaptists. Equally unfounded were also the accusations that the Evangelicals had abolished all order as well as all ceremonies, and had undermined the authority of the bishops. If only the bishops would tolerate the Gospel and do away with the gross abuses, they would suffer no loss of power, honor, and prestige. In concluding Melanchthon emphatically protests: "Never has a reformation been undertaken so utterly without any violence as this [in Saxony]; for it is a public fact that our men have prevailed with such as were already in arms to make peace." (Kolde, *l. c.*, 13.) The document, accordingly, as originally planned for presentation at Augsburg, was to be a defense of Luther and his Elector. In keeping herewith it was in the beginning consistently designated "Apology."

## 20. Transformation of Apology into Confession Due to Eck's Slanders

This plan, however, was modified when the Lutherans, after reaching Augsburg, heard of and read the 404 Propositions published by Dr. John Eck, in which Luther was classified with Zwingli, Oecolampadius, Carlstadt, Pirkheimer, Hubmaier, and Denk, and was charged with every conceivable heresy. In a letter of March 14, accompanying the copy of his Propositions which Eck sent to the Emperor, he refers to Luther as the domestic enemy of the Church (*hostis ecclesiae domesticus*), who has fallen into every Scylla and Charybdis of iniquity; who speaks of the Pope as the Antichrist and of the Church as the harlot; who has praise for none but heretics and schismatics; whom the Church has to thank for the Iconoclasts, Sacramentarians, New Hussites, Anabaptists, New Epicureans, who teach that the soul is mortal, and the Cerinthians; who rehashes all the old heresies condemned more than a thousand years ago, etc. (Plitt, *Einleitung in die Augustana*, 1, 527 ff.) Such and similar slanders had been disseminated by the Papists before this, and they continued to do so even after the Lutherans, at Augsburg, had made a public confession of their faith and had most emphatically disavowed all ancient and modern heresies. Thus Cochlaeus asserted in his attack on the Apology, published 1534, that Lutheranism was a concoction of all the old condemned heresies, that Luther taught fifteen errors against the article of God, and Melancthon nine against the Nicene Creed, etc. Luther, he declared, had attacked the doctrine of the Trinity in a coarser fashion than Arius. (Salig, *Historie d. Augsb. Konf.*, 1, 377.)

These calumnies caused the Lutherans to remodel and expand the defense originally planned into a document which should not merely justify the changes made by them with regard to customs and ceremonies, but also present as fully as possible the doctrinal articles which they held over against ancient and modern heresies, falsely imputed to them. Thus to some extent it is due to the scurrility of Eck that the contemplated Apology was transformed into an all-embracing Confession, a term employed by Melancthon himself. In a letter to Luther, dated May 11, 1530, he wrote: "Our Apology is being sent to you – though it is rather a Confession. *Mittitur tibi apologia nostra, quamquam verius confessio est.* I included [in the Confession] almost all articles of faith, because Eck published most diabolical lies against us, *quia Eckius edidit diabolikontatas diabolos contra nos.* Against these it was my purpose to provide an antidote." (C. R. 2, 45; Luther, St. L. 16, 654.)

This is in accord also with Melancthon's account in his Preface of September 29, 1559 to the German *Corpus Doctrinae* (Philippicum), stating: "Some papal scribblers had disseminated pasquinades at the diet [at Augsburg, 1530], which reviled our churches with horrible lies, charging that they taught many condemned errors, and were like the Anabaptists, erring and rebellious. Answer had to be made to His Imperial Majesty, and in order to refute the pasquinades, it was decided to include all articles of Christian doctrine in proper succession, that every one might see how unjustly our churches were slandered in the lying papal writings. ... Finally, this Confession was, as God directed and guided, drawn up by me in the manner indicated, and the venerable Doctor Martin Luther was pleased with it." (C. R. 9, 929.)

The original plan, however, was not entirely abandoned, but merely extended by adding a defense also against the various heresies with which the Lutherans were publicly charged. This was done in an objective presentation of the principal doctrines held by the Lutherans, for which the Marburg and Schwabach Articles served as models and guides.

## 21. Marburg, Schwabach, and Torgau Articles

The material from which Melanchthon constructed the Augsburg Confession is, in the last analysis, none other than the Reformation truths which Luther had proclaimed since 1517 with ever-increasing clarity and force. In particular, he was guided by, and based his labor on, the Marburg Articles, the Schwabach Articles, and the so-called Torgau Articles. The Marburg Articles, fifteen in number, had been drawn up by Luther, in 1529, at the Colloquy of Marburg, whence he departed October 6, about six months before the Diet at Augsburg. (Luther, St. L., 17, 1138 f.) The seventeen Schwabach Articles were composed by Luther, Melanchthon, Jonas, Brenz and Agricola, and presented to the Convention at Smalcald about the middle of October, 1529. According to recent researches the Schwabach Articles antedated the Marburg Articles and formed the basis for them. (Luther, Weimar Ed., 30, 3, 97, 107.) In 1530 Luther published these Articles, remarking: "It is true that I helped to draw up such articles; for they were not composed by me alone." This public statement discredits the opinion of v. Schubert published in 1908 according to which Melanchthon is the sole author of the Schwabach Articles, Luther's contribution and participation being negligible. The Schwabach Articles constitute the seventeen basic articles of the first part of the Augsburg Confession. (St. L. 16, 638. 648. 564; C. R. 26, 146 f.)

The so-called Torgau Articles are the documents referred to above, touching chiefly upon the abuses. Pursuant to the order of the Elector, they were prepared by Luther and his assistants, Melanchthon, Bugenhagen, and possibly also Jonas. They are called Torgau Articles because the order for drafting them came from Torgau (March 14), and because they were presented to the Elector at Torgau. (Foerstemann, 1, 66; C. R. 26, 171; St. L. 16, 638.) With reference to these articles Luther wrote (March 14) to Jonas, who was then still conducting the visitation: "The Prince has written to us, that is, to you, Pomeranus, Philip, and myself, in a letter addressed to us in common, that we should come together set aside all other business, and finish before next Sunday whatever is necessary for the next diet on April 8. For Emperor Charles himself will be present at Augsburg to settle all things in a friendly way, as he writes in his bull. Therefore, although you are absent, we three shall do what we can today and tomorrow; still, in order to comply with the will of the Prince, it will be incumbent upon you to turn your work over to your companions and be present with us here on the morrow. For things are in a hurry. *Festinata enim sunt omnia.*" (St. L. 16, 638.)

Melanchthon also wrote to Jonas on the 15th of March: "Luther is summoning you by order of the Prince; you will therefore come as soon as it is at all possible. The Diet, according to the proclamation, will convene at Augsburg. And the Emperor graciously promises that he will investigate the matter, and correct the errors on both sides. May Christ stand by us!" (C. R. 2, 28; Foerstemann, 1, 45.) It was to these articles (Torgau Articles) that the Elector referred when he wrote to Luther from Augsburg on the 11th of May: "After you and others of our learned men at Wittenberg, at our gracious desire and demand, have drafted the articles which are in religious controversy, we do not wish to conceal from you that Master Philip Melanchthon has now at this place perused them further and drawn them up in one form." (C. R. 2, 47.)

## 22. Luther's Spokesman at Augsburg

The material, therefore, out of which Melanchthon, who in 1530 was still in full accord with Luther doctrinally, framed the fundamental symbol of the Lutheran Church were the thoughts and, in a large measure, the very words of Luther. Melanchthon gave to the Augsburg Confession its form and its irenic note, its entire doctrinal content, however must be conceded to be "*iuxta sententiam Lutheri*, according to the teaching of Luther," as Melanchthon himself declared particularly with respect to the article of the Lord's Supper. (C. R. 2, 142.) On the 27th of June, two days after the presentation of the Confession, Melanchthon wrote to Luther: "We have hitherto followed your authority, *tuam secuti hactenus auctoritatem*," and now, says Melanchthon, Luther should also let him know how much could be yielded to the opponents. (2, 146.) Accordingly, in the opinion of Melanchthon, Luther, though absent, was the head of the Evangelicals also at Augsburg.

In his answer Luther does not deny this, but only demands of Melanchthon to consider the cause of the Gospel as his own. "For," says he, "it is indeed my affair, and, to tell the truth, my affair more so than that of all of you." Yet they should not speak of "authority." "In this matter," he continues, "I will not be or be called your author [authority]; and though this might be correctly explained, I do not want this word. If it is not your affair at the same time and in the same measure, I do not desire that it be called mine and be imposed upon you. If it is mine alone, I shall direct it myself." (St. L. 16, 906. 903. Enders, *Luthers Briefwechsel*, 8, 43.)

Luther, then, was the prime mover also at Augsburg. Without him there would have been no Evangelical cause, no Diet of Augsburg, no Evangelical confessors, no Augsburg Confession. And this is what Luther really meant when he said: "*Confessio Augustana mea*; the Augsburg Confession is mine." (Walch 22, 1532.) He did not in the least thereby intend to deprive Melanchthon of any credit properly due him with reference to the Confession. Moreover, in a letter written to Nicolaus Hausmann on July 6, 1530, Luther refers to the Augustana as "our confession, which our Philip prepared; *quam Philippus noster paravit*." (St. L. 16, 882; Enders 8, 80.) As a matter of fact, however, the day of Augsburg, even as the day of Worms, was the day of Luther and of the Evangelical truth once more restored to light by Luther. At Augsburg, too, Melanchthon was not the real author and moving spirit, but the instrument and mouthpiece of Luther, out of whose spirit the doctrine there confessed had proceeded. (See Formula of Concord 983, 32 – 34.)

Only blindness born of false religious interests (indifferentism, unionism, etc.) can speak of Melanchthon's theological independence at Augsburg or of any doctrinal disagreement between the Augsburg Confession and the teaching of Luther. That, at the Diet, he was led, and wished to be led, by Luther is admitted by Melanchthon himself. In the letter of June 27, referred to above, he said: "The matters, as you [Luther] know, have been considered before, though in the combat it always turns out otherwise than expected." (St. L. 16, 899; C. R. 2, 146.) On the 31st of August he wrote to his friend Camerarius: "Hitherto we have yielded nothing to our opponents, except what Luther judged should be done, since the matter was considered well and carefully before the Diet; *re bene ac diligenter deliberata ante conventum*." (2, 334.)

Very pertinently E. T. Nitzsch said of Melanchthon (1855): "With the son of the miner, who was destined to bring good ore out of the deep shaft, there was associated the son of an armorer, who was well qualified to follow his leader and to forge shields, helmets, armor, and swords for this great work." This applies also to the Augsburg Confession, in which Melanchthon merely shaped the material long before produced by Luther from the divine shafts of God's Word. Replying to Koeller, Rueckert, and Heppe, who contend that the authorship of the Augsburg Confession must in every way be ascribed to Melanchthon, Philip Schaff writes as follows: "This is true as far as the spirit [which Luther called 'pussyfooting,' *Leisetreten*] and the literary composition are concerned; but as to

the doctrines Luther had a right to say, 'The Catechism, the Exposition of the Ten Commandments, and the Augsburg Confession are *mine*.'" (*Creeds* 1, 229.)



## 23. Drafting the Confession

May 11 the Confession was so far completed that the Elector was able to submit it to Luther for the purpose of getting his opinion on it. According to Melanchthon's letter of the same date, the document contained "almost all articles of faith, *omnes fere articulos fidei*." (C. R. 2, 45.) This agrees with the account written by Melanchthon shortly before his death, in which he states that in the Augsburg Confession he had presented "the sum of our Church's doctrine," and that in so doing he had arrogated nothing to himself; for in the presence of the princes, etc., each individual sentence had been discussed. "Thereupon," says Melanchthon, "the entire Confession was sent also to Luther, who informed the princes that he had read it and approved it. The princes and other honest and learned men still living will remember that such was the case. *Missa est denique et Luthero tota forma Confessionis, qui Principibus scripsit, se hanc Confessionem et legisse et probare. Haec ita acta esse, Principes et alii honesti et docti viri adhuc superstites meminerint*." (9, 1052.) As early as May 15 Luther returned the Confession with the remark: "I have read Master Philip's Apology. I am well pleased with it, and know nothing to improve or to change in it; neither would this be proper, since I cannot step so gently and softly. Christ, our Lord, grant that it may produce much and great fruit which, indeed, we hope and pray for. Amen." (St. L. 16, 657.) Luther is said to have added these words to the Tenth Article: "And they condemn those who teach otherwise, *et improbant secus docentes*." (Enders, 7, 336.)

Up to the time of its presentation the Augsburg Confession was diligently improved, polished, perfected, and partly recast. Additions were inserted and several articles added. Nor was this done secretly and without Luther's knowledge. May 22 Melanchthon wrote to Luther: "Daily we change much in the Apology. I have eliminated the article On Vows, since it was too brief, and substituted a fuller explanation. Now I am also treating of the Power of the Keys. I would like to have you read the articles of faith. If you find no shortcoming in them, we shall manage to treat the remainder. For one must always make some changes in them and adapt oneself to conditions. *Subinde enim mutandi sunt atque ad occasiones accommodandi*." (C. R. 2, 60; Luther, 16, 689.) Improvements suggested by Regius and Brenz were also adopted. (Zoeckler, *Die A. K.*, 18.)

Even Brueck is said to have made some improvements. May 24 the Nuernberg delegates wrote to their Council: "The Saxon Plan [Apology] has been returned by Doctor Luther. But Doctor Brueck, the old chancellor, still has some changes to make at the beginning and the end." (C. R. 2, 62.) The expression "beginning and end (*hinten und vorne*)," according to Tschackert, is tantamount to "all over (*ueberall*)." However, even before 1867 Plitt wrote it had long ago been recognized that this expression refers to the Introduction and the Conclusion of the Confession, which were written by Brueck. (Aug. 2, 11.) Bretschneider is of the same opinion. (C. R. 2, 62.) June 3 the Nuernberg delegates wrote: "Herewith we transmit to Your Excellencies a copy of the Saxon Plan [Confession] in Latin, together with the Introduction or Preamble. At the end, however, there are lacking one or two articles [20 and 21] and the Conclusion, in which the Saxon theologians are still engaged. When that is completed, it shall be sent to Your Excellencies. Meanwhile Your Excellencies may cause your learned men and preachers to study it and deliberate upon it. When this Plan [Confession] is drawn up in German, it shall not be withheld from Your Excellencies. The Saxons, however, distinctly desire that, for the present, Your Excellencies keep this Plan or document secret, and that you permit no copy to be given to any one until it has been delivered to His Imperial Majesty. They have reasons of their own for making this request. ... And if Your Excellencies' pastors and learned men should decide to make changes or improvements in this Plan or in the one previously submitted, these, too, Your Excellencies are asked to transmit to us." (2, 83.) June 26 Melanchthon wrote to Camerarius: "Daily I changed and recast much; and I would have changed still more if our advisers (*sumphradmones*) had permitted us to do so." (2, 140.)

## 24. Public Reading of the Confession

June 15, after long negotiations, a number of other estates were permitted to join the adherents of the Saxon Confession. (C. R. 2, 105.) As a result, Melancthon's Introduction, containing a defense of the Saxon Electors, without mentioning the other Lutheran estates, no longer fitted in with the changed conditions. Accordingly, it was supplanted by the Preface composed by Brueck, and translated into Latin by Justus Jonas, whose acknowledged elegant Latin and German style qualified him for such services. At the last deliberation, on June 23, the Confession was signed. And on June 25, at 3 P.M., the ever-memorable meeting of the Diet took place at which the Augustana was read by Chancellor Beyer in German, and both manuscripts were handed over. The Emperor kept the Latin copy for himself, and gave the German copy to the Imperial Chancellor, the Elector and Archbishop Albrecht, to be preserved in the Imperial Archives at Mainz. Both texts, therefore, the Latin as well as the German, have equal authority, although the German text has the additional distinction and prestige of having been publicly read at the Diet.

As to where and how the Lutheran heroes confessed their faith, Kolde writes as follows: "The place where they assembled on Saturday, June 25, at 3 P.M., was not the courtroom, where the meetings of the Diet were ordinarily conducted, but, as the Imperial Herald, Caspar Sturm, reports, the 'Pfalz,' the large front room, *i. e.*, the Chapter-room of the bishop's palace, where the Emperor lived. The two Saxon chancellors, Dr. Greg. Brueck and Dr. Chr. Beyer, the one with the Latin and the other with the German copy of the Confession, stepped into the middle of the hall, while as many of the Evangelically minded estates as had the courage publicly to espouse the Evangelical cause arose from their seats. Caspar Sturm reports: 'Als aber die gemeldeten Commissarii und Botschaften der oesterreichischen Lande ihre Werbung und Botschaft vollendet und abgetreten, sind darauf von Stund' an Kurfuerst von Sachsen naemlich Herzog Johannes, Markgraf Joerg von Brandenburg, Herzog Ernst samt seinem Bruder Franzisko, beide Herzoege zu Braunschweig und Lueneburg, Landgraf Philipp von Hessen, Graf Wolf von Anhalt usw. von ihrer Session auf; und gegen Kaiserliche Majestaet gestanden.' The Emperor desired to hear the Latin text. But when Elector John had called attention to the fact that the meeting was held on German soil, and expressed the hope that the Emperor would permit the reading to proceed in German, it was granted. Hereupon Dr. Beyer read the Confession. The reading lasted about two hours; but he read with a voice so clear and plain that the multitude, which could not gain access to the hall, understood every word in the courtyard." (19 f.)

The public reading of the Confession exercised a tremendous influence in every direction. Even before the Diet adjourned, Heilbronn, Kempten, Windsheim, Weissenburg and Frankfurt on the Main professed their adherence to it. Others had received the first impulse which subsequently induced them to side with the Evangelicals. Brenz has it that the Emperor fell asleep during the reading. However, this can have been only temporarily or apparently, since Spalatin and Jonas assure us that the Emperor, like the other princes and King Ferdinand, listened attentively. Their report reads: "*Satis attentus erat Caesar*, The Emperor was attentive enough." Duke William of Bavaria declared: "Never before has this matter and doctrine been presented to me in this manner." And when Eck assured him that he would undertake to refute the Lutheran doctrine with the Fathers, but not with the Scriptures, the Duke responded, "Then the Lutherans, I understand, sit in the Scriptures and we of the Pope's Church beside the Scriptures! *So hoer' ich wohl, die Lutherischen sitzen in der Schrift und wir Pontificii daneben!*" The Archbishop of Salzburg declared that he, too desired a reformation, but the unbearable thing about it was that one lone monk wanted to reform them all. In private conversation, Bishop Stadion of Augsburg exclaimed, "What has been read to us is the truth, the pure truth, and we cannot deny it." (St. L. 16, 882; Plitt, *Apologie*, 18.) Father Aegidius, the Emperor's confessor, said to Melancthon, "You have a theology which a person can understand only if he prays much."

Campegius is reported to have said that for his part he might well permit such teaching; but it would be a precedent of no little consequence, as the same permission would then have to be given other nations and kingdoms, which could not be tolerated. (Zoeckler, A. K., 24.)

## 25. Luther's Mild Criticism

June 26 Melanchthon sent a copy of the Confession, as publicly read, to Luther, who adhering to his opinion of May 15, praised it yet not without adding a grain of gentle criticism. June 29 he wrote to Melanchthon: "I have received your Apology and can not understand what you may mean when you ask what and how much should be yielded to the Papists. ... As far as I am concerned too much has already been yielded (*plus satis cessum est*) in this Apology; and if they reject it, I see nothing that might be yielded beyond what has been done, unless I see the proofs they proffer, and clearer Bible-passages than I have hitherto seen. ... As I have always written – I am prepared to yield everything to them if we are but given the liberty to teach the Gospel. I cannot yield anything that militates against the Gospel." (St. L. 16, 902; Enders, 8, 42. 45.) The clearest expression of Luther's criticism is found in a letter to Jonas, dated July 21, 1530. Here we read: "Now I see the purpose of those questions [on the part of the Papists] whether you had any further articles to present. The devil still lives, and he has noticed very well that your Apology steps softly, and that it has veiled the articles of Purgatory, the Adoration of the Saints, and especially that of the Antichrist, the Pope." Another reading of this passage of Luther: "*Apologiam vestram, die Leisetreterin, dissimulasse*," is severer even than the one quoted: "*Apologiam vestram leise treten et dissimulasse*." (St. L. 16, 2323, Enders, 8, 133.)

Brenz regarded the Confession as written "very courteously and modestly, *valde de civiliter et modeste*." (C. R. 2, 125.) The Nuernberg delegates had also received the impression that the Confession, while saying what was necessary, was very reserved and discreet. They reported to their Council: "Said instruction [Confession], as far as the articles of faith are concerned, is substantially like that which we have previously sent to Your Excellencies, only that it has been improved in some parts, and throughout made as mild as possible (*allenthalben aufs glimpflichste gemacht*), yet, according to our view, without omitting anything necessary." (2, 129.) At Smalcald, in 1537, the theologians were ordered by the Princes and Estates "to look over the Confession, to make no changes pertaining to its contents or substance, nor those of the Concord [of 1536], but merely to enlarge upon matters regarding the Papacy, which, for certain reasons, was previously omitted at the Diet of Augsburg in submissive deference to His Imperial Majesty." (Kolde, *Analecta*, 297.)

Indirectly Melanchthon himself admits the correctness of Luther's criticism. True, when after the presentation of the Confession he thought of the angry Papists, he trembled fearing that he had written too severely. June 26 he wrote to his most intimate friend, Camerarius: "Far from thinking that I have written milder than was proper, I rather strongly fear (*mirum in modum*) that some have taken offense at our freedom. For Valdes, the Emperor's secretary, saw it before its presentation and gave it as his opinion that from beginning to end it was sharper than the opponents would be able to endure." (C. R. 2, 140.) On the same day he wrote to Luther: "According to my judgment, the Confession is severe enough. For you will see that I have depicted the monks sufficiently." (141.)

In two letters to Camerarius, however, written on May 21 and June 19, respectively, hence before the efforts at toning down the Confession were completed, Melanchthon expressed the opinion that the Confession could not have been written "in terms more gentle and mild, *mitior et lenior*." (2, 57.) No doubt, Melanchthon also had in mind his far-reaching irenics at Augsburg, when he wrote in the Preface to the Apology of the Augsburg Confession: "It has always been my custom in these controversies to retain, so far as I was at all able, the form of the customarily received doctrine, in order that at some time concord might the more readily be effected. Nor, indeed, am I now departing far from this custom, although I could justly lead away the men of this age still farther from the opinions of the adversaries." (101, 11.) Evidently, Melanchthon means to emphasize that in the Augustana he had been conservative criticizing only when compelled to do so for conscience' sake.

## 26. Luther Praising Confession and Confessors

Luther's criticism did not in the least dampen his joy over the glorious victory at Augsburg nor lessen his praise of the splendid confession there made. In the above-mentioned letter of June 27 he identifies himself fully and entirely with the Augustana and demands that Melanchthon, too, consider it an expression of his own faith, and not merely of Luther's faith. July 3 he wrote to Melanchthon: "Yesterday I reread carefully your entire Apology, and it pleases me extremely (*vehementer*).\" (St. L. 16, 913; Enders, 8, 79.) July 6 he wrote a letter to Cordatus in which he speaks of the Augustana as "altogether a most beautiful confession, *plane pulcherrima confessio*." At the same time he expresses his great delight over the victory won at Augsburg, applying to the Confession Ps. 119, 46: "I will speak of Thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed," – a text which ever since has remained the motto, appearing on all of its subsequent manuscripts and printed copies.

Luther said: "I rejoice beyond measure that I lived to see the hour in which Christ was publicly glorified by such great confessors of His, in so great an assembly, through this in every respect most beautiful Confession. And the word has been fulfilled [Ps. 119, 46]: 'I will speak of Thy testimonies also before kings;' and the other word will also be fulfilled: 'I was not confounded.' For, 'Whosoever confesses Me before men' (so speaks He who lies not), 'him will I also confess before My Father which is in heaven.'" (16, 915; E. 8, 83.) July 9 Luther wrote to Jonas "Christ was loudly proclaimed by means of the public and glorious Confession (*publica et gloriosa confessione*) and confessed in the open (*am Lichte*) and in their [the Papists'] faces, so that they cannot boast that we fled, had been afraid, or had concealed our faith. I only regret that I was not able to be present when this splendid Confession was made (*in hac pulchra confessione*).\" (St. L. 16, 928; E. 8, 94.)

On the same day, July 9, Luther wrote to the Elector: "I know and consider well that our Lord Christ Himself comforts the heart of Your Electoral Grace better than I or any one else is able to do. This is shown, too, and proved before our eyes by the facts, for the opponents think that they made a shrewd move by having His Imperial Majesty prohibit preaching. But the poor deluded people do not see that, through the written Confession presented to them, more has been preached than otherwise perhaps ten preachers could have done. Is it not keen wisdom and great wit that Magister Eisleben and others must keep silence? But in lieu thereof the Elector of Saxony, together with other princes and lords, arises with the written Confession and preaches freely before His Imperial Majesty and the entire realm, under their noses so that they must hear and cannot gainsay. I think that thus the order prohibiting preaching was a success indeed. They will not permit their servants to hear the ministers, but must themselves hear something far worse (as they regard it) from such great lords, and keep their peace. Indeed, Christ is not silent at the Diet; and though they be furious, still they must hear more by listening to the Confession than they would have heard in a year from the preachers. Thus is fulfilled what Paul says: God's Word will nevertheless have free course. If it is prohibited in the pulpit, it must be heard in the palaces. If poor preachers dare not speak it, then mighty princes and lords proclaim it. In brief, if everything keeps silence, the very stones will cry out, says Christ Himself.\" (16, 815.) September 15, at the close of the Diet, Luther wrote to Melanchthon: "You have confessed Christ, offered peace, obeyed the Emperor, endured reproach, been sated with slander, and have not recompensed evil for evil; in sum you have performed the holy work of God, as becomes saints, in a worthy manner. ... I shall canonize you (*canonizabo vos*) as faithful members of Christ.\" (16, 2319; E. 8, 259.)

## 27. Manuscripts and Editions of Augustana

As far as the text of the Augsburg Confession is concerned, both of the original manuscripts are lost to us. Evidently they have become a prey to Romish rage and enmity. Eck was given permission to examine the German copy in 1540, and possibly at that time already it was not returned to Mainz. It may have been taken to Trent for the discussions at the Council, and thence carried to Rome. The Latin original was deposited in the Imperial Archives at Brussels, where it was seen and perused by Lindanus in 1562. February 18, 1569, however, Philip II instructed Duke Alva to bring the manuscript to Spain, lest the Protestants "regard it as a Koran," and in order that "such a damned work might forever be destroyed; *porque se hunda para siempre tan malvada obra.*" The keeper of the Brussels archives himself testifies that the manuscript was delivered to Alva. There is, however, no lack of other manuscripts of the Augsburg Confession. Up to the present time no less than 39 have been found. Of these, five German and four Latin copies contain also the signatures. The five German copies are in verbal agreement almost throughout, and therefore probably offer the text as read and presented at Augsburg.

The printing of the Confession had been expressly prohibited by the Emperor. June 26 Melanchthon wrote to Veit Dietrich: "Our Confession has been presented to the Emperor. He ordered that it be not printed. You will therefore see that it is not made public." (C. R. 2, 142.) However, even during the sessions of the Diet a number of printed editions six in German and one in Latin, were issued by irresponsible parties. But since these were full of errors, and since, furthermore, the Romanists asserted with increasing boldness and challenge that the Confession of the Lutherans had been refuted, by the Roman Confutation, from the Scriptures and the Fathers, Melanchthon, in 1530, had a correct edition printed, which was issued, together with the Apology, in May, 1531. This quarto edition ("Beide, Deutsch Und Lateinisch Ps. 119") is regarded as the *editio princeps*.

For years this edition was also considered the authentic edition of the Augsburg Confession. Its Latin text was embodied 1584 in the Book of Concord as the *textus receptus*. But when attention was drawn to the changes in the German text of this edition (also the Latin text had been subjected to minor alterations), the Mainz Manuscript was substituted in the German Book of Concord, as its Preface explains. (14.) This manuscript, however contains no original signatures and was erroneously considered the identical document presented to the Emperor, of which it was probably but a copy. In his Introduction to the Symbolical Books, J. T. Mueller expresses the following opinion concerning the Mainz Manuscript: "To say the least, one cannot deny that its text, as a rule, agrees with that of the best manuscripts, and that its mistakes can easily be corrected according to them and the *editio princeps*, so that we have no reason to surrender the text received by the Church and to accept another in place thereof, of which we cannot prove either that it is any closer to the original." (78.) Tschackert, who devoted much study to the manuscripts of the Augsburg Confession, writes: "The Saxon theologians acted in good faith, and the Mainz copy is still certainly better than Melanchthon's original imprint [the *editio princeps*] yet, when compared with the complete and – because synchronous with the originally presented copy – reliable manuscripts of the signers of the Confession, the Mainz Manuscript proves to be defective in quite a number of places." (L.c. 621 f.)

However, even Tschackert's minute comparison shows that the Mainz Manuscript deviates from the original presented to the Emperor only in unimportant and purely formal points. For example, in sec. 20 of the Preface the words: "Papst das Generalkonzilium zu halten nicht geweigert, so waere E. K. M. gnaediges Erbieten, zu fordern und zu handeln, dass der" are omitted. Art. 27 sec. 48 we are to read: "dass die erdichteten geistlichen Orden Staende sind christlicher Vollkommenheit" instead of: "dass die erdichteten geistlichen Ordensstaende sind christliche Vollkommenheit." Art. 27, sec. 61 reads, "die Uebermass der Werke," instead of, "die Uebermasswerke," by the way, an excellent expression, which should again be given currency in the German. The conclusion of sec.

2 has "Leichpredigten" instead of "Beipredigten." According to the manuscripts, also the Mainz Manuscript, the correct reading of sec. 12 of the Preface is as follows: "Wo aber bei unsern Herrn, Freunden und besonders den Kurfuersten, Fuersten und Staenden des andern Teils die Handlung dermassen, wie E. K. M. Ausschreiben vermag (bequeme Handlung unter uns selbst in Lieb und Guetigkeit) nicht verfangen noch erspriesslich sein wollte" etc. The words, "bequeme Handlung unter uns selbst in Lieb' und Guetigkeit," are quoted from the imperial proclamation. (Foerstemann, 7, 378; Plitt, 2, 12.)

Originally only the last seven articles concerning the abuses had separate titles, the doctrinal articles being merely numbered, as in the Marburg and Schwabach Articles, which Melancthon had before him at Augsburg. (Luther, Weimar 30, 3, 86. 160.) Nor are the present captions of the doctrinal articles found in the original German and Latin editions of the Book of Concord, Article XX forming a solitary exception; for in the German (in the Latin Concordia, too, it bears no title) it is superscribed: "Vom Glauben und guten Werken, Of Faith and Good Works." This is probably due to the fact that Article XX was taken from the so-called Torgau Articles and, with its superscription there, placed among the doctrinal articles. In the German edition of 1580 the word "Schluss" is omitted where the Latin has "Epilogus."

As to the translations, even before the Confession was presented to the Emperor, it had been rendered into French. (This translation was published by Foerstemann, 1, 357.) The Emperor had it translated for his own use into both Italian and French. (C. R. 2, 155; Luther, St. L., 16, 884.) Since then the Augustana has been done into Hebrew, Greek, Spanish, Portuguese, Belgian, Slavic, Danish, Swedish, English, and many other languages. As to the English translations, see page 6. [tr. note: numbered section 4, above]

## 28. Signatures of Augsburg Confession

Concerning the signatures of the Augustana, Tschackert writes as follows: The names of the signers are most reliably determined from the best manuscript copies of the original of the Confession, which have been preserved to us. There we find the signatures of eight princes and two free cities, to wit, Elector John of Saxony, Margrave George of Brandenburg-Ansbach, Duke Ernest of Braunschweig-Lueneburg, Landgrave Philip of Hesse, then John Frederick, the Electoral Prince of Saxony, Ernest's brother Francis of Braunschweig-Lueneburg, Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt, Count Albrecht of Mansfeld, and the cities Nuernberg and Reutlingen. (*L.c.* 285; see also Luther's letter of July 6, 1530, St. L. 16, 882.) Camerarius, in his *Life of Melanchthon*, relates that Melanchthon desired to have the Confession drawn up in the name of the theologians only, but that his plan did not prevail because it was believed that the signatures of the princes would lend prestige and splendor to the act of presenting this confession of faith. Besides, this plan of Melanchthon's was excluded by the Emperor's proclamation.

Although Philip of Hesse, in the interest of a union with the Swiss, had zealously, but in vain, endeavored to secure for the article concerning the Lord's Supper a milder form still, in the end, he did not refuse to sign. Regius wrote to Luther, May 21, that he had discussed the entire cause of the Gospel with the Landgrave, who had invited him to dinner, and talked with him for two hours on the Lord's Supper. The Prince had presented all the arguments of the Sacramentarians and desired to hear Regius refute them. But while the Landgrave did not side with Zwingli (*non sentit cum Zwinglio*), yet he desired with all his heart an agreement of the theologians, as far as piety would permit (*exoptat doctorum hominum concordiam, quantum sinit pietas*). He was far less inclined to dissension than rumor had it before his arrival. He would hardly despise the wise counsel of Melanchthon and others. (Kolde, *Analecta*, 125; see also *C. R.* 2, 59, where the text reads, "*nam sentit cum Zwinglio*" instead of, "*non sentit cum Zwinglio*.") Accordingly, the mind of the Landgrave was not outright Zwinglian, but unionistic. He regarded the followers of Zwingli as weak brethren who must be borne with, and to whom Christian fellowship should not be refused. This also explains how the Landgrave could sign the Augustana, and yet continue his endeavors to bring about a union.

May 22 Melanchthon wrote to Luther: "The Macedonian [Philip of Hesse] now contemplates signing our formula of speech, and it appears as if he can be drawn back to our side; still, a letter from you will be necessary. Therefore I beg you most urgently that you write him, admonishing him not to burden his conscience with a godless doctrine." Still the Landgrave did not change his position in the next few weeks. June 25, however, Melanchthon reported to Luther: "The Landgrave approves our Confession and has signed it. You will, I hope accomplish much if you seek to strengthen him by writing him a letter." (*C. R.* 2, 60. 92. 96. 101. 103. 126; Luther St. L., 16, 689; 21a, 1499.)

At Augsburg, whither also Zwingli had sent his *Fidei Ratio*, the South-German imperial cities (Strassburg, Constance, Memmingen, Lindau) presented the so-called *Confessio Tetrapolitana*, prepared by Bucer and Capito, which declares that the Sacraments are "holy types," and that in the Lord's Supper the "true body" and the "true blood" of Christ "are truly eaten and drunk as meat and drink for the souls which are thereby nourished unto eternal life." However, in 1532 these cities, too, signed the Augsburg Confession.

Thus the seed which Luther sowed had grown wonderfully. June 25, 1530, is properly regarded as the real birthday of the Lutheran Church. From this day on she stands before all the world as a body united by a public confession and separate from the Roman Church. The lone, but courageous confessor of Worms saw himself surrounded with a stately host of true Christian heroes, who were not afraid to place their names under his Confession, although they knew that it might cost them goods and blood, life and limb. When the Emperor, after entering Augsburg, stubbornly demanded that the Lutherans cease preaching, Margrave George of Brandenburg finally declared: "Rather than



deny my God and suffer the Word of God to be taken from me, I will kneel down and have my head struck off." (C. R. 2, 115.) That characterizes the pious and heroic frame of mind of all who signed the Augustana in 1530 In a letter, of June 18, to Luther, Jonas relates how the Catholic princes and estates knelt down to receive the blessing of Campegius when the latter entered the city, but that the Elector remained standing and declared: "To God alone shall knees be bowed; *In Deo flectenda sunt genua.*" (Kolde, *Analecta*, 135.) When Melancthon called the Elector's attention to the possible consequences of his signing the Augsburg Confession, the latter answered that he would do what was right, without concerning himself about his electoral dignity; he would confess his Lord, whose cross he prized higher than all the power of the world.

Brenz wrote: "Our princes are most steadfast in confessing the Gospel, and surely, when I consider their great steadfastness, there comes over me no small feeling of shame because we poor beggars [theologians] are filled with fear of the Imperial Majesty." (C. R. 2, 125.) Luther praises Elector John for having suffered a bitter death at the Diet of Augsburg. There, says Luther, he had to swallow all kinds of nasty soups and poison with which the devil served him; at Augsburg he publicly, before all the world, confessed Christ's death and resurrection, and hazarded property and people, yea, his own body and life; and because of the confession which he made we shall honor him as a Christian. (St. L. 12, 2078 f.) And not only the Lutheran Church, but all Protestant Christendom, aye, the entire world has every reason to revere and hold sacred the memory of the heroes who boldly affixed their names to the Confession of 1530.

## 29. Tributes to Confession of Augsburg

From the moment of its presentation to the present day, men have not tired of praising the Augsburg Confession, which has been called *Confessio augusta*, *Confessio augustissima*, the "*Evangelischer Augapfel*," etc. They have admired its systematic plan, its completeness, comprehensiveness, and arrangement; its balance of mildness and firmness; its racy vigor, freshness, and directness; its beauty of composition, "the like of which can not be found in the entire literature of the Reformation period." Spalatin exclaims: "A Confession, the like of which was never made, not only in a thousand years, but as long as the world has been standing!" Sartorius: "A confession of the eternal truth, of true ecumenical Christianity, and of all fundamental articles of the Christian faith!" "From the Diet of Augsburg, which is the birthday of the Evangelical Church Federation, down to the great Peace Congress of Muenster and Osnabrueck, this Confession stands as the towering standard in the entire history of those profoundly troublous times, gathering the Protestants about itself in ever closer ranks, and, when assaulted by the enemies of Evangelical truth with increasing fury, is defended by its friends in severe fighting, with loss of goods and blood, and always finally victoriously holds the field. Under the protection of this banner the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany has been built up on firm and unassailable foundations: under the same protection the Reformed Church in Germany has found shelter. But the banner was carried still farther; for all Swedes, Danes, Norwegians, and Prussians have sworn allegiance to it, and the Esthonians, Latts, Finns, as well as all Lutherans of Russia, France, and other lands recognize therein the palladium of their faith and rights. No other Protestant confession has ever been so honored." (Guericke, *Kg.*, 3, 116 f.)

Vilmar says in praise of the Confession: "Whoever has once felt a gentle breath of the bracing mountain air which is wafted from this mighty mountain of faith [the Augsburg Confession] no longer seeks to pit against its firm and quiet dignity his own uncertain, immature, and wavering thoughts nor to direct the vain and childish puff of his mouth against that breath of God in order to give it a different direction." (*Theol. d. Tatsachen*, 76.) In his Introduction to the Symbolical Books, J. T. Mueller says: "Luther called the Diet of Augsburg 'the last trumpet before Judgment Day;' hence we may well call the confession there made the *blast* of that trumpet, which, indeed, has gone forth into all lands, even as the Gospel of God which it proclaims in its purity." (78.) The highest praise, however, is given the Augsburg Confession by the Church which was born with it, when, *e. g.*, in the Formula of Concord, the Lutherans designate it as "the symbol of our time," and glory in it as the Confession, which, though frowned upon and assailed by its opponents, "down to this day has remained unrefuted and unoverthrown (bis auf diesen Tag unwiderlegt und unumgestossen geblieben)." (777, 4; 847, 3.)

## IV. Melanchthon's Alterations of the Augsburg Confession

### 30. Changes Unwarranted

Melanchthon continued uninterruptedly to polish and correct the Augsburg Confession till immediately before its presentation on June 25, 1530. While, indeed he cannot be censured for doing this, it was though originally not so intended by Melanchthon, an act of presumption to continue to alter the document after it had been adopted, signed, and publicly presented. Even the *editio princeps* of 1531 is no longer in literal agreement with the original manuscripts. For this reason the German text embodied in the Book of Concord is not the one contained in the *editio princeps*, but that of the Mainz Manuscript, which, as stated, was erroneously believed to be the identical German copy presented to the Emperor. The Latin text of the *editio princeps*, embodied in the Book of Concord, had likewise undergone some, though unessential, changes. These alterations became much more extensive in the Latin octavo edition of 1531 and in the German revision of 1533. The Variata of 1540 and 1542, however, capped the climax as far as changes are concerned, some of them being very questionable also doctrinally. In their "Approbation" of the Concordia Germanico-Latina, edited by Reineccius, 1708, the Leipzig theologians remark pertinently: Melanchthon found it "impossible to leave a book as it once was." Witness his *Loci* of 1521, which he remodeled three times – 1535, 1542, and 1548. However, the *Loci* were his own private work while the Augustana was the property and confession of the Church.

Tschackert is right when he comments as follows: "To-day it is regarded as an almost incomprehensible trait of Melanchthon's character that immediately after the Diet and all his lifetime he regarded the Confession as a private production of his pen, and made changes in it as often as he had it printed, while he, more so than others, could but evaluate it as a state-paper of the Evangelical estates, which, having been read and delivered in solemn session, represented an important document of German history, both secular and ecclesiastical. In extenuation it is said that Melanchthon made these changes in pedagogical interests, namely, in order to clarify terms or to explain them more definitely; furthermore, that for decades the Evangelical estates and theologians did not take offense at Melanchthon's changes. Both may be true. But this does not change the fact that the chief editor of the Confession did not appreciate the world-historical significance of this state-paper of the Evangelical estates." (*L.c.* 288.) Nor can it be denied that Melanchthon made these changes, not merely in pedagogical interests, but, at least a number of them, also in the interest of his deviating dogmatic views and in deference to Philip of Hesse, who favored a union with the Swiss. Nor can Melanchthon be fully cleared of dissimulation in this matter. The revised Apology of 1540, for example, he openly designated on the titlepage as "diligently revised, *diligenter recognita*"; but in the case of the Augsburg Confession of 1540 and 1542 he in no way indicated that it was a changed and augmented edition.

As yet it has not been definitely ascertained when and where the terms "Variata" and "Invariata" originated. At the princes' diet of Naumburg, in 1561, the Variata was designated as the "amended" edition. The Reuss Confession of 1567 contains the term "unaltered Augsburg Confession." In its Epitome as well as in its Thorough Declaration the Formula of Concord speaks of "the First Unaltered Augsburg Confession — *Augustana illa prima et non mutata Confessio*." (777, 4; 851, 5.) The Preface to the Formula of Concord repeatedly speaks of the Variata of 1540 as "the other edition of the Augsburg Confession — *altera Augustanae Confessionis editio*." (13 f.)

### 31. Detrimental Consequences of Alterations

The changes made in the Augsburg Confession brought great distress, heavy cares, and bitter struggles upon the Lutheran Church both from within and without. Church history records the manifold and sinister ways in which they were exploited by the Reformed as well as the Papists; especially by the latter (the Jesuits) at the religious colloquies beginning 1540, until far into the time of the Thirty Years' War, in order to deprive the Lutherans of the blessings guaranteed by the religious Peace of Augsburg, 1555. (Salig, *Gesch. d. A. K.*, 1, 770 ff.; *Lehre und Wehre* 1919, 218 ff.)

On Melanchthon's alterations of the Augsburg Confession the Romanists, as the Preface to the Book of Concord explains, based the reproach and slander that the Lutherans themselves did not know "which is the true and genuine Augsburg Confession." (15.) Decrying the Lutherans, they boldly declared "that not two preachers are found who agree in each and every article of the Augsburg Confession, but that they are rent asunder and separated from one another to such an extent that they themselves no longer know what is the Augsburg Confession and its proper sense." (1095.) In spite of the express declaration of the Lutherans at Naumburg, 1561, that they were minded to abide by the original Augsburg Confession as presented to Emperor Charles V at Augsburg, 1530, the Papists and the Reformed did not cease their calumniations, but continued to interpret their declarations to mean, "as though we [the Lutherans] were so uncertain concerning our religion, and so often had transfused it from one formula to another, that it was no longer clear to us or our theologians what is the Confession once offered to the Emperor at Augsburg." (11.)

As a result of the numerous and, in part radical changes made by Melanchthon in the Augsburg Confession, the Reformed also, in the course of time more and more, laid claim to the Variata and appealed to it over against the loyal Lutherans. In particular, they regarded and interpreted the alteration which Melanchthon had made in Article X, Of the Lord's Supper, as a correction of the original Augustana in deference to the views of Calvinism. Calvin declared that he (1539 at Strassburg) had signed the Augustana "in the sense in which its author [Melanchthon] explains it (*sicut eam auctor ipse interpretatur*)." And whenever the Reformed, who were regarded as confessionally related to the Augsburg Confession (*Confessioni Augustanae addicti*), and as such shared in the blessings of the Peace of Augsburg (1555) and the Peace of Westphalia (1648), adopted, and appealed to, the Augustana, they interpreted it according to the Variata.

Referring to this abuse on the part of the Reformed and Crypto-Calvinists, the Preface to the Book of Concord remarks: "To these disadvantages [the slanders of the Romanists] there is also added that, under the pretext of the Augsburg Confession [Variata of 1540], the teaching conflicting with the institution of the Holy Supper of the body and blood of Christ and also other corruptions were introduced here and there into the churches and schools." (11. 17.) – Thus the changes made in the Augsburg Confession did much harm to the Lutheran cause. Melanchthon belongs to the class of men that have greatly benefited our Church, but have also seriously harmed it. "These fictions" of the adversaries, says the Preface to the Book of Concord concerning the slanders based on Melanchthon's changes "have deterred and alienated many good men from our churches, schools, doctrine, faith, and confession." (11.)

## 32. Attitude toward Variata

John Eck was the first who, in 1541, at the religious colloquy of Worms, publicly protested against the Variata. But since it was apparent that most of the changes were intended merely as reinforcements of the Lutheran position against the Papists, and Melanchthon also declared that he had made no changes in "the matter and substance or in the sense," *i. e.*, in the doctrine itself, the Lutherans at that time, as the Preface to the Book of Concord shows, attached no further importance to the matter. The freedom with which in those days formal alterations were made even in public documents, and the guilelessness with which such changes were received, appears, for example, from the translation of the Apology by Justus Jonas. However, not all Lutherans even at that time were able to view Melanchthon's changes without apprehension and indifference. Among these was Elector John Frederick, who declared that he considered the Augustana to be the confession of those who had signed it, and not the private property of Melanchthon.

In his admonition to Brueck of May 5, 1537, he says: "Thus Master Philip also is said to have arrogated to himself the privilege of changing in some points the Confession of Your Electoral Grace and the other princes and estates, made before His Imperial Majesty at Augsburg, to soften it and to print it elsewhere [a reprint of the changed Latin octavo edition of 1531 had been published 1535 at Augsburg and another at Hagenau] without the previous knowledge and approval of Your Electoral Grace and of the other estates which, in the opinion of Your Electoral Grace, he should justly have refrained from, since the Confession belongs primarily to Your Electoral Grace and the other estates; and from it [the alterations made] Your Electoral Grace and the other related estates might be charged that they are not certain of their doctrine and are also unstable. Besides, it is giving an offense to the people." (C. R. 3, 365.) Luther, too, is said to have remonstrated with Melanchthon for having altered the Confession. In his Introduction to the Augsburg Confession (Koenigsberg, 1577) Wigand reports: "I heard from Mr. George Rorarius that Dr. Luther said to Philip, 'Philip, Philip, you are not doing right in changing Augustanam Confessionem so often for it is not your, but the Church's book.'" Yet it is improbable that this should have occurred between 1537 and 1542, for in 1540 the Variata followed, which was changed still more in 1542, without arousing any public protest whatever.

After Luther's death, however, when Melanchthon's doctrinal deviations became apparent, and the Melanchthonians and the loyal Lutherans became more and more opposed to one another, the Variata was rejected with increasing determination by the latter as the party-symbol of the Philippists. In 1560 Flacius asserted at Weimar that the Variata differed essentially from the Augustana. In the Reuss-Schoenburg Confession of 1567 the Variata was unqualifiedly condemned; for here we read: We confess "the old, true, unaltered Augsburg Confession, which later was changed, mutilated, misinterpreted, and falsified ... by the Adiaphorists in many places both as regards the words and the substance (*nach den Worten und sonst in den Haendeln*), which thus became a buskin, *Bundschuh*, pantoffle, and a Polish boot, fitting both legs equally well [suited Lutherans as well as Reformed] or a cloak and a changeling (*Wechselbalg*), by means of which Adiaphorists, Sacramentarians, Antinomians, new teachers of works, and the like hide, adorn, defend, and establish their errors and falsifications under the cover and name of the Augsburg Confession, pretending to be likewise confessors of the Augsburg Confession, for the sole purpose of enjoying with us under its shadow, against rain and hail, the common peace of the Empire, and selling, furthering, and spreading their errors under the semblance of friends so much the more easily and safely." (Kolde, *Einleitung*, 30.) In a sermon delivered at Wittenberg, Jacob Andreae also opposed the Variata very zealously.

Thus the conditions without as well as within the Lutheran Church were such that a public declaration on the part of the genuine Lutherans as to their attitude toward the alterations of Melanchthon, notably in the Variata of 1540, became increasingly imperative. Especially the continued slanders, intrigues, and threats of the Papists necessitated such a declaration. As early as

1555, when the Peace of Augsburg was concluded, the Romanists attempted to limit its provisions to the adherents of the Augustana of 1530. At the religious colloquy of Worms, in 1557, the Jesuit Canisius, distinguishing between a pure and a falsified Augustana, demanded that the adherents of the latter be condemned, and excluded from the discussions.

### 33. Alterations in Editions of 1531, 1533, 1540

As to the alterations themselves, the Latin text of the *editio princeps* of the Augsburg Confession of 1531 received the following additions: sec. 3 in Article 13, sec. 8 in Article 18, and sec. 26 in Article 26. Accordingly, these passages do not occur in the German text of the Book of Concord. Originally sec. 2 in the conclusion of Article 21 read: "*Tota dissensio est de paucis quibusdam abusibus*," and sec. 3 in Article 24: "*Nam ad hoc praecipue opus est ceremoniis, ut doceant imperitos*." The additions made to Articles 13 and 18 are also found in the German text of the *editio princeps*. (C. R. 26, 279, 564.)

In the "Approbation" of the Leipzig theologians mentioned above we read: The octavo edition of the Augustana and the Apology printed 1531 by George Rauh, according to the unanimous testimony of our theologians, cannot be tolerated, "owing to the many additions and other changes originating from Philip Melanchthon. For if one compares the 20th Article of the Augsburg Confession as well as the last articles on the Abuses: 'Of Monastic Vows' and 'Of Ecclesiastical Authority,' it will readily be seen what great additions (*lacinae*) have been patched onto this Wittenberg octavo edition of 1531. The same thing has also been done with the Apology, especially in the article 'Of Justification and Good Works,' where often entire successive pages may be found which do not occur in the genuine copies. Furthermore, in the declaration regarding the article 'Of the Lord's Supper,' where Paul's words, that the bread is a communion of the body of Christ, etc., as well as the testimony of Theophylact concerning the presence of the body of Christ in the Supper have been omitted. Likewise in the defense of the articles 'Of Repentance,' 'Of Confession and Satisfaction,' 'Of Human Traditions,' 'Of the Marriage of Priests,' and 'Of Ecclesiastical Power,' where, again, entire pages have been added." (L.c. 8, 13; C. R. 27, 437.) In the German edition of the Augsburg Confession of 1533 it was especially Articles 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 15, and 20 that were remodeled. These alterations, however, involve no doctrinal changes, with the possible exception of Article 5, where the words "where and when He will" are expunged. (C. R. 26, 728.)

As to the Variata of 1540, however, the extent of the 21 doctrinal articles was here almost doubled, and quite a number of material alterations were made. Chief among the latter are the following: In Article 5 the words, "ubi et quando visum est Deo," are omitted. In the 10th Article the rejection of the Reformed doctrine is deleted, and the following is substituted for the article proper: "De coena Domini docent, quod cum pane et vino vere exhibeantur corpus et sanguis Christi vescentibus in Coena Domini." (C. R. 26, 357.) The following sentences have also given offense: "Et cum hoc modo consolamur nos promissione seu Evangelio et erigimus nos fide, certo consequimur remissionem peccatorum, et *simul* datur nobis Spiritus Sanctus." "Cum Evangelium audimus aut cogitamus aut sacramenta tractamus et fide nos consolamur *simul* est efficax Spiritus Sanctus." (354.) For the words of the 18th Article: "sed haec fit in cordibus, cum per Verbum Spiritus Sanctus concipitur," the Variata substitutes: "Et Christus dicit: Sine me nihil potestis facere. Efficitur autem spiritualis iustitia in nobis, cum *audiuvamur* a Spiritu Sancto. Porro Spiritum Sanctum concipimus, cum Verbo Dei assentimur, ut nos fide in terroribus consolemur." (362.) Toward the end of the same article we read: "Quamquam enim externa opera aliquo modo potest efficere humana natura per sese, ... verum timorem, veram fiduciam, patientiam, castitatem non potest efficere, nisi Spiritus Sanctus gubernet et *adiuvet* corda nostra." (363.) In the 19th Article the phrase "non adiuvante Deo" is erased, which, by the way, indicates that Melanchthon regarded these words as equivalent to those of the German text: "so Gott die Hand abgetan," for else he would have weakened the text against his own interests. (363.) To the 20th Article Melanchthon added the sentence: "Debet autem ad haec dona [Dei] accedere exercitatio nostra, quae et *conservat* ea et meretur incrementum, iuxta illud: Habenti dabitur. Et Augustinus praeclare dixit: Dilectio meretur incrementum dilectionis, cum videlicet exercetur." (311.)

### 34. Alterations Render Confession Ambiguous

True in making all these changes, Melanchthon did not introduce any direct heresy into the Variata. He did, however, in the interest of his irenic and unionistic policy and dogmatic vacillations, render ambiguous and weaken the clear sense of the Augustana. By his changes he opened the door and cleared the way, as it were, for his deviations in the direction of Synergism, Calvinism (Lord's Supper), and Romanism (good works are necessary to salvation). Nor was Melanchthon a man who did not know what he was doing when he made alterations. Whenever he weakened and trimmed the doctrines he had once confessed, whether in his *Loci* or in the Augustana, he did so in order to satisfy definite interests of his own, interests self-evidently not subservient to, but conflicting with, the clear expression and bold confession of the old Lutheran truth.

Kolde, referring in particular to the changes made in the 10th Article, says: "It should never have been denied that these alterations involved real changes. The motives which actuated Melanchthon cannot be definitely ascertained, neither from his own expressions nor from contemporary remarks of his circle of acquaintances" [As late as 1575 Selnecker reports that Philip of Hesse had asked Melanchthon to erase the *improbatio* of the 10th Article, because then also the Swiss would accept the Augustana as their confession]. "A comparison with the Wittenberg Concord of May, 1536 (*cum pane et vino vere et substantialiter adesse*— that the body and blood [of Christ] are really and substantially present with the bread and wine, *C. R.* 3, 75) justifies the assumption that by using the form: *cum pane et vino vere exhibeantur*, he endeavored to take into account the existing agreement with the South Germans (*Oberlaender*). However, when, at the same time, he omits the words: *vere et substantialiter adesse*, and the *improbatio*, it cannot, in view of his gradually changed conception of the Lord's Supper, be doubted that he sought to leave open for himself and others the possibility of associating also with the Swiss." (25.)

An adequate answer to the question what prompted Melanchthon to make his alterations will embrace also the following points: 1. Melanchthon's mania for changing and remodeling in general. 2. His desire, especially after the breach between the Lutherans and the Papists seemed incurable, to meet and satisfy the criticism that the Augustana was too mild, and to reenforce the Lutheran position over against the Papists. 3. Melanchthon's doctrinal deviations, especially in Reformed and synergistic directions.



### 35. Variata Disowned by Lutheran Church

It cannot be denied that during Luther's life and for quite a time after his death the Variata was used by Lutherans without any public opposition and recognized as the Augsburg Confession. Martin Chemnitz, in his "Iudicium de Controversiis quibusdam circa quosdam Augustanae Confessionis Articulos – Decision concerning Certain Controversies about Some Articles of the Augsburg Confession," printed 1597, says that the edition of 1540 was employed at the religious colloquies with the previous knowledge and approval of Luther; in fact, that it was drawn up especially for the Colloquy at Hagenau, which the opponents (Cochlaeus at Worms, Pighius at Regensburg) had taken amiss. "Graviter tulerant," says Chemnitz, "multis articulis pleniori declaratione plusculum lucis accessisse, unde videbant veras sententias magis illustrari et Thaidis Babyloniae turpitudinem manifestius denudare – They took it amiss that more light had been shed on many articles by a fuller explanation, whence they perceived the true statements to be more fully illustrated and the shame of the Babylonian Thais to be more fully disclosed." (Mueller, *Einleitung*, 72.)

Furthermore, it is equally certain that on the part of the Lutheran princes, the Variata was employed without any sinister intentions whatever, and without the slightest thought of deviating even in the least from the doctrine of the original Augustana, as has been falsely asserted by Heppe, Weber, and others. Wherever the Variata was adopted by Lutheran princes and theologians, it was never for the purpose of weakening the doctrine of the Augsburg Confession in any point. Moreover, the sole reason always was to accentuate and present more clearly the contrast between themselves and the Papists; and, generally speaking, the Variata did serve this purpose. True, Melancthon at the same time, no doubt planned to prepare the way for his doctrinal innovations; but wherever such was the case he kept it strictly to himself.

The complete guilelessness and good faith in which the Lutheran princes and theologians employed the Variata, and permitted its use appears from the Preface to the Book of Concord. For here they state: "Therefore we have decided in this writing to testify publicly, and to inform all, that we wished neither then nor now in any way to defend, or excuse or to approve, as agreeing with the Gospel-doctrine, false and godless doctrines and opinions which may be concealed under certain coverings of words [in the Variata]. We, indeed, never received the latter edition [of 1540] in a sense differing in any part from the former which was presented [at Augsburg]. Neither do we judge that other useful writings of Dr. Philip Melancthon, or of Brenz, Urban Regius, Pomeranus, etc., should be rejected and condemned, as far as in all things, they agree with the norm which has been set forth in the Book of Concord." (17.)

Accordingly, when the Variata was boldly exploited by the Romanists to circulate all manner of slanders about the Lutherans; when it also became increasingly evident that the Reformed and Crypto-Calvinists employed the Variata as a cover for their false doctrine of the Lord's Supper; when, furthermore within the Lutheran Church the suspicion gradually grew into conviction that Melancthon, by his alterations had indeed intended to foist doctrinal deviations upon the Lutheran Church; and when, finally, a close scrutiny of the Variata had unmistakably revealed the fact that it actually did deviate from the original document not only in extent, but also with regard to intent, not merely formally, but materially as well, – all loyal Lutheran princes and theologians regarded it as self-evident that they unanimously and solemnly declare their exclusive adherence to the Augsburg Confession as presented to Emperor Charles at Augsburg, and abandon the Variata without delay. At Naumburg, in 1561, the Lutheran princes therefore, after some vacillation, declared that they would adhere to the original Augsburg Confession and its "genuine Christian declaration and norm," the Smalcald Articles. Frederick III of the Palatinate alone withdrew, and before long joined the Calvinists by introducing the Heidelberg Catechism, thus revealing the spuriousness of his own Lutheranism.

It was due especially to the Crypto-Calvinists in Electoral Saxony and to the *Corpus Doctrinae Philippicum* that the Variata retained a temporary and local authority, until it was finally and generally disowned by the Lutheran Church and excluded from its symbols by the adoption of the Formula of Concord. For here our Church pledges adherence to "the First, Unaltered Augsburg Confession, delivered to the Emperor Charles V at Augsburg in the year 1530, in the great Diet." (777, 4; 847, 5; 851, 5.) And in the Preface to the Book of Concord the princes and estates declare: "Accordingly, in order that no persons may permit themselves to be disturbed by the charges of our adversaries spun out of their own minds, by which they boast that not even we are certain which is the true and genuine Augsburg Confession, but that both those who are now among the living and posterity may be clearly and firmly taught and informed what that godly Confession is which we and the churches and schools of our realms at all times professed and embraced, we emphatically testify that next to the pure and immutable truth of God's Word we wish to embrace the first Augsburg Confession alone which was presented to the Emperor Charles V, in the year 1530, at the famous Diet of Augsburg, this alone (we say), and no other." (15.) At the same time the princes furthermore protest that also the adoption of the Formula of Concord did not make any change in this respect. For doctrinally the Formula of Concord was not, nor was it intended to be, a "new or different confession," *i. e.*, different from the one presented to Emperor Charles V. (20.)

## V. The Pontifical Confutation of the Augsburg Confession

### 36. Papal Party Refusing Conciliation

At the Diet of Augsburg, convened in order to restore the disturbed religious peace, the Lutherans were the first to take a step towards reconciliation by delivering their Confession, June 25, 1530. In accordance with the manifesto of Emperor Charles, they now expected that the papal party would also present its view and opinion, in order that the discussions might thereupon proceed in love and kindness, as the Emperor put it. In the Preface to their Confession the Lutherans declared: "In obedience to Your Imperial Majesty's wishes, we offer, in this matter of religion the Confession of our preachers and of ourselves, showing what manner of doctrine from the Holy Scriptures and the pure Word of God has been up to this time set forth in our lands, dukedoms, dominions and cities, and taught in our churches. And if the other Electors, Princes, and Estates of the Empire will, according to the said imperial proposition, present similar writings, to wit, in Latin and German, giving their opinions in this matter of religion, we, with the Princes and friends aforesaid, here before Your Imperial Majesty, our most clement Lord, are prepared to confer amicably concerning all possible ways and means, in order that we may come together, as far as this may be honorably done, and, the matter between us on both sides being peacefully discussed without offensive strife, the dissension, by God's help, may be done away and brought back to one true accordant religion; for as we all are under one Christ and do battle under Him, we ought to confess the one Christ, after the tenor of Your Imperial Majesty's edict, and everything ought to be conducted according to the truth of God; and this is what, with most fervent prayers, we entreat of God." (39, 8.)

The Lutherans did not believe that the manifesto of the Emperor could be construed in any other way than that both parties would be treated as equals at the Diet. Not merely as a matter of good policy, but *bona fide*, as honest Germans and true Christians, they clung tenaciously to the words of the Emperor, according to which the Romanists, too, were to be regarded as a party summoned for the trial, the Emperor being the judge. The Lutherans simply refused to take the word of the Emperor at anything less than par, or to doubt his good will and the sincerity of his promise. The fact that from the very beginning his actions were in apparent contravention of the manifesto was attributed by the Lutherans to the sinister influence of such bitter, baiting, and unscrupulous theologians as Eck, Cochlaeus, and Faber, who, they claimed, endeavored to poison and incite the guileless heart of the Emperor. Thus the Lutherans would not and could not believe that Charles had deceived them, – a simple trust, which, however, stubborn facts finally compelled them to abandon.

The Romanists, on the other hand, boasting before the Emperor that they had remained with the true Christian faith, the holy Gospel, the Catholic Church, the bull of the Pope, and the Edict of Worms, refused with equal tenacity to be treated as a party summoned for trial. June 25, 1530, Elector John wrote to Luther: "Thus we and the other princes and estates who are related to us in this matter had to consent to submit our opinion and confession of faith. Our opponents, however, as we are told, declined to present theirs and decided to show to the Emperor that they adhered to the Edict [of Worms] and to the faith which their fathers had bequeathed to and bestowed upon them, and which they intended to adhere to even now; if, however the Pope or, in his place, the Legate, together with His Imperial Majesty, would point out, and expect them to adopt, a different and new faith, they would humbly hear the Emperor's opinion." (Luther, St. L. 16, 758.)

Thus presupposing what they were summoned to prove at Augsburg, namely, that the doctrine of the Pope was identical with the old Christian faith, the Romanists declared a presentation of their views unnecessary. The Lutherans, they maintained, were convicted apostates and rebels against Pope and Church, against Emperor and realm; sentence was not first to be pronounced upon them, but

had been pronounced long ago, the Diet's duty merely being to confirm and execute it; hence, there was nothing else to be done by the Emperor than to attend to his office as warden and protector of the Church, and, together with the princes and estates, to proceed against the heretics with drastic measures. Also in the later discussions, conducted with a view of effecting a reconciliation, the Romanists refused to relinquish this position. From beginning to end they acted as the accusers, judges, and henchmen of the Lutherans. Nor was anything else to be expected, since, unlike the Lutherans, they considered not God's Word, but the Pope the supreme arbiter in religious matters. Thus from the very outset, the gulf between the two parties was such that it could not be bridged. Common ground was lacking. On the one side conscience, bound by the Word of God! On the other, blind subjection to human, papal authority! Also Romanists realized that this fundamental and irreconcilable difference was bound to render futile all discussions. It was not merely his own disgust which the papal historian expressed when he concluded his report on the prolonged discussions at Augsburg: "Thus the time was wasted with vain discussions." (Plitt, *Apologie*, 43.)

### 37. Further Success Not Hoped for by Luther

Luther regarded the public reading of the Confession as an unparalleled triumph of his cause. Further results, such as a union with the Romanists, he did not expect. On July 9, 1530, he wrote to Jonas: "*Quid sperem de Caesare, quantumvis optimo, sed obsesso?* What can I hope of the Emperor, even the best, when he is obsessed" [by the papal theologians]? The most Luther hoped for was mutual political toleration. In the letter quoted he continues: "But they [the Papists] must expect a sad, and we a happy issue. Not indeed, that there ever will be unity of doctrine; for who can hope that Belial will be united with Christ? Excepting that perhaps marriage [of priests] and the two kinds [of the Sacrament] be permitted (here too however, this adverb 'perhaps' is required, and perhaps too much 'perhaps'). But this I wish and earnestly hope for, that, the difference in doctrine being set aside, a political union may be made. If by the blessing of Christ this takes place, enough and more than enough has been done and accomplished at this Diet. ... Now, if we obtain also the third thing, that we adjourn with worldly peace secured, then we shall have clearly defeated Satan in this year." (Enders, 8, 95; St. L. 16 927. 1666.)

July 21, 1530, Luther wrote in a similar vein to Jonas: "The fact that these frogs [the papal theologians who wrote the Confutation] with their croakings [*coaxitatibus* = pasquinades against Luther, instead of answers to the Augustana] have free access [to the Emperor] chagrins me very much in this great work in the most important matters. ... But this happens to prove that I am a true prophet; for I have always said that we work and hope in vain for a union in doctrine; it would be enough if we could obtain worldly peace." (16, 927. 2324.) August 25, when the prolonged discussions of reconciliation were nearing their end, he wrote to Melancthon: "In sum, it does not please me at all that unity of doctrine is to be discussed, since this is utterly impossible, unless the Pope would abolish his entire popery. It would have sufficed if we had presented to them the reasons for our faith and desired peace. But how can we hope that we shall win them over to accept the truth? We have come to hear whether they approve our doctrine or not, permitting them to remain what they are, only inquiring whether they acknowledge our doctrine to be correct or condemn it. If they condemn it, what does it avail to discuss the question of unity any longer with avowed enemies? If they acknowledge it to be right, what necessity is there of retaining the old abuses?" (16, 1404.)

Though willing to yield to the Catholic party in all other matters, Luther refused to compromise the divine truth in any point or in any way. For this reason he also insisted that the Emperor should not be recognized as judge and arbiter without qualification, but only with the proviso that his decision would not conflict with the clear Word of God. According to Luther, everybody, Pope and Emperor included, must submit to the authority of the Scriptures. In a letter of July 9, 1530 he wrote to the Elector: "In the first place; Should His Imperial Majesty desire that the Imperial Majesty be permitted to decide these matters, since it was not His Majesty's purpose to enter into lengthy discussions, I think Your Electoral Grace might answer that His Imperial Majesty's manifesto promises that he would graciously listen to these matters. If such was not intended, the manifesto would have been needless, for His Imperial Majesty might have rendered his decision just as well in Spain without summoning Your Electoral Grace to Augsburg at such great labor and expense. ... In the second place: Should His Imperial Majesty insist that the Imperial Majesty be permitted to decide these matters Your Electoral Grace may cheerfully answer Yes, the Imperial Majesty shall decide these matters, and Your Electoral Grace would accept and suffer everything, provided only that His Imperial Majesty make no decision against the clear Scriptures, or God's Word. For Your Electoral Grace cannot put the Emperor above God, nor accept his verdict in opposition to God's Word." (16, 815.)

### 38. Papal Peace Sought by Emperor

By their obstinate refusal to regard themselves as a party summoned, the Romanists from the outset, made it impossible for the Emperor to maintain the role of an impartial judge, which, probably, he had never really intended to be. At any rate, though earnestly desirous of religious peace, his actions throughout the Diet do not reveal a single serious effort at redeeming his promise and putting his beautiful words into practise. Being bound to the Pope and the papal party both religiously and politically, Charles did not require of the Romanists a fulfilment of the obligations imposed upon them by his manifesto. All the concessions were to be made by the Lutherans. *Revoca!* – that was the first and only word which Rome had hitherto spoken to Luther. "Revoke and submit yourselves!" – that, in the last analysis, was also the demand of the Emperor at Augsburg with respect to the Lutheran princes, both when he spoke in tones friendly and gentle and when he uttered severe and threatening words. Charles, it is true, desired peace, but a Roman peace, a peace effected by universal blind submission to the Pope; not a peace by mutual understanding and concessions; least of all a peace by political religious tolerance, such as Luther desired, and which in our days is generally regarded as the outstanding feature of modern civilization, notably of Americanism. To force the Lutherans into submission and obedience to the Pope, that was the real object of the Emperor. And the political situation demanded that this be accomplished by peaceable and gentle means – if possible.

Self-evidently, in his endeavors to establish a Papal Peace, the Emperor, who was haunted and tormented by the fear that all efforts might prove futile, was zealously seconded, encouraged, and prodded on by the papal theologians. To bring about a religious peace, such as the Emperor contemplated, this, they flattered Charles, would be an ever-memorable achievement, truly worthy of the Emperor: for the eyes of all Christendom were upon him, and he had staked his honor upon the success of this glorious undertaking. June 3 the Father Confessor of the Emperor, Garsia, then at Rome, wrote to Charles: "At present there is nothing so important in this life as that Your Majesty emerge victorious in the German affair. In Italy you will be accounted the best prince on earth if God should vouchsafe this grace unto us that the heresies which have arisen in that nation be cured by your hand." (Plitt, 4.) June 6 Garsia wrote: "Gracious Lord! After the letters from the legate [Campegius, concerning the return of Christian II to the Roman Church, the disagreement between Philip of Hesse and the Elector, etc.] had been read at to-day's Consistorial Meeting, almost all the cardinals said that Your Majesty was the angel sent from heaven to restore Christendom. God knows how much I rejoiced, and although the sun burned fiercely when I returned to my home, how patiently I bore it! I was not sensitive to it from sheer joy at hearing such sweet words about my master from those who a year ago had maligned him. My chief comfort, however, was to behold that they were right; for it seems as if God were performing miracles by Your Majesty, and to judge by the beginning you have made in curing this ailment, it is evident that we may expect the issue to prove far more favorable than our sins merit." (II. 67.)

### 39. Compulsion Advocated by Theologians

All Romanists, the Emperor included, were of the opinion that the Protestants must be brought back to the papal fold. But they differed somewhat as to the means of accomplishing this purpose. Some demanded that force be resorted to forthwith, while others counseled that leniency be tried first. Campegius advised kindness at the beginning, and greater severity only in dealing with certain individuals, but that sharper measures and, finally, force of arms ought to follow. At Rome force was viewed as the "true rhubarb" for healing the breach, especially among the common people. July 18 Garsia wrote to the Emperor: "If you are determined to bring Germany back to the fold, I know of no other or better means than by presents and flattery to persuade those who are most eminent in science or in the empire to return to our faith. Once that is done, you must, in dealing with the remaining common people, first of all publish your imperial edicts and Christian admonitions. If they will not obey these, then the true rhubarb to cure them is force. This alone cured Spain's rebellion against its king. And force is what will also cure Germany's unfaithfulness to God, unless, indeed, divine grace should not attend Your Majesty in the usual measure. God would learn in this matter whether you are a faithful son of His, and should He so find, then I promise you that among all creatures you will find no power sufficiently strong to resist you. All will but serve the purpose of enabling you to obtain the crown of this world." (42.)

Among the open advocates of force were Cochlaeus, Eck, Faber, and the theologians and monks who flocked to Augsburg in large numbers about the time the Augsburg Confession was read. They all considered it their prime duty to rouse the passions of the Emperor, as well as of the Catholic princes and estates, and to incite them against the Lutherans. Their enmity was primarily directed against the Augustana, whose objective and moderate tone had gained many friends even among the Catholics, and which had indirectly branded Eck and his compeers as detractors and calumniators. For had not Duke William of Bavaria, after the reading of the Confession, rebuked Eck, in the presence of the Elector of Saxony, for having misrepresented the Lutheran doctrine to him? The moderation of the Augustana, said these Romanists, was nothing but the cunning of serpents, deception and misrepresentation, especially on the part of the wily Melanchthon, for the true Luther was portrayed in the 404 theses of Eck. Cochlaeus wrote that the Lutherans were slyly hiding their ungodly doctrines in order to deceive the Emperor: "astute occultari in illorum Confessione prava eorum dogmata, de quibus ibi tacendo dissimulabant, ut in hypocrisi loquentes Maiestati Tuae aliisque principibus imponderent." (Laemmer, *Vortridentinische Theologie*, 39.) Thus the malice and fanaticism of the papal theologians and the monks rose in proportion as friendliness was shown the Lutherans by Catholic princes and the Emperor. They feared that every approach toward the Lutherans would jeopardize the *pax Pontificia*.

The fanaticism of the papal theologians is frequently referred to by the Lutherans. June 26 Melanchthon wrote to Luther: "Sophists and monks are daily streaming into the city, in order to inflame the hatred of the Emperor against us." (C. R. 2, 141.) June 27: "Our Confession was presented last Saturday. The opponents are now deliberating upon how to answer; they flock together, take great pains, and incite the princes, who already have been sufficiently aroused. Eck vehemently demands of the Archbishop of Mainz that the matter be not debated, since it has already been condemned." (144.) June 29 Jonas wrote to Luther: "Faber is goaded on by furies and Eck is not a whit more sensible. Both insist in every manner imaginable that the affair ought to be managed by force and must not be heard." (154.) Melanchthon, July 8: "By chance Eck and Cochlaeus came to the legate [Campegius, with whom Melanchthon was deliberating]. I heard them say, distinctly enough, I believe, that the opponents are merely deliberating upon how to suppress us by force." (175.) July 15: "Repeatedly have I been with certain enemies who belong to that herd of Eck. Words fail me to describe the bitter, Pharisaical hatred I noticed there. They do nothing, they plan nothing else than how they may

incite the princes against us, and supply the Emperor with impious weapons." (197.) The implacable theologians also succeeded in fanaticizing some of the princes and bishops, who gradually became more and more opposed to any kind of settlement by mutual understanding. (175.)

The chief exponent of force was Cochlaeus. In his *Expostulatio*, which appeared at Augsburg in May, 1530, he argued that not only according to papal, but according to imperial law as well, which the Evangelicals also acknowledged, and according to the Scriptures, heretics might, aye, must be punished with death. The treatise concludes as follows: "Thus it is established that obdurate heretics may be executed by every form of law. We, however, much prefer to have them return to the Church, be converted, healed and live, and we beseech them to do so. *Constat igitur, haereticos pertinaces omni iure interimi posse. Nos tamen longe magis optamus et precamur, ut redeuntes ad ecclesiam convertantur, sanentur et vivant.*" (Plitt, 1, 5.)

Naturally Eck, too, was prominent among those who counseled the employment of compulsory measures; indeed, he could not await the hour when the order would be given to proceed against the heretics with fire and sword. He lamented, in bitter terms, the fact that the Emperor had not made use of stern measures as soon as he arrived in Germany. For now, said he, procrastination and the conciliatory demeanor of the Evangelicals, especially of Melancthon and Brueck, had made it impossible to rouse the Emperor to such a degree as the exigency of the case demanded. (Plitt, 63.) Luther wrote: "For that shameless gab and bloodthirsty sophist, Doctor Eck, one of their chief advisers, publicly declared in the presence of our people that if the Emperor had followed the resolution made at Bononia, and, immediately on entering Germany, had courageously attacked the Lutherans with the sword, and beheaded one after another, the matter would have been easily settled. But all this was prevented when he permitted the Elector of Saxony to speak and be heard through his chancellor." (St. L. 16, 1636.)



## 40. Emperor Employs Mildness

While a number of the Catholic estates, incited by the theologians, were also in favor of immediately resorting to brutal force, the Emperor, for political reasons, considered it more advisable to employ kindness. Lauding the extreme affability and leniency of Charles, Melancthon wrote to Luther, January 25: "The Emperor greets our Prince very kindly; and I would that our people, in turn, were more complaisant towards him. I would ask you to admonish our Junior Prince by letter in this matter. The Emperor's court has no one milder than himself. All others harbor a most cruel hatred against us. *Caesar satis benigne salutatur nostrum principem; ac velim vicissim nostros erga ipsum officiosiores esse. Ea de re utinam iuniorum principem nostrum litteris admonueris. Nihil ipso Caesare mitius habet ipsius aula. Reliquii omnes crudelissime nos oderunt.*" (C. R. 2, 125.)

The reading of the Augustana strengthened this friendly attitude of Charles. Both its content and its conciliatory tone, which was not at all in harmony with the picture of the Lutherans as sketched by Eck, caused him to be more kindly disposed toward Protestantism, and nourished his hope that religious peace might be attained by peaceable means. Other Catholic dignitaries and princes had been impressed in the same manner. July 6 Luther wrote to Hausmann: "Many bishops are inclined to peace and despise the sophists, Eck and Faber. One bishop [Stadion of Augsburg] is said to have declared in a private conversation, 'This [the Confession of the Lutherans] is the pure truth, we cannot deny it,' The Bishop of Mainz is being praised very much for his endeavors in the interest of peace. Likewise Duke Henry of Brunswick who extended a friendly invitation to Philip to dine with him, and admitted that he was not able to disprove the articles treating of both kinds, the marriage of priests, and the distinction of meats. Our men boast that, of the entire Diet, no one is milder than the Emperor himself. Such is the beginning. The Emperor treats our Elector not only graciously, but most respectfully. So Philip writes. It is remarkable how all are aglow with love and good will toward the Emperor. It may happen, if God so wills, that, as the first Emperor [Charles at Worms] was very hostile, so this last Emperor [Charles at Augsburg] will be very friendly. Only let us pray; for the power of prayer is clearly perceived." (St. L. 16, 882.) The Emperor's optimism was, no doubt, due to the fact that, unlike his theologians, he did not perceive and realize the impassable gulf fixed between Lutheranism and the Papacy, as appeared also from the Augustana, in which, however, the Emperor mistook moderation of tone for surrender of substance.

## **41. Augustana Submitted to Catholic Party**

Full of hope the Emperor, on June 26, immediately after its public presentation, submitted the Lutheran Confession to the Catholic estates for deliberation. These, too, though not in the least inclined to abandon their arrogant attitude, seem to have given themselves over to the delusion that the Lutherans could now be brought to recede from their position. Accordingly, their answer (Responsum) of June 27, couched in conciliatory language, recommended as "the humble opinion of the electors and estates that the Imperial Roman Majesty would submit this great and important matter to a number of highly learned, sensible, honest, conciliating, and not spiteful persons, to deliberate on, and to consider, the writing [the Augustana], as far as necessary, enumerating, on the one hand, whatsoever therein was found to be in conformity and harmony with the Gospel, God's Word, and the holy Christian Church, but, on the other hand, refuting with the true foundation of the Gospel and the Holy Scripture and its doctrine, and bringing into true Christian understanding, such matters as were found to be against, and out of harmony with, the Gospel, the Word of God, and the Christian Church." (Laemmer, 32.) They recommended, however, that in this entire matter Campegius be consulted, and for that purpose be furnished with a copy of the Lutheran Confession.

The Romanists furthermore resolved that the Lutherans be asked whether they had any additional points to present, and, if so, to do this immediately. The Lutherans, considering this a snare, declared, on July 10, that in their Confession they had made it a special point to present the chief articles which it is necessary to believe in order to be saved, but had not enumerated all abuses, desiring to emphasize such only as burdened the consciences, lest the paramount questions be obscured; that they would let this [all that was enumerated in their Confession] suffice, and have included other points of doctrine and abuses which were not mentioned, that they would not fail to give an answer from the Word of God in case their opponents should attack the Confession or present anything new. (Foerstemann, 2, 16. *C. R.* 2, 181.) No doubt, the Papists felt that the Lutherans really should have testified directly also against the Papacy, etc. This, too, was the interpretation which Luther put on the inquiry of the Romanists. July 21, 1530, he wrote to Jonas: But now I see what the questions aimed at whether you had other articles to present. For Satan still lives and has noticed very well that your Apology [Augustana] steps softly and has passed by the articles concerning purgatory, the adoration of the saints, and especially Antichrist, the Pope. (St. L. 16, 2323, Enders, 8, 133.)

July 5 the Emperor accepted the opinion of the estates and appointed the confutators. At the same time he declared with reference to the Lutherans that he was the judge of the content of their writing (Augustana); that, in case they should not be satisfied with his verdict, the final decision must remain with the Council, but that meanwhile the Edict of Worms would be enforced everywhere. (Laemmer, 34; *C. R.* 2, 175.) Thus the Emperor, in unmistakable terms, indicated that the Roman Confutation would bring his own final verdict, which no further discussions could modify, and that he would compel the Lutherans by force to observe the Edict of Worms if they refused to submit willingly. The Catholic estates endorsed the Emperor's declaration, but added the petition that, after the Confutation had been read, the Lutherans be asked in all kindness to return and that, in case this remained fruitless, an attempt be made to bring about an agreement to be reached by a committee appointed by both parties. Evidently, the estates as well as the Emperor expected the Lutherans to yield and surrender. Still, for the present, they were willing and preferred to attain this end by mild and gentle means.

## 42. Rabid Theologians Appointed as Confutators

Campegius, to whom the entire matter was entrusted, manipulated things in such a manner that the result was the very opposite of what the Emperor and estates had resolved upon. To be sure he made it appear as though he were entirely neutral leaving everything to the discretion of the German princes. He knew also how to hide his real sentiments from the Lutherans. Jonas, for example reports that in his address of June 24 Campegius had said nothing harsh or hateful (*nihil acerbe, nihil odiose*) against the Lutherans. Spalatin reports: "Some one besought the Legate and Cardinal Campegius to assist in obtaining peace for the cause of the Gospel. To this he responded: Since the papal power was suspicious to us the matter rested with the Emperor and the German princes. Whatever they did would stand." (Koellner, *Symbolik*, 403.) Thus Campegius created the impression of absolute neutrality while in reality he was at the same time busy with secret intrigues against the Lutherans.

Among the Confutators (Brueck mentions 19, Spalatin 20, others 22, still others 24), selected by Campegius and appointed by the Emperor, were such rabid abusive and inveterate enemies of Luther as Eck, Faber, Cochlaeus, Wimpina, Colli (author of a slanderous tract against Luther's marriage), Dietenberger etc. The first three are repeatedly designated as the true authors of the Confutation. In his *Replica ad Bucerum*, Eck boasts: "Of all the theologians at Augsburg I was chosen unanimously to prepare the answer to the Saxon Confession, and I obeyed. *Augustae ab omnibus theologis fui delectus unanimiter, qui responsum pararem contra confessionem Saxoniam, et parui.*" (Koellner, 407.) July 10 Brenz wrote to Myconius: "Their leader (*antesignanus*) is that good man Eck. The rest are 23 in number. One might call them an Iliad [Homer's Iliad consists of 24 books] of sophists." (C. R. 2, 180.) Melancthon, too, repeatedly designates Eck and Faber as the authors of the Confutation. July 14 he wrote to Luther: "With his legerdemain (*commanipulatione*) Eck presented to the Emperor the Confutation of our Confession." (193.) August 6: "This Confutation is the most nonsensical of all the nonsensical books of Faber." (253.) August 8, to Myconius: "Eck and Faber have worked for six entire weeks in producing the Confutation of our Confession." (260.) Hence also such allusions in Melancthon's letters as "confutatio Fabrilis," "Fabriliter scripta," and in the Apology: "Nullus Faber Fabrilis cogitare quidquam posset, quam hae ineptiae excogitatae sunt ad eludendum ius naturae." (366, 10.) Brueck was right when he said that some of the Confutators were "purely partial, and altogether suspicious characters." (Koellner, 411.)

### 43. Confutation Prepared

The resolution which the Catholic estates passed June 27 was to the effect that the imperial answer to the Lutheran Confession be made "by sober and not spiteful men of learning." The Emperor's Prolog to the Confutation, accordingly, designated the confutators as "certain learned, valiant, sensible, sober, and honorable men of many nations." (*C. R.* 27, 189.) At the same time they were told to couch their answer in winning, convincing, moderate, and earnest terms. The imperial instruction read: "To this end it is indeed good and needful that said document [the Augustana] be carefully considered and diligently studied by learned, wise, and sober persons, in order that they [the Lutherans] be shown in all kindness (*durch gute Wege*) where they err, and be admonished to return to the good way, likewise, to grant them whatsoever may be serviceable and adapted to our holy Christian faith; and to set forth the errors, moderately and politely, with such good and holy arguments as the matter calls for, to defend and prove everything with suitable evangelical declarations and admonitions, proceeding from Christian and neighborly love; and at the same time to mingle therewith earnestness and severity with such moderation as may be likely to win the five electors and princes, and not to destroy their hope or to harden them still more." (Koellner, 403)

However, inspired by Campegius and goaded on by blind hatred, the Confutators employed their commission for the purpose of casting suspicion on the Lutherans and inciting the Emperor against them. They disregarded the imperial admonition for moderation, and instead of an objective answer to the Augustana, they produced a long-winded pasquinade against Luther and the Evangelical preachers, a fit companion piece to the 404 theses of Eck – a general accusation against the Protestants, a slanderous anthology of garbled quotations from Luther, Melanchthon, and other Evangelical preachers. The insinuation lurking in the document everywhere was that the Confession of the Lutheran princes was in glaring contradiction to the real doctrine of their pastors. The sinister scheme of the Romanists, as the Elector in 1536 reminded the Lutheran theologians, was to bring the princes in opposition to their preachers. (*C. R.* 3, 148.) The mildness and moderation of the Augustana, they openly declared, was nothing but subtle cunning of the smooth and wily Melanchthon, who sought to hide the true state of affairs. In a book which Cochlaeus published against the Apology in 1534 he said that the open attacks of Luther were far more tolerable than the serpentine cunning and hypocrisy of Melanchthon (*instar draconis insidiantis fraudes intendens*), as manifested in particular by his demeanor toward Campegius at Augsburg in 1530. (Laemmer, 56; Salig, 1, 376.) Thus the Roman Confutators disregarded their commission to refute the Augustana, and substituted a caricature of Luther and his doctrines designed to irritate the Emperor.

## 44. A Bulky, Scurrilous Document

The Confutation, compiled by Eck and Faber from various contributions of the Confutators, was ready by the 8th of July, and was presented to the Emperor on the 12th or 13th. The German translation was prepared by the Bavarian Chancellor, Leonhard von Eck. July 10 Brenz had written: "It is reported that they are preparing wagonloads of commentaries against our Confession." (C. R. 2, 180.) Spalatin reports that the Confutators delivered to the Emperor "a pile of books against Doctor Martin with most scurrilous titles." The chief document was entitled: "Catholic and, as it were, Extemporaneous Response concerning Certain Articles Presented in These Days at the Diet to the Imperial Majesty by the Illustrious Elector of Saxony and Certain Other Princes as well as Two Cities. *Catholica et quasi extemporanea Responsio super nonnullis articulis Caesareae Maiestati hisce diebus in dieta imperiali Augustensi per Illustrem Electorem Saxoniae et alios quosdam Principes et duas Civitates oblatis.*" It was supplemented by nine other treatises on all manner of alleged contradictions and heresies of Luther and Anabaptistic as well as other fruits of his teaching. (Laemmer, 37, C. R. 2, 197.) The pasquinade with its supplements comprised no less than 351 folios, 280 of which were devoted to the answer proper. Cochlaeus also designates it as "very severe and extended, *acrior extensiorque.*" July 14 Melanchthon reported he had heard from friends that the Confutation was "long and filled with scurrilities." (193. 218.) July 15: "I am sending you [Luther] a list of the treatises which our opponents have presented to the Emperor, from which you will see that the Confutation is supplemented by antilogs and other treatises in order to stir up against us the most gentle heart of the Emperor. Such are the stratagems these slanderers (*sycophantae*) devise." (197.)

The effect of the Confutation on the Emperor, however, was not at all what its authors desired and anticipated. Disgusted with the miserable bulky botch, the Emperor convened the estates on July 15, and they resolved to return the bungling document to the theologians for revision. Tone, method, plan, everything displeased the Emperor and estates to such an extent that they expunged almost one-third of it. Intentionally they ignored the nine supplements and demanded that reflections on Luther be eliminated from the document entirely; moreover, that the theologians confine themselves to a refutation of the Augustana. (Laemmer, 39.) Cochlaeus writes: "Since the Catholic princes all desired peace and concord, they deemed it necessary to answer in a milder tone, and to omit all reference to what the [Lutheran] preachers had formerly taught and written otherwise than their Confession stated." (Koellner, 406.) In a letter to Brueck he declared that such coarse extracts and articles [with which the first draft of the Confutation charged Luther] should not be mentioned in the reply to the Confession, lest any one be put to shame or defamed publicly. (Laemmer, 39.)

In his Annals, Spalatin reports: "At first there were perhaps 280 folios. But His Imperial Majesty is said to have weeded out many folios and condensed the Confutation to such an extent that not more than twelve folios remained. This is said to have hurt and angered Eck severely." (St. L. 21a, 1539.) In a letter to Veit Dietrich, dated July 30, Melanchthon remarks sarcastically: "Recently Eck complained to one of his friends that the Emperor had deleted almost the third part of his treatise, and I suspect that the chief ornaments of the book were rooted out, that is, the glaring lies and the most stupid tricks, *insignia mendacia et sycophantiae stolidissimae.*" (C. R. 2, 241.) Brenz regarded this as an evidence of the extent to which the Augustana had perturbed the opponents, leaving them utterly helpless. July 15 he wrote to Isemann: "Meanwhile nothing new has taken place in our midst, except that I heard that the confession of the sophists was to-day returned by the Emperor to its authors, the sophists, and this for the reason that it was so confused, jumbled, vehement, bloodthirsty, and cruel (*confusa, incordita, violenta, sanguinolenta et crudelis*) that he was ashamed to have it read before the Imperial Senate... We experience daily that we have so bewildered, stunned, and confused them that they know not where to begin or to end." (198.) "Pussyfooting (*Leisetreten*)!" – such was the slogan at Augsburg; and in this Melanchthon was nowhere equaled. Privately also Cochlaeus elaborated a

milder answer to the Lutheran Confession. But even the friends who had induced him to undertake this task considered his effort too harsh to be presented to the Emperor.

The first, rejected draft of the Confutation has been lost, with the sole exception of the second article, preserved by Cochlaeus. On the difference between this draft and the one finally adopted, Plitt comments as follows: "The Confutation as read simply adopted the first article of the Confession [Augustana] as in complete agreement with the Roman Church. The original draft also approved this article's appeal to the Council of Nicaea, but added that now the Emperor should admonish the confessing estates to accept everything else taught by the Catholic Church, even though it was not verbally contained in the Scriptures, as, for example, the Mass, Quadregesimal fasting, the invocation of the saints, etc.; for the wording of the doctrine of the Trinity could be found in the Scriptures just as little as that of the points mentioned, furthermore, that he also call upon them to acknowledge said Synod of Nicaea in all its parts, hence also to retain the hierarchical degrees with their powers; that he admonish them to compel their preachers and teachers to retract everything which they had said and written against that Synod, especially Luther and Melancthon, its public defamers. Refusal of such retraction would invalidate their appeal to that Synod and prove it to be nothing but a means of deception. Finally they were to be admonished not to believe their teachers in anything which was against the declarations of the Church catholic. Such was the form in which the first draft of the Confutation was couched. Everywhere the tendency was apparent to magnify the differences, make invidious inferences, cast suspicion on their opponents, and place them in a bad light with the Emperor and the majority. This was not the case in the answer which was finally read." (37.)

## 45. Confutation Adopted and Read

Only after repeated revisions in which Campegius and the imperial counselors Valdes and Granvella took part was an agreement reached regarding the form of the Confutation. July 30 the Emperor received the fourth revision and on August 1 he presented it to the bishops, princes, and estates for their opinion. There still remained offensive passages which had to be eliminated. A fifth revision was necessary before the approval of the Emperor and the estates was forthcoming. A Prolog and an Epilog were added according to which the Confutation is drawn up in the name of the Emperor. Thus the original volume was boiled down to a comparatively small document. But to speak with Kolde, even in its final form the Confutation is "still rather an accusation against the Evangelicals, and an effort to retain all the medieval church customs than a refutation of the Augustana." (34.) August 6 Jonas wrote to Luther: "The chaplain [John Henkel] of Queen Maria informed us that they had five times changed their Confutation, casting and recasting, minting and reminting it, and still there finally was produced nothing but an uncouth and confused conglomeration and a hodgepodge, as when a cook pours different soups into one pot. At first they patched together an enormous volume, as Faber is known to be a verbose compiler; the book grew by reason of the multitude of its lies and scurrilities. However, at the first revision the Emperor eliminated the third part of the book, so that barely twelve or sixteen folios remained, which were read." (St. L. 21a, 1539.)

On August 3, 1530, in the same hall in which the Augsburg Confession had been submitted thirty-eight days before, in the presence of all the estates of the empire, the Augustanae Confessionis Responsio, immediately called Confutatio Pontificia by the Protestants, was read in the German language by Alexander Schweiss, the Imperial Secretary. However, the reading, too, proved to be a discreditable affair. Owing to the great haste in which the German copy had been prepared, an entire portion had been omitted; the result was that the conclusion of Article 24 as well as Articles 25 and 26 were not presented. Furthermore, Schweiss, overlooking the lines of erasure, read a part which had been stricken, containing a very bold deliverance on the sacrifice of the Mass, in which they labored to prove from the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin that the word *facite* in the institution of the Sacrament was synonymous with "sacrifice." (Kolde, 34.) August 6, 1530, Jonas wrote to Luther: The opponents presented their Confutation to the Emperor on July 30, and on the 3d of August it was read in the presence of the Emperor and the estates, together with a Prolog and an Epilog of the Emperor. "The reading also consumed two entire hours, but with an incredible aversion, weariness, and disgust on the part of some of the more sensible hearers, who complained that they were almost driven out by this utterly cold, threadbare songlet (*cantilena*), being extremely chagrined that the ears of the Emperor should be molested with such a lengthy array of worthless things masquerading under the name of Catholic doctrines." (St. L. 21a, 1539.) August 4 Brenz wrote to Isemann: "The Emperor maintains neutrality; for he slept both when the Augustana and when the Confutation was read. *Imperator neutralem sese gerit; nam cum nostra confessio legeretur obdormivit; rursus cum adversariorum responsio legeretur, iterum obdormivit in media negotii actione.*" (C. R. 2, 245.)

The Confutation was neither published, nor was a copy of it delivered to the Lutherans. Apparently the Romanists, notably the Emperor and the estates, were ashamed of the document. True, Cochlaeus reports that toward the close of the Diet Charles authorized him and Eck to publish it, but that this was not done, because Duke George and the Emperor left Augsburg shortly after, and the printer also moved away. (Koellner, 414.) All subsequent pleading and imploring, however, on the part of Eck and others, to induce the Emperor to publish the Confutation fell on deaf ears. Evidently Charles no longer took any interest in a document that had so shamefully shattered his fond ambition of reconciling the religious parties. What appeared in print, early in 1531, was merely an extract prepared by Cochlaeus, entitled, *Summary of the Imperial Answer*, etc. The first Latin edition of the Confutation appeared as late as 1573; the first German edition, in 1808. All previous German

impressions (also the edition of 1584) are translations of the Latin edition of 1573. (*C. R.* 27, 25. 82.) Concerning the German text of the Confutation Kolde remarks: "Since changes were made even after it had been read, we have even less definite knowledge, respecting details, as to what was read than in the case of the Augustana." (35.) One may therefore also speak of a *Confutatio Variata*. The doctrine of the Confutation does not differ essentially from that which was later on affirmed by the Council of Trent (1545-1563). However, says Kolde, "being written by the German leaders of the Catholic party under the eye of the Papal Legate, and approved by the Emperor, the German bishops, and the Roman-minded princes, it [the Confutation] must be reckoned among the historically most important documents of the Roman Catholic faith of that day."



## 46. Confutation Denounced by Lutherans

In the opinion of the Lutherans, the final draft of the Confutation, too, was a miserable makeshift. True, its tone was moderate, and, with few exceptions, personal defamations were omitted. The arrangement of subjects was essentially the same as in the Augustana. Still it was not what it pretended to be. It was no serious attempt at refuting the Lutheran Confession, but rather an accumulation of Bible-texts, arbitrarily expounded, in support of false doctrines and scholastic theories. These efforts led to exegetical feats that made the Confutators butts of scorn and derision. At any rate, the Lutherans were charged with having failed, at the public reading, to control their risibilities sufficiently. Cochlaeus complains: "During the reading many of the Lutherans indulged in unseemly laughter. *Quando recitata fuit, multi e Lutheranis inepte cachinnabantur.*" (Koellner, 411.) If this did not actually occur, it was not because the Confutators had given them no cause for hilarity.

"Altogether childish and silly" – such is Melancthon's verdict on many of their exegetical pranks. August 6 he wrote letter after letter to Luther, expressing his contempt for the document. "After hearing that Confutation," says Melancthon, "all good people seem to have been more firmly established on our part, and the opponents, if there be among them some who are more reasonable, are said to be disgusted (*stomachari*) that such absurdities were forced upon the Emperor, the best of princes." (*C. R.* 2, 252.) Again: Although the Emperor's verdict was very stern and terrible, "still, the Confutation being a composition so very puerile, a most remarkable congratulation followed its reading. No book of Faber's is so childish but that this Confutation is still more childish." (253.) In another letter he remarked that, according to the Confutation, in which the doctrine of justification by faith was rejected, "the opponents had no knowledge of religion whatever." (253.)

August 4 Brenz wrote to Isemann: "All things were written in the fashion of Cochlaeus, Faber, and Eck. Truly a most stupid comment, so that I am ashamed of the Roman name, because in their whole Church they can find no men able to answer us heretics at least in a manner wise and accomplished. *Sed omnia conscripta erant Cochleice et Fabriliter et Eccianice. Commentum sane stupidissimum, ut pudeat me Romani nominis, quod in sua religione non conquirant viros, qui saltem prudenter et ornate nobis haereticis responderent.*" (245.) August 15 Luther answered: "We received all of your letters, and I praise God that he made the Confutation of the adversaries so awkward and foolish a thing. However, courage to the end! *Verum frisch hindurch!*" (Enders, 8, 190.)

## 47. Luther on the Confutation

Derision increased when the Papists declined to publish the Confutation, or even to deliver a copy of it to the Lutherans for further inspection. This refusal was universally interpreted as an admission, on the part of the Romanists, of a guilty conscience and of being ashamed themselves of the document. In his *Warning to My Beloved Germans*, which appeared early in 1531, Luther wrote as follows: "But I am quite ready to believe that extraordinary wisdom prompted them [the Papists at Augsburg] to keep this rebuttal of theirs and that splendid booklet [Confutation] to themselves, because their own conscience tells them very plainly that it is a corrupt, wicked, and frigid thing, of which they would have to be ashamed if it were published and suffered itself to be seen in the light or to endure an answer. For I very well know these highly learned doctors who have cooked and brewed over it for six weeks, though with the ignorant they may be able to give the matter a good semblance. But when it is put on paper, it has neither hands nor feet, but lies there in a disorderly mass, as if a drunkard had spewed it up, as may be seen, in particular, in the writings of Doctor Schmid and Doctor Eck. For there is neither rhyme nor rhythm in whatsoever they are compelled to put into writing. Hence they are more sedulous to shout and prattle. Thus I have also learned that when our Confession was read, many of our opponents were astonished and confessed that it was the pure truth, which they could not refute from the Scriptures. On the other hand, when their rebuttal was read, they hung their heads, and showed by their gestures that they considered it a mean and useless makeshift as compared with our Confession. Our people, however, and many other pious hearts were greatly delighted and mightily strengthened when they heard that with all the strength and art which our opponents were then called upon to display, they were capable of producing nothing but this flimsy rebuttal, which now, praise God! a woman, a child, a layman, a peasant are fully able to refute with good arguments taken from the Scriptures, the Word of Truth. And that is also the true and ultimate reason why they refused to deliver [to the Lutherans a copy of] their refutation. Those fugitive evil consciences were filled with horror at themselves, and dared not await the answer of Truth. And it is quite evident that they were confident, and that they had the Diet called together in the conviction that our people would never have the boldness to appear, but if the Emperor should only be brought to Germany in person, every one would be frightened and say to them: Mercy, dear lords, what would you have us do? When they were disappointed in this, and the Elector of Saxony was the very first to appear on the scene, good Lord, how their breeches began to – ! How all their confidence was confounded! What gathering together, secret consultations, and whisperings resulted! ... The final sum and substance of it all was to devise ways and means (since our men were the first joyously and cheerfully to appear) how to keep them from being heard [block the reading of the Augustana]. When also this scheme of theirs was defeated, they finally succeeded in gaining the glory that they did not dare to hand over their futile rebuttal nor to give us an opportunity to reply to it! ... But some one might say: The Emperor was willing to deliver the answer to our party provided they would promise not to have it published nor its contents divulged. That is true, for such a pledge was expected of our men. Here, however, every one may grasp and feel (even though he is able neither to see nor hear) what manner of people they are who will not and dare not permit their matter to come to the light. If it is so precious a thing and so well founded in the Scriptures as they bellow and boast, why, then, does it shun the light? What benefit can there be in hiding from us and every one else such public matters as must nevertheless be taught and held among them? But if it is unfounded and futile, why, then, did they in the first resolution [of the Diet], have the Elector of Brandenburg proclaim and publish in writing that our Confession had been refuted [by the Confutation] with the Scriptures and stanch arguments? If that were true, and if their own consciences did not give them the lie, they would not merely have allowed such precious and well-founded Refutation to be read, but would have furnished us with a written copy, saying: There you have it, we defy any one to answer it! as we did and still do

with our Confession. ... What the Elector of Brandenburg said in the resolution [read at the Diet], that our Confession was refuted with the Scriptures and with sound arguments, is not the truth, but a lie. ... For this well-founded refutation [Confutation] has as yet not come to light, but is perhaps sleeping with the old Tannhaeuser on Mount Venus (*Venusberg*).\" (St. L. 15, 1635.)

## VI. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession

### 48. Emperor Demands Adoption of Confutation

The Confutation was written in the name of the Emperor. This is indicated by the title: "Roman Imperial Confutation, *Roemisch-Kaiserliche Konfutation*." (C. R. 21, 189.) And according to his declaration of July 5, demanding that the Lutherans acknowledge him as judge, the Emperor, immediately before the reading, announced: The Confutation contained his faith and his verdict on the Confession of the Lutherans; he demanded that they accept it; should they refuse to do so, he would prove himself the warden and protector of the Church. In the Epilog the Emperor gave expression to the following thoughts: From this Confutation he saw that the Evangelicals "in many articles agree with the Universal and also the Roman Church, and reject and condemn many wicked teachings current among the common people of the German nation." He therefore did not doubt that, having heard his answer to their Confession, they would square themselves also in the remaining points, and return to what, by common consent, had hitherto been held by all true believers. Should they fail to heed his admonition, they must consider that he would be compelled to reveal and demean himself in this matter in such manner as "by reason of his office, according to his conscience, behooved the supreme warden and protector of the Holy Christian Church." (27, 228.) Immediately after the reading, Frederick, Duke of the Palatinate, declared in the name of the Emperor that the Confutation was the Emperor's answer to the Lutherans, the verdict he rendered against their Confession; and they were now called upon to relinquish the articles of their Confession that were refuted in the Confutation, and to return to the Roman Church in unity of faith. (See the reports of Brenz, Melanchthon, and the delegates from Nuernberg, C. R. 2, 245. 250. 253.) Thus the Emperor, who had promised to have the deliberations carried on in love and kindness, demanded blind submission, and closed his demand with a threat. His manifesto was Protestant; his actions remained Papistical. In the estimation of the Romanists, the Emperor, by condescending to an extended reply to the Lutheran Confession, had done more than his duty, and much more than they had considered expedient. Now they rejoiced, believing that everything they wished for had been accomplished, and that there was no other way open for the Lutherans than to submit, voluntarily or by compulsion.

Naturally the attitude of the Emperor was a great disappointment to the Lutherans, and it caused much alarm and fear among them. From the very beginning they had declared themselves ready in the interest of peace, to do whatever they could "with God and conscience." And this remained their position to the very last. They dreaded war, and were determined to leave no stone unturned towards avoiding this calamity. In this interest even Philip of Hesse was prepared to go to the very limits of possibility. Melanchthon wrote: "The Landgrave deports himself with much restraint. He has openly declared to me that in order to preserve peace, he would accept even sterner conditions, as long as he did not thereby disgrace the Gospel." (C. R. 2, 254.) But a denial of God, conscience, and the Gospel was precisely what the Emperor expected. Hence the Lutherans refer to his demands as cruel, impossible of fulfilment, and as a breach of promise. Outraged by the Emperor's procedure, and fearing for his own safety, the Landgrave secretly left the Diet on August 6. War seemed inevitable to many. The reading of the Confutation had shattered the last hopes of the Lutherans for a peaceful settlement. They said so to each other, and wrote it to those at home, though not all of them in the lachrymose tone of the vacillating Melanchthon, who, filled with a thousand fears was temporarily more qualified for depriving others of their courage than for inspiring courage. (Plitt, 24.)

## 49. Sustained by Luther

In these days of severe trials and sore distress the Lutherans were sustained by the comforting letters of Luther and the bracing consciousness that it was the divine truth itself which they advocated. And the reading of the Confutation had marvelously strengthened this conviction. Brueck reports an eyewitness of the reading of the Augustana as saying: "The greater portion among them [the Papists] is not so ignorant as not to have seen long ago that they are in error." (Plitt, 18.) Because of this conviction there was, as Melanchthon reported, a "marvelous congratulation" among the Lutherans after the reading of the Confutation. "We stand for the divine truth, which God cannot but lead to victory, while our opponents are condemned by their own consciences," – such was the buoying conviction of the Lutherans. And in this the powerful letters of Luther strengthened the confessors at Augsburg. He wrote: "This is the nature of our Christian doctrine, that it must be held and grasped as certain and that every one must think and be convinced: The doctrine is true and sure indeed and cannot fail. But whoever falls to reasoning and begins to waver within himself, saying: My dear friend, do you believe that it is true, etc.? such a heart will never be a true Christian." (Plitt, 12.)

Concerning the spiritual support which the confessors at Augsburg, notably Melanchthon, received from Luther, Plitt remarks: "What Luther did during his solitary stay in the Castle at Coburg cannot be rated high enough. His ideal deportment during these days, so trying for the Church, is an example which at all times Evangelical Christians may look up to, in order to learn from him and to emulate him. What he wrote to his followers in order to comfort and encourage them, can and must at all times refresh and buoy up those who are concerned about the course of the Church." (24.) June 30 Veit Dietrich who shared Luther's solitude at Coburg, wrote to Melanchthon: "My dear Philip, you do not know how concerned I am for your welfare, and I beseech you for Christ's sake not to regard as vain the Doctor's [Luther's] letters to you. I cannot sufficiently admire that man's unique constancy, joy, confidence, and hope in these days of most sore distress. And daily he nourishes them by diligent contemplation of the Word of God. Not a day passes in which he does not spend in prayer at least three hours, such as are most precious for study. On one occasion I chanced to hear him pray. Good Lord, what a spirit, what faith spoke out of his words! He prayed with such reverence that one could see he was speaking with God, and withal with such faith and such confidence as is shown by one who is speaking with his father and friend. I know, said he, that Thou art our Father and our God. Therefore I am certain that Thou wilt confound those who persecute Thy children. If Thou dost not do it, the danger is Thine as well as ours. For the entire matter is Thine own. We were compelled to take hold of it; mayest Thou therefore also protect it, etc. Standing at a distance, I heard him praying in this manner with a loud voice. Then my heart, too, burned mightily within me, when he spoke so familiarly, so earnestly, and reverently with God, and in his prayer insisted on the promises in the Psalms, as one who was certain that everything he prayed for would be done. Hence I do not doubt that his prayer will prove a great help in the desperately bad affair of this Diet. And you, my teacher, would do far better to imitate our father, the Doctor, also in this point. For with your miserable cares and your weakling tears you will accomplish nothing, but prepare a sad destruction for yourself and us all, who take pleasure in, and are benefited by nothing more than your welfare." (*C. R.* 2, 158f.; *St. L.* 15, 929f.)

## 50. Copy of Confutation Refused to Lutherans

Since the Confutation, in the manner indicated, had been presented as the Emperor's final verdict upon the Augsburg Confession the Lutherans were compelled to declare themselves. Accordingly, Chancellor Brueck at once responded to the demand for submission made through the Palatinate after the reading of the Confutation, saying: The importance of this matter, which concerned their salvation, required that the Confutation be delivered to the Lutherans for careful inspection and examination to enable them to arrive at a decision in the matter. The delegates from Nuernberg reported, in substance: After the Confutation was read, Doctor Brueck answered: Whereas, according to their Confession, the Lutherans were willing to do and yield everything that could be so done with a good conscience, whereas, furthermore, according to the Confutation, some of their [the Lutherans'] articles were approved, others entirely rejected, still others partly admitted to be right and partly repudiated; and whereas the Confutation was a somewhat lengthy document: therefore the Electors, princes, and cities deemed it necessary to scan these articles more closely, the more so, because many writings were adduced in them that made it necessary to show to what intent, and if at all they were rightly quoted, and accordingly requested the Emperor, since he had promised to hear both parties, to submit the Confutation for their inspection. The Emperor answered: "As it was now late and grown dark, and since the matter was important, he would consider their request and reply to it later." Hereupon, according to the Nuernberg delegates, "the chancellor pleaded again and most earnestly that His Imperial Majesty would consider this important and great affair as a gracious and Christian emperor ought to do, and not deny their prayer and petition, but deliver to them the document which had been read." (C. R. 2, 251.)

Now, although the Romanists were in no way minded and disposed to submit the Confutation to the Lutherans, they nevertheless did not consider it wise to refuse their petition outright and bluntly; for they realized that this would redound to the glory neither of themselves nor of their document. The fanatical theologians, putting little faith in that sorry fabrication of their own, and shunning the light, at first succeeded in having a resolution passed declaring the entire matter settled with the mere reading. However in order to save their faces and to avoid the appearance of having refused the Confutation as well as "the scorn and ridicule on that account" (as the Emperor naively put it), and "lest any one say that His Imperial Majesty had not, in accordance with his manifesto, first dealt kindly with" the Lutherans, the estates resolved on August 4 to grant their request. At the same time, however, they added conditions which the Lutherans regarded as dangerous, insinuating and impossible, hence rendering the Catholic offer illusory and unacceptable.

August 5 the Emperor communicated the resolutions adopted by the Catholic estates to the Lutherans. According to a report of the Nuernberg delegates the negotiations proceeded as follows: The Emperor declared that the Confutation would be forwarded to the Lutherans, but with the understanding that they must come to an agreement with the Catholic princes and estates; furthermore that they spare His Imperial Majesty with their refutations and make no further reply and, above all, that they keep this and other writings to themselves, nor let them pass out of their hands, for instance, by printing them or in any other way. Hereupon Brueck, in the name of the Lutherans, thanked the Emperor, at the same time voicing the request "that, considering their dire necessity, His Imperial Majesty would permit his Elector and princes to make answer to the Confutation." Duke Frederick responded: The Emperor was inclined to grant them permission to reply, but desired the answer to be "as profitable and brief as possible," also expected them to come to an agreement with the Catholics, and finally required a solemn promise that they would not permit the document to pass out of their hands. Brueck answered guardedly: The Lutherans would gladly come to an agreement "as far as it was possible for them to do so with God and their conscience;" and as to their answer and the preservation of the document, they would be found "irreprehensible." The Emperor now

declared: "The document should be delivered to the Lutherans in case they would promise to keep it to themselves and not allow it to fall into other hands; otherwise His Imperial Majesty was not minded to confer with them any longer." Brueck asked for time to consider the matter, and was given till evening. In his response he declined the Emperor's offer, at the same time indicating that an answer to the Confutation would be forthcoming nevertheless. The Lutherans, he said, felt constrained to relinquish their petition, because the condition that the document be kept in their hands had been stressed in such a manner that they could not but fear the worst interpretation if it would nevertheless leak out without their knowledge and consent; still, they offered to answer the Confutation, since they had noted the most important points while it was read; in this case, however, they asked that it be not charged to them if anything should be overlooked; at the same time they besought the Emperor to consider this action of theirs as compelled by dire necessity, and in no other light. (*C. R.* 2, 255ff.) In the Preface to the Apology, Melanchthon says: "This [a copy of the Confutation] our princes could not obtain, except on the most perilous conditions, which it was impossible for them to accept." (99.)

## 51. Lutherans on Roman Duplicity and Perfidy

The duplicity and perfidy of the Emperor and the Romanists in their dealings with the Lutherans was characterized by Chancellor Brueck as follows: "The tactics of the opponents in offering a copy [of the Confutation] were those of the fox when he invited the stork to be his guest and served him food in a broad, shallow pan, so that he could not take the food with his long bill. In like manner they treated the five electors and princes, as well as the related cities, when they offered to accede to their request and submit a copy to them, but upon conditions which they could not accept without greatly violating their honor." (Koellner, 419.) Over against the Emperor's demand of blind submission and his threat of violence, the Lutherans appealed to their pure Confession, based on the Holy Scriptures, to their good conscience, bound in the Word of God, and to the plain wording of the imperial manifesto, which had promised discussions in love and kindness. In an Answer of August 9, *e. g.*, they declared: The articles of the Augustana which we have presented are drawn from the Scriptures, and "it is impossible for us to relinquish them with a good conscience and peace of heart, unless we find a refutation founded on God's Word and truth, on which we may rest our conscience in peace and certainty." (Foerstemann, 2, 185.) In the Preface to the Apology, Melancthon comments as follows on the demand of the Romanists: "Afterwards, negotiations for peace were begun, in which it was apparent that our princes declined no burden, however grievous, which could be assumed without offense to conscience. But the adversaries obstinately demanded that we should approve certain manifest abuses and errors; and as we could not do this, His Imperial Majesty again demanded that our princes should assent to the Confutation. This our princes refused to do. For how could they, in a matter pertaining to religion, assent to a writing which they had not been able to examine, especially as they had heard that some articles were condemned in which it was impossible for them, without grievous sin, to approve the opinions of the adversaries?" (99.)

Self-evidently the Lutherans also protested publicly that the procedure of the Romanists was in contravention of the proclamation of the Emperor as well as of his declaration on June 20, according to which both parties were to deliver their opinions in writing for the purpose of mutual friendly discussion. In the Answer of August 9, referred to above they said: "We understand His Imperial Majesty's answer to mean nothing else than that, after each party had presented its meaning and opinion, such should here be discussed among us in love and kindness." Hence, they said, it was in violation of this agreement to withhold the Confutation, lest it be answered. (Foerstemann, 2, 184f.) Luther expressed the same conviction, saying: "All the world was awaiting a gracious diet, as the manifesto proclaimed and pretended, and yet, sad to say, it was not so conducted." (St. L. 16, 1636.)

That the Romanists themselves fully realized that the charges of the Lutherans were well founded, appears from the subterfuges to which they resorted in order to justify their violence and duplicity, notably their refusal to let them examine the Confutation. In a declaration of August 11 they stated "that the imperial laws expressly forbid, on pain of loss of life and limb, to dispute or argue (*gruppeln*) about the articles of faith in any manner whatever," and that in the past the edicts of the Emperor in this matter of faith had been despised, scorned, ridiculed, and derided by the Lutherans. (Foerstemann, 2, 190.) Such were the miserable arguments with which the Romanists defended their treachery. Luther certainly hit the nail on the head when he wrote that the Romanists refused to deliver the Confutation "because their consciences felt very well that it was a corrupt, futile, and frigid affair, of which they would have to be ashamed in case it should become public and show itself in the light, or endure an answer." (St. L. 16, 1635.)



## 52. Original Draft of Apology

August 5 the Lutherans had declared to the Emperor that they would not remain indebted for an answer to the Confutation, even though a copy of it was refused them. They knew the cunning Romanists, and had prepared for every emergency. Melanchthon, who, according to a letter addressed to Luther (C. R. 2, 254), was not present at the reading of the Confutation, writes in the Preface to the Apology: "During the reading some of us had taken down the chief points of the topics and arguments." (101.) Among these was Camerarius. August 4 the Nuernberg delegates reported to their senate that the Confutation comprising more than fifty pages, had been publicly read on August 3, at 2 P.M., and that the Lutherans had John Kammermeister "record the substance of all the articles; this he has diligently done in shorthand on his tablet as far as he was able, and more than all of us were able to understand and remember, as Your Excellency may perceive from the enclosed copy." (C. R. 2, 250.)

On the basis of these notes the council of Nuernberg had a theological and a legal opinion drawn up, and a copy of the former (Osiander's refutation of the Confutation) was delivered to Melanchthon on August 18 by the Nuernberg delegates. Osiander specially stressed the point that the demand of the Romanists to submit to the decision of the Church in matters of faith must be rejected, that, on the contrary, everything must be subordinated to the Holy Scriptures. (Plitt, 87.) In drawing up the Apology, however, Melanchthon made little, if any, use of Osiander's work. Such, at least, is the inference Kolde draws from Melanchthon's words to Camerarius, September 20: "Your citizens [of Nuernberg] have sent us a book on the same subject [answer to the Confutation], which I hope before long to discuss with you orally." (383.) There can be little doubt that Melanchthon privately entertained the idea of writing the Apology immediately after the reading of the Confutation. The commission, however, to do this was not given until later; and most of the work was probably done in September. For August 19 the Nuernberg delegates reported that their "opinion" had been given to Melanchthon, who as yet, however, had not received orders to write anything in reply to the Confutation, "unless he is privately engaged in such undertaking." (C. R. 2, 289.)

At Augsburg the execution of the resolution to frame an answer to the Confutation had been sidetracked for the time being, by the peace parleys between the Lutherans and the Catholics, which began soon after the Confutation was read and continued through August. But when these miscarried, the Evangelical estates, on the 29th of August, took official action regarding the preparation of an Apology. Of the meeting in which the matter was discussed the Nuernberg delegates report: "It was furthermore resolved: 'Since we have recently declared before His Majesty that, in case His Majesty refused to deliver to us the Confutation of our Confession without restrictions [the aforementioned conditions] we nevertheless could not refrain from writing a reply to it, as far as the articles had been noted down during the reading, and from delivering it to His Imperial Majesty: we therefore ought to prepare ourselves in this matter, in order to make use of it in case of necessity,' In this we, the delegates of the cities, also acquiesced. ... I, Baumgaertner, also said: In case such a work as was under discussion should be drawn up, we had some opinions [the theological and the legal opinions of the city of Nuernberg], which might be of service in this matter, and which we would gladly submit. Hereupon it was ordered that Dr. Brueck and other Saxons be commissioned to draft the writing." (321.) The assumption, therefore, that Melanchthon was the sole author of the first draft of the Apology is erroneous. In the Preface to the Apology he writes: "They had, however, commanded me *and some others* to prepare an Apology of the Confession, in which the reasons why we could not accept the Confutation should be set forth to His Imperial Majesty, and the objections made by the adversaries be refuted." (101.) In the same Preface he says that he had originally drawn up the Apology at Augsburg, "*taking counsel* with others." (101.) However, we do not know who, besides Brueck, these "others" were.

### 53. Apology Presented, But Acceptance Refused

By September 20 Melancthon had finished his work. For on the same day he wrote to Camerarius: "The verdict [decision of the Diet] on our affair has not yet been rendered. ... Our Prince thought of leaving yesterday, and again to-day. The Emperor however, kept him here by the promise that he would render his decision within three days. ... Owing to the statements of evil-minded people, I am now remaining at home and have in these days written the Apology of our Confession, which, if necessary, shall also be delivered; for it will be opposed to the Confutation of the other party, which you heard when it was read. I have written it sharply and more vehemently" (than the Confession). (C. R. 2, 383.)

Before long, a good opportunity also for delivering this Apology presented itself. It was at the meeting of the Diet on September 22 when the draft of a final resolution (*Abschied*) was read to the estates. According to this decision, the Emperor offered to give the Evangelicals time till April 15, 1531, to consider whether or not they would unite with the Christian Church, the Holy Father, and His Majesty "in the other articles," provided however, that in the mean time nothing be printed and absolutely no further innovations be made. The imperial decision also declared emphatically that the Lutheran Confession had been refuted by the Confutation. The verdict claimed the Emperor "had, in the presence of the other electors, princes, and estates of the holy empire, graciously heard the opinion and confession [of the Evangelical princes], had given it due and thorough consideration, and had refuted and disproved it with sound arguments from the holy gospels and the Scriptures." (Foerstemann, 2, 475.)

Self-evidently, the Lutherans could not let this Roman boast pass by in silence. Accordingly, in the name of the Elector, Brueck arose to voice their objections, and, while apologizing for its deficiencies, presented the Apology. In his protest, Brueck dwelt especially on the offensive words of the imperial decision which claimed that the Augustana was refuted by the Confutation. He called attention to the fact that the Lutherans had been offered a copy only under impossible conditions; that they had nevertheless, on the basis of what was heard during the reading, drawn up a "counter-plea, or reply;" this he was now holding in his hands, and he requested that it be read publicly; from it every one might learn "with what strong, irrefutable reasons of Holy Scripture" the Augustana was fortified. (Foerstemann, 2, 479.) Duke Frederick took the Apology, but returned it on signal from the Emperor, into whose ear King Ferdinand had been whispering. Sleidan relates: "Cumque hucusce [tr. note: sic] perventum esset, Pontanus apologiam Caesari deferret; eam ubi Fridericus Palatinus accepit, subnunte Caesare, cui Ferdinandus aliquid ad aures insusurraverat, reddit." A similar report is found in the annals of Spalatin. (Koellner, 422.)

By refusing to accept the Apology, the Emperor and the Romanists *de facto* broke off negotiations with the Lutherans; and the breach remained, and became permanent. September 23 the Elector left Augsburg. By the time the second imperial decision was rendered, November 19, all the Evangelical princes had left the Diet. The second verdict dictated by the intolerant spirit of the papal theologians, was more vehement than the first. Confusing Lutherans, Zwinglians, and Anabaptists, Charles emphasized the execution of the Edict of Worms; sanctioned all dogmas and abuses which the Evangelicals had attacked; confirmed the spiritual jurisdiction of the bishops; demanded the restoration of all abolished rites identified himself with the Confutation; and repeated the assertion that the Lutheran Confession had been refuted from the Scriptures. (Foerstemann, 2, 839f.; Laemmer, 49.)

In his *Gloss on the Alleged Imperial Edict of 1531*, Luther dilates as follows on the Roman assertion of having refuted the Augustana from the Scriptures: "In the first place concerning their boasting that our Confession was refuted from the holy gospels, this is so manifest a lie that they themselves well know it to be an abominable falsehood. With this rouge they wanted to tint their faces

and to defame us, since they noticed very well that their affair was leaky, leprous, and filthy, and despite such deficiency nevertheless was to be honored. Their heart thought: Ours is an evil cause, this we know very well, but we shall say the Lutherans were refuted; that's enough. Who will compel us to prove such a false statement? For if they had not felt that their boasting was lying, pure and simple, they would not only gladly, and without offering any objections, have surrendered their refutation as was so earnestly desired, but would also have made use of all printing-presses to publish it, and heralded it with all trumpets and drums, so that such defiance would have arisen that the very sun would not have been able to shine on account of it. But now, since they so shamefully withheld their answer and still more shamefully hide and secrete it, by this action their evil conscience bears witness to the fact that they lie like reprobates when they boast that our Confession has been refuted, and that by such lies they seek not the truth, but our dishonor and a cover for their shame." (St. L. 16, 1668.)

## 54. Apology Recast by Melanchthon

Owing to the fact that Melanchthon, immediately after the presentation of the Apology, resolved to revise and recast it, the original draft was forced into the background. It remained unknown for a long time and was published for the first time forty-seven years after the Diet. Chytraeus embodied it in his *Historia Augustanae Confessionis*, 1578, with the caption, "*Prima Delineatio Caesari Carolo Die 22. Septembris Oblata, sed Non Recepta*— The First Draft which was Offered to Emperor Charles on September 22, but Not Accepted." The German and Latin texts are found in *Corp. Ref.* 27, 275ff. and 322. Following is the Latin title: "Apologia Confessionis, 1530. Ps. 119: Principes persecuti sunt me gratis." The German title runs: "Antwort der Widerlegung auf unser Bekenntnis uebergeben." (245. 378.) Plitt says of the original Apology: "It was well qualified to be presented to the Emperor, and, in form also, far surpassed the Confutation of the Papists. Still the Evangelical Church suffered no harm when the Emperor declined to accept it. The opportunity for revision which was thus offered and fully exploited by Melanchthon, who was never able to satisfy himself, resulted in a great improvement. The Apology as it appeared the following year is much riper, sharper in its rebuttal, and stronger in its argumentation." (88.)

The draft of the Apology presented at Augsburg concluded as follows: "If the Confutation had been forwarded to us for inspection we would perhaps have been able to give a more adequate answer on these and additional points." (*C. R.* 27, 378.) When, therefore, the Emperor had refused to accept it, Melanchthon determined to revise, reenforce, and augment the document. September 23 he left Augsburg in the company of the Elector; and already while *en route* he began the work. In his *History of the Augsburg Confession*, 1730, Salig remarks: "Still the loss of the first copy [of the Apology] does not seem to be so great, since we now possess the Apology in a more carefully elaborated form. For while the Diet was still in session, and also after the theologians had returned home, Melanchthon was constantly engaged upon it, casting it into an entirely different mold, and making it much more extensive than it was before. When the theologians had returned to Saxony from the Diet, Melanchthon, in Spalatin's house at Altenburg, even worked at it on Sunday, so that Luther plucked the pen from his hand, saying that on this day he must rest from such work." (1, 377.) However, since the first draft was presented to the Emperor on September 22, and Melanchthon, together with the Elector, left Augsburg on the following day, it is evident that he could not have busied himself very much with the revision of the Apology at Augsburg. And that Luther, in the Altenburg incident, should have put especial stress on the Sunday, for this neither Salig nor those who follow him (*e. g.*, Schaff, *Creeds*, 1, 243) offer any evidence. In his *Seventeen Sermons on the Life of Luther*, Mathesius gives the following version of the incident: "When Luther, returning home with his companions from Coburg, was visiting Spalatin, and Philip, constantly engrossed in thoughts concerning the Apology, was writing during the meal, he arose and took the pen away from him [saying]: 'God can be honored not alone by work, but also by rest and recreation; for that reason He has given the Third Commandment and commanded the Sabbath.'" (243.) This report of Mathesius certainly offers no ground for a Puritanic explanation of the incident in Spalatin's home.

Originally Melanchthon does not seem to have contemplated a revision on a very large scale. In the Preface, which was printed first, he merely remarks that he made "some additions" (*quaedam adieci*) to the Apology drawn up at Augsburg. (101.) Evidently, at the time when he wrote this, he had no estimate of the proportions the work, which grew under his hands, would finally assume. Before long also he obtained a complete copy of the Confutation. It was probably sent to him from Nuernberg, whose delegate had been able to send a copy home on August 28, 1530. (Kolde, 37.) Says Melanchthon in the Preface to the Apology: "I have recently seen the Confutation, and have noticed how cunningly and slanderously it was written, so that on some points it could deceive even the cautious." (101.) Eck clamored that the Confutation "had gotten into Melanchthon's

hands in a furtive and fraudulent manner, *furtim et fraudulenter ad manus Melanchthonis eandem pervenisse*." (Koellner, 426.) The possession of the document enabled Melanchthon to deal in a reliable manner with all questions involved, and spurred him on to do most careful and thorough work.

## 55. Completion of Apology Delayed

Owing to the fact that Melanchthon spent much more time and labor on the work than he had anticipated and originally planned, the publication of the Apology was unexpectedly delayed. October 1, 1530, Melanchthon wrote to Camerarius: "Concerning the word 'liturgy' [in the Apology] I ask you again and again carefully to search out for me its etymology as well as examples of its meaning." November 12, to Dietrich: "I shall describe them [the forms of the Greek mass] to Osiander as soon as I have completed the Apology, which I am now having printed and am endeavoring to polish. In it I shall fully explain the most important controversies, which, I hope, will prove profitable." (C. R. 2, 438.) In a similar strain he wrote to Camerarius, November 18. (440.) January 1, 1531, again to Camerarius: "In the Apology I experience much trouble with the article of Justification, which I seek to explain profitably." (470.) February, 1531, to Brenz: "I am at work on the Apology. It will appear considerably augmented and better founded. For this article, in which we teach that men are justified by faith and not by love, is treated exhaustively." (484.) March 7, to Camerarius: "My Apology is not yet completed. It grows in the writing." (486.) Likewise in March, to Baumgaertner: "I have not yet completed the Apology, as I was hindered, not only by illness, but also by many other matters, which interrupted me, concerning the syncretism Bucer is stirring up." (485.) March 17, to Camerarius: "My Apology is making slower progress than the matter calls for." (488.) Toward the end of March, to Baumgaertner: "The Apology is still in press; for I am revising it entirely and extending it." (492.) April 7, to Jonas: "In the Apology I have completed the article on Marriage, in which the opponents are charged with many real crimes." (493.) April 8, to Brenz: "We have almost finished the Apology. I hope it will please you and other good people." (494.) April 11, to Camerarius: "My Apology will appear one of these days. I shall also see that you receive it. At times I have spoken somewhat vehemently, as I see that the opponents despise every mention of peace." (495.) Finally, in the middle of April, to Bucer: "My Apology has appeared, in which, in my opinion, I have treated the articles of Justification, Repentance, and several others in such a manner that our opponents will find themselves heavily burdened. I have said little of the Eucharist." (498.)

These letters show that Melanchthon took particular pains with the article of Justification, which was expanded more than tenfold. January 31, he was still hard at work on this article. Kolde says: "This was due to the fact that he suppressed five and one-half sheets [preserved by Veit Dietrich] treating this subject because they were not satisfactory to him, and while he at first treated Articles 4 to 6 together, he now included also Article 20, recasting anew the entire question of the nature of justification and the relation of faith and good works. Illness and important business, such as the negotiations with Bucer on the Lord's Supper, brought new delays. He also found it necessary to be more explicit than he had contemplated. Thus it came about that the work could first appear, together with the Augustana, end of April, or, at the latest, beginning of May." (37) According to the resolution of the Diet, the Lutherans were to have decided by April 15, 1531, whether they would accept the Confutation or not. The answer of the Lutherans was the appearance, on the bookstalls, of the Augustana and the Apology, and a few days prior, of Luther's "Remarks on the Alleged Imperial Edict, *Glossen auf das vermeinte kaiserliche Edikt*."

## 56. German Translation by Jonas

The Apology was written in Latin. The *editio princeps* in quarto of 1531 contained the German and the Latin texts of the Augsburg Confession, and the Latin text of the Apology. From the very beginning, however, a German translation was, if not begun, at least planned. But, though announced on the title-page of the quarto edition just referred to, it appeared six months later, in the fall of 1531. It was the work of Justus Jonas. The title of the edition of 1531 reads: "*Apologie der Konfession, aus dem Latein verdeutscht durch Justus Jonas, Wittenberg*. Apology of the Confession done into German from the Latin by Justus Jonas, Wittenberg." For a time Luther also thought of writing a "German Apology." April 8, 1531, Melanchthon wrote to Brenz: "*Lutherus nunc instituit apologiam Germanicam*. Luther is now preparing a German Apology." (C. R. 2, 494. 501.) It is, however, hardly possible that Luther was contemplating a translation. Koellner comments on Melanchthon's words: "One can understand them to mean that Luther is working on the German Apology." *Instituit*, however, seems to indicate an independent work rather than a translation. Koestlin is of the opinion that Luther thought of writing an Apology of his own, because he was not entirely satisfied with Melanchthon's. (*Martin Luther* 2, 382.) However, if this view is correct, it certainly cannot apply to Melanchthon's revised Apology, to which Luther in 1533 expressly confessed himself, but to the first draft at Augsburg, in which, e. g., the 10th Article seems to endorse the concomitance doctrine. (*Lehre und Wehre* 1918, 385.) At all events, Luther changed his plan when Jonas began the translation of the new Apology.

The translation of Jonas is not a literal reproduction of the Latin original, but a version with numerous independent amplifications. Also Melanchthon had a share in this work. In a letter of September 26, 1531, he says: "They are still printing the German Apology, the improvements of which cost me no little labor." (C. R. 2, 542.) The deviations from the Latin original therefore must perhaps be traced to Melanchthon rather than to Jonas. Some of them are due to the fact that the translation was based in part not on the text of the *editio princeps*, but on the altered Latin octavo edition, copies of which Melanchthon was able to send to his friends as early as September 14. See, for example the 10th Article, where the German text follows the octavo edition in omitting the quotation from Theophylact. The German text appeared also in a separate edition, as we learn from the letter of the printer Rhau to Stephen Roth of November 30, 1531: "I shall send you a German Apology, most beautifully bound." (Kolde, 39.) German translations adhering strictly to the text of the *editio princeps* are of a much later date.

## 57. Alterations of Apology

Melanchthon, who was forever changing and improving, naturally could not leave the Apology as it read in the first edition. This applies to both the German and the Latin text. He was thinking of the Latin octavo edition when he wrote to Brenz, June 7, 1531: "The Apology is now being printed, and I am at pains to make some points in the article of Justification clearer. It is an extremely great matter, in which we must proceed carefully that Christ's honor may be magnified." (2, 504.) The same edition he had in mind when he wrote to Myconius, June 14, 1531: "My Apology is now in press, and I am endeavoring to present the article of Justification even more clearly; for there are some things in the solution of the arguments which are not satisfactory to me." (506.) Accordingly, this octavo edition, of which Melanchthon was able to send a copy to Margrave George on September 14, revealed important alterations: partly improvements, partly expansions, partly deletions. The changes in the 10th Article, already referred to, especially the omission of the quotation from Theophylact, attracted most attention. The succeeding Latin editions likewise revealed minor changes. The Apology accompanying the Altered Augsburg Confession of 1540, was designated by Melanchthon himself as "*diligenter recognita*, diligently revised." (C. R. 26, 357. 419.)

Concerning the German Apology, Melanchthon wrote to Camerarius on January 1, 1533: "I have more carefully treated the German Apology and the article of Justification, and would ask you to examine it. If you have seen my Romans [Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans], you will be able to notice how exactly and methodically I am endeavoring to explain this matter. I also hope that intelligent men will approve it. For I have done this in order to explain necessary matters and to cut off all manner of questions, partly false, partly useless." (C. R. 2, 624.) About the same time he wrote to Spalatin: "Two articles I have recast entirely: Of Original Sin and Of Righteousness. I ask you to examine them, and hope that they will profit pious consciences. For in my humble opinion I have most clearly presented the doctrine of Righteousness and ask you to write me your opinion." (625.) Kolde says of this second revision of the German text of 1533: "This edition, which Melanchthon described as 'diligently amended,' is much sharper in its tone against the Romanists than the first and reveals quite extensive changes. Indeed, entire articles have been remodeled, such as those Of Justification and Good Works, Of Repentance. Of the Mass, and also the statements on Christian perfection." (41.) These alterations in the Latin and German texts of the Apology, however, do not involve changes in doctrine, at least not in the same degree as in the case of the Augustana Variata of 1540. Self-evidently, it was the text of the first edition of the German as well as the Latin Apology that was embodied in the Book of Concord.



## 58. Purpose, Arrangement, and Character of Apology

The aim of the Apology was to show why the Lutherans "do not accept the Confutation," and to puncture the papal boast that the Augustana had been refuted with the Holy Scriptures. In its Preface we read: "Afterwards a certain decree was published [by the Emperor], in which the adversaries boast that they have refuted our Confession from the Scriptures. You have now, therefore, reader, our Apology, from which you will understand not only what the adversaries have judged (for we have reported in good faith), but also that they have condemned several articles contrary to the manifest Scripture of the Holy Ghost, so far are they from overthrowing our propositions by means of the Scriptures." (101.) The Apology is, on the one hand, a refutation of the Confutation and, on the other hand, a defense and elaboration of the Augustana, presenting theological proofs for the correctness of its teachings. Hence constant reference is made to the Augsburg Confession as well as the Confutation; and scholastic theology is discussed as well. On this account also the sequence of the articles, on the whole, agrees with that of the Augustana and the Confutation. However, articles treating of related doctrines are collected into one, *e. g.*, Articles 4, 5, 6, and 20. Articles to which the Romanists assented are but briefly touched upon. Only a few of them have been elaborated somewhat *e. g.*, Of the Adoration of the Saints, Of Baptism, Of the Lord's Supper, Of Repentance, Of Civil Government. The fourteen articles, however, which the Confutation rejected are discussed extensively, and furnished also with titles, in the *editio princeps* as well as in the Book of Concord of 1580 and 1584. In Mueller's edition of the Symbolical Books all articles of the Apology are for the first time supplied with numbers and captions corresponding with the Augsburg Confession.

In the Apology, just as in the Augsburg Confession, everything springs from, and is regulated by, the fundamental Lutheran principle of Law and Gospel, sin and grace, faith and justification. Not only is the doctrine of justification set forth thoroughly and comfortingly in a particular article, but throughout the discussions it remains the dominant note, its heavenly strain returning again and again as the *motif* in the grand symphony of divine truths – a strain with which the Apology also breathes, as it were, its last, departing breath. For in its Conclusion we read: "If all the scandals [which, according to the Papists, resulted from Luther's teaching] be brought together, still the one article concerning the remission of sins (that for Christ's sake, through faith, we freely obtain the remission of sins) brings so much good as to hide all evils. And this, in the beginning [of the Reformation], gained for Luther not only our favor, but also that of many who are now contending against us." (451.)

In Kolde's opinion, the Apology is a companion volume, as it were, to Melancthon's *Loci Communes*, and a theological dissertation rather than a confession. However, theological thoroughness and erudition do not conflict with the nature of a confession as long as it is not mere cold intellectual reflection and abstraction, but the warm, living, and immediate language of the believing heart. With all its thoroughness and erudition the Apology is truly edifying, especially the German version. One cannot read without being touched in his inmost heart, without sensing and feeling something of the heart-beat of the Lutheran confessors. Jacobs, who translated the Apology into English, remarks: "To one charged with the cure of souls the frequent reading of the Apology is invaluable; in many (we may say, in most) parts it is a book of practical religion." (*The Book of Concord* 2, 41.) The Apology does not offer all manner of theories of idle minds, but living testimonies of what faith, while struggling hotly with the devil and languishing in the fear of death and the terrors of sin and the Law found and experienced in the sweet Gospel as restored by Luther. In reading the Apology, one can tell from the words employed how Melancthon lived, moved, and fairly reveled in this blessed truth which in opposition to all heathen work-righteousness teaches terrified hearts to rely solely and alone on grace. In his *History of Lutheranism* (2, 206) Seckendorf declares that no one can be truly called a theologian of our Church who has not diligently and repeatedly read the Apology or familiarized himself with it. (Salig, 1, 375.)

## 59. Moderate Tone of Apology

The tone of the Apology is much sharper than that of the Augsburg Confession. The situation had changed; hence the manner of dealing with the opposition also changed. The Romanists had fully revealed themselves as implacable enemies, who absolutely refused a peace on the basis of truth and justice. In the Conclusion of the Apology we read: "But as to the want of unity and dissension in the Church, it is well known how these matters first happened and who caused the division namely, the sellers of indulgences, who shamefully preached intolerable lies, and afterwards condemned Luther for not approving of those lies, and besides, they again and again excited more controversies, so that Luther was induced to attack many other errors. But since our opponents would not tolerate the truth, and dared to promote manifest errors by force it is easy to judge who is guilty of the schism. Surely, all the world, all wisdom, all power ought to yield to Christ and his holy Word. But the devil is the enemy of God, and therefore rouses all his might against Christ to extinguish and suppress the Word of God. Therefore the devil with his members, setting himself against the Word of God, is the cause of the schism and want of unity. For we have most zealously sought peace, and still most eagerly desire it, provided only we are not forced to blaspheme and deny Christ. For God, the discernor of all men's hearts, is our witness that we do not delight and have no joy in this awful disunion. On the other hand, our adversaries have so far not been willing to conclude peace without stipulating that we must abandon the saving doctrine of the forgiveness of sin by Christ without our merit, though Christ would be most foully blasphemed thereby." (451.)

Such being the attitude of the Romanists, there was no longer any reason for Melanchthon to have any special consideration for these implacable opponents of the Lutherans and hardened enemies of the Gospel, of the truth, and of religious liberty and peace. Reconciliation with Rome was out of the question. Hence he could yield more freely to his impulse here than in the Augustana; for when this Confession was written an agreement was not considered impossible. In a letter of July 15, 1530, informing Luther of the pasquinades delivered to the Emperor, Melanchthon declared: "If an answer will become necessary, I shall certainly remunerate these wretched, bloody men. *Si contingeret, ut respondendum sit, ego profecto remunerabor istos nefarios viros sanguinum.*" (C. R. 2, 197.) And when about to conclude the Apology, he wrote to Brenz, April 8, 1531: "I have entirely laid aside the mildness which I formerly exercised toward the opponents. Since they will not employ me as a peacemaker, but would rather have me as their enemy, I shall do what the matter requires, and faithfully defend our cause." (494.) But while Melanchthon castigates the papal theologians, he spares and even defends the Emperor.

In Luther's *Remarks on the Alleged Imperial Edict*, of 1531, we read: "I, Martin Luther, Doctor of the Sacred Scriptures and pastor of the Christians at Wittenberg, in publishing these Remarks, wish it to be distinctly understood that anything I am writing in this booklet against the alleged imperial edict or command is not to be viewed as written against his Imperial Majesty or any higher power, either of spiritual or civil estate... I do not mean the pious Emperor nor the pious lords, but the traitors and reprobates (be they princes or bishops), and especially that fellow whom St. Paul calls God's opponent (I should say God's vicar), the arch-knave, Pope Clement, and his servant Campegius, and the like, who plan to carry out their desperate, nefarious roguery under the imperial name, or, as Solomon says, at court." (16, 1666.) Luther then continues to condemn the Diet in unqualified terms. "What a disgraceful Diet," says he, "the like of which was never held and never heard of, and nevermore shall be held or heard of, on account of his disgraceful action! It cannot but remain an eternal blot on all princes and the entire empire, and makes all Germans blush before God and all the world." But he continues exonerating and excusing the Emperor: "Let no one tremble on account of this edict which they so shamefully invent and publish in the name of the pious Emperor. And should they not publish their lies in the name of a pious Emperor, when their entire blasphemous,

abominable affair was begun and maintained for over six hundred years in the name of God and the Holy Church?" (16, 1634.)

In a similar manner Melanchthon, too, treats the Emperor. He calls him "*optimum imperatorem*," and speaks of "the Emperor's most gentle disposition, *mansuetissimum Caesaris pectus*," which Eck and his party were seeking to incite to bloodshed. (C. R. 2, 197.) In the Preface he says: "And now I have written with the greatest moderation possible; and if any expression appears too severe, I must say here beforehand that I am contending with the theologians and monks who wrote the Confutation, and not with the Emperor or the princes, whom I hold in due esteem." (101.) In Article 23 Melanchthon even rises to the apostrophe: "And these their lusts they ask you to defend with your chaste right hand, Emperor Charles (whom even certain ancient predictions name as the king of modest face; for the saying appears concerning you: 'One modest in face shall reign everywhere')." (363.)

The Confutators, however, the avowed enemies of truth and peace, were spared no longer. Upon them Melanchthon now pours out the lye of bitter scorn. He excoriates them as "desperate sophists, who maliciously interpret the holy Gospel according to their dreams," and as "coarse, sluggish, inexperienced theologians." He denounces them as men "who for the greater part do not know whereof they speak," and "who dare to destroy this doctrine of faith with fire and sword," etc. Occasionally Melanchthon even loses his dignified composure. Article 6 we read: "Quis docuit illos asinos hanc dialecticam?" Article 9: "Videant isti asini." In his book of 1534 against the Apology, Cochlaeus complains that the youthful Melanchthon called old priests asses, sycophants, windbags, godless sophists, worthless hypocrites, etc. In the margin he had written: "Fierce and vicious he is, a barking dog toward those who are absent, but to those who were present at Augsburg, Philip was more gentle than a pup. *Ferox et mordax est, latrator in absentes, praesentes erat Augustae omni catello blandior Philippus*." (Salig, 1, 377.)

On this score, however, Cochlaeus and his papal compeers had no reason to complain, for they had proved to be past masters in vilifying and slandering the Lutherans, as well as implacable enemies, satisfied with nothing short of their blood and utter destruction. As a sample of their scurrility W. Walther quotes the following from a book written by Duke George of Saxony: "Er [Luther] ist gewiss mit dem Teufel besessen, mit der ganzen Legion, welche Christus von den Besessenen austrieb und erlaubte ihnen, in die Schweine zu fahren. Diese Legion hat dem Luther seinen Moenchschaedel hirnwuetig und wirbelsuechtig gemacht. Du unruhiger, treuloser und meineidiger Kутtenbube! Du bist allein der groesste, groebste Esel und Narr, du verfluchter Apostat! Hieraus kann maenniglich abnehmen die Verraeterei und Falschheit deines blutduerstigen Herzens, rachgierigen Gemuets und teuflischen Willens, so du, Luther, gegen deinen Naechsten tobend, als ein toerichter Hund mit offenem Maul ohne Unterlass wagest. Du treuloser Bube und teuflischer Moench! Du deklariertes Mameluck and verdammter Zwiedarm, deren neun einen Pickharden gelten. Ich sage vornehmlich, dass du selbst der aller unverstaendigste Bacchant und zehneckichte Cornut und Bestia bist. Du meineidiger, treuloser und ehrenblosser Fleischboesewicht! Pfui dich nun, du sakrilegischer, der ausgelaufenen Moenche und Nonnen, der abfaelligen Pfaffen und aller Abtruennigen Hurenwirt! Ei, Doktor Schandluther! Mein Doktor Erzesel, ich will dir's prophezeit haben, der allmaechtige Gott wird dir kuerzlich die Schanze brechen und deiner boshaftigsten, groebsten Eselheit Feierabend geben. Du Sauboze, Doktor Sautrog! Doktor Eselsohr! Doktor Filzhut! Zweiundsiebzig Teufel sollen dich lebendig in den Abgrund der Hoelle fuehren. Ich will machen, dass du als ein Hoellenhund sollst Feuer ausspruehen und dich endlich selbst verbrennen. Ich will dich dem wuetenigen Teufel und seiner Hurenmutter mit einem blutigen Kopf in den Abgrund der Hoelle schicken." (*Luthers Charakter*, 148.)

Despite the occasional asperity referred to, the Apology, as a whole, is written with modesty and moderation. Melanchthon sought to keep the track as clear as possible for a future understanding. In the interest of unity, which he never lost sight of entirely, he was conservative and not disposed

needlessly to widen the existing gulf. In the Preface to the Apology he declares: "It has always been my custom in these controversies to retain, so far as I was at all able, the form of the customarily received doctrine, in order that at some time concord could be reached the more readily. Nor, indeed, am I now departing far from this custom, although I could justly lead away the men of this age still farther from the opinions of the adversaries." (101.) This irenic feature is perhaps most prominent in the 10th Article, Of the Lord's Supper, where Melancthon, in order to satisfy the opponents as to the orthodoxy of the Lutherans in the doctrine of the Real Presence, emphasizes the agreement in such a manner that he has been misunderstood as endorsing also the Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation.

## 60. Symbolical Authority of Apology

The great importance ascribed to the Apology appears both from its numerous reprints and the strenuous endeavors of the opponents to oppose it with books, which, however, no one was willing to print. The reception accorded it by the Lutherans is described in a letter which Lazarus Spengler sent to Veit Dietrich May 17: "We have received the Apology with the greatest joy and in good hope that it will be productive of much profit among our posterity." Brenz declares it worthy of the canon [worthy of symbolical authority]: "Apologiam, me iudice, canone dignam" (C. R. 2, 510), a phrase which Luther had previously applied to Melancthon's *Loci*. The joy of the Lutherans was equaled only by the consternation of their enemies. The appearance of the Apology surprised and perturbed them. They keenly felt that they were again discredited in the public opinion and had been outwitted by the Lutherans. On November 19 Albert of Mayence sent a copy of the Apology to the Emperor in order to show him how the Catholic religion was being destroyed while the Confutation remained unpublished. Cochlaeus complained that to judge from letters received, the Apology found approval even in Rome, whereas no printer could be found for Catholic replies to the Apology. He wrote: "Meantime, while we keep silence, they flaunt the Apology and other writings, and not only insult us, but cause our people and cities to doubt and to grow unstable in the faith." (Kolde, 40.)

The Apology, as revised and published by Melancthon, was a private work. His name, therefore, appeared on the title-page of the edition of 1531, which was not the case with respect to the Confession and Apology presented at Augsburg. The latter were official documents, drawn up by order of the Lutheran princes and estates, while the revised Apology was an undertaking for which Melancthon had received no commission. Accordingly, as he was not justified in publishing a work of his own under the name of the princes, there was nothing else for him to do than to affix his own signature. In the Preface to the Apology he says: "As it passed through the press, I made some additions. Therefore I give my name, so that no one can complain that the book has been published anonymously." (100.) Melancthon did not wish to make any one beside himself responsible for the contents of the revised Apology.

Before long, however, the Apology received official recognition. At Schweinfurt, 1532, in opposition to the Papists, the Lutherans appealed to the Augustana and Apology as the confession of their faith, designating the latter as "the defense and explanation of the Confession." And when the Papists advanced the claim that the Lutherans had gone farther in the Apology than in the Augustana, and, April 11, 1532, demanded that they abide by the Augustana, refrain from making the Apology their confession, and accordingly substitute "Assertion" for the title "Apology," the Lutherans, considering the Apology to be the adequate expression of their faith, insisted on the original title. April 17 they declared: "This book was called Apology because it was presented to Caesar after the Confession; nor could they suffer its doctrine and the Word of God to be bound and limited, or their preachers restricted to teach nothing else than the letter of the Augsburg Confession, thus making it impossible for them to rebuke freely and most fully all doctrinal errors, abuses, sins, and crimes. *Nominatum fuisse Apologiam scriptum illud, quod Caesari post Confessionem exhibitum sit, neque se pati posse, ut doctrina sua et Verbum Dei congestetur, imminuatur et concionatores astringantur, ut nihil aliud praedicent quam ad litteram Augustanae Confessionis, neque libere et plenissime adversus omnes errores doctrinae, abusos, peccata et crimina dicere possint.*" Hereupon the Romanists, on April 22, demanded that at least a qualifying explanation be added to the title Apology. Brueck answered on the 23d: "It is not possible to omit this word. The Apology is the correlate of the Confession. Still the princes and their associates do not wish any articles taught other than those which have so far begun to be discussed. *Omitti istud verbum non posse; Apologiam esse correlatum Confessionis; nolle tamen Principes et socios, ut alii articuli docerentur quam huiusque tractari coepti sint.*" (Koellner, 430.)

In his Letter of Comfort, 1533, to the Leipzig Lutherans banished by Duke George, Luther says: "There is our Confession and Apology... Adhere to our Confession and Apology." (10, 1956.) Membership in the Smalcald League was conditioned on accepting the Apology as well as the Augustana. Both were also subscribed to in the Wittenberg Concord of 1536. (*C. R.* 3, 76.) In 1537, at Smalcald, the Apology (together with the Augustana and the Appendix Concerning the Primacy of the Pope) was, by order of the Evangelical estates, subscribed by all of the theologians present, and thereby solemnly declared a confession of the Lutheran Church. In 1539 Denmark reckoned the Apology among the books which pastors were required to adopt. In 1540 it was presented together with the Augustana at Worms. It was also received into the various *corpora doctrinae*. The Formula of Concord adopts the Apology, saying: "We unanimously confess this [Apology] also, because not only is the said Augsburg Confession explained in it as much as is necessary and guarded [against the slanders of the adversaries], but also proved by clear, irrefutable testimonies of Holy Scripture." (853, 6.)

## **VII. Smalcald Articles and Tract concerning Power and Primacy of Pope**

### **61. General Council Demanded by Lutherans**

In order to settle the religious controversy between themselves and the Papists, the Lutherans, from the very beginning, asked for a general council. In the course of years this demand became increasingly frequent and insistent. It was solemnly renewed in the Preface of the Augsburg Confession. The Emperor had repeatedly promised to summon a council. At Augsburg he renewed the promise of convening it within a year. The Roman Curia, however, dissatisfied with the arrangements made at the Diet, found ways and means of delaying it. In 1532, the Emperor proceeded to Bologna, where he negotiated with Clement VII concerning the matter, as appears from the imperial and papal proclamations of January 8 and 10, 1533, respectively. As a result, the Pope, in 1533, sent Hugo Rangon, bishop of Resz, to Germany, to propose that the council be held at Placentia, Bologna, or Mantua. Clement, however, was not sincere in making this offer. In reality he was opposed to holding a council. Such were probably also the real sentiments of his successor, Paul III. But when the Emperor who, in the interest of his sweeping world policy, was anxious to dispose of the religious controversy, renewed his pressure, Paul finally found himself compelled to yield. June 4 1536, he issued a bull convoking a general council to meet at Mantua, May 8, 1537. Nothing, however, was said about the principles according to which it was to be formed and by which it should be governed in transacting its business. Self-evidently, then, the rules of the former councils were to be applied. Its declared purpose was the peace of the Church through the extinction of heresy. In the *Bull Concerning the Reforms of the Roman Court*, which the Pope issued September 23, he expressly declared that the purpose of the council would be "the utter extirpation of the poisonous, pestilential Lutheran heresy." (St. L. 16, 1914.) Thus the question confronting the Protestants was, whether they could risk to appear at such a council, and ought to do so, or whether (and how) they should decline to attend. Luther, indeed, still desired a council. But after 1530 he no longer put any confidence in a council convened by the Pope, although, for his person, he did not refuse to attend even such a council. This appears also from his conversation, November 7, 1535, with the papal legate Peter Paul Vergerius (born 1497; accused of Lutheranism 1546; deprived of his bishopric 1549; defending Protestantism after 1550; employed by Duke Christoph of Wuerttemberg 1553; died 1564.) Koestlin writes: "Luther relates how he had told the legate: 'Even if you do call a council, you will not treat of salutary doctrine, saving faith, etc., but of useless matters, such as laws concerning meats, the length of priest's garments, exercises of monks, etc.' While he was thus dilating, says Luther, the legate, holding his head in his hand, turned to a near-by companion and said: 'He strikes the nail on the head,' The further utterances of Luther: 'We do not need a council for ourselves and our adherents, for we already have the firm Evangelical doctrine and order; Christendom, however, needs it, in order that those whom error still holds captive may be able to distinguish between error and truth,' appeared utterly intolerable to Vergerius, as he himself relates. He regarded them as unheard-of arrogance. By way of answer, he asked, whether, indeed the Christian men assembled from all parts of the world, upon whom, without doubt, the Holy Spirit descends, must only decide what Luther approved of. Boldly and angrily interrupting him Luther said: 'Yes, I will come to the council and lose my head if I shall not defend my doctrine against all the world;' furthermore he exclaimed: 'This wrath of my mouth is not my wrath, but the wrath of God.' Vergerius rejoiced to hear that Luther was perfectly willing to come to the council; for, so he wrote to Rome, he thought that nothing more was needed to break the courage of the heretics than the certain prospect of a council, and at the same time he

believed that in Luther's assent he heard the decision of his master, the Elector, also. Luther declared that it was immaterial to him where the council would meet, at Mantua, Verona, or at any other place. Vergerius continued: 'Are you willing to come to Bologna?' Luther: 'To whom does Bologna belong?' Vergerius: 'To the Pope.' Luther: 'Good Lord, has this town, too, been grabbed by the Pope? Very well, I shall come to you there.' Vergerius: 'The Pope will probably not refuse to come to you at Wittenberg either,' Luther: 'Very well, let him come; we shall look for him with pleasure.' Vergerius: 'Do you expect him to come with an army or without weapons?' Luther: 'As he pleases, in whatsoever manner he may come, we shall expect him and shall receive him.' – Luther and Bugenhagen remained with Vergerius until he departed with his train of attendants. After mounting, he said once more to Luther: 'See that you be prepared for the council.' Luther answered: 'Yes, sir, with this my neck and head.'" (*Martin Luther* 2, 382 sq.)



## **62. Luther's Views Regarding the Council**

What Luther's attitude toward a general council was in 1537 is expressed in the Preface to the Smalcald Articles as follows: "But to return to the subject. I verily desire to see a truly Christian council, in order that many matters and persons might be helped. Not that we need it, for our churches are now through God's grace, so enlightened and equipped with the pure Word and right use of the Sacraments, with knowledge of the various callings and of right works that we on our part ask for no council, and on such points have nothing better to hope or expect from a council. But we see in the bishoprics everywhere so many parishes vacant and desolate that one's heart would break, and yet neither the bishops nor canons care how the poor people live or die, for whom nevertheless Christ has died, and who are not permitted to hear Him speak with them as the true Shepherd with His sheep. This causes me to shudder and fear that at some time he may send a council of angels upon Germany utterly destroying us, like Sodom and Gomorrah, because we so wantonly mock Him with the council." (457.)

From a popish council Luther expected nothing but condemnation of the truth and its confessors. At the same time he was convinced that the Pope would never permit a truly free, Christian council to assemble. He had found him out and knew "that the Pope would see all Christendom perish and all souls damned rather than suffer either himself or his adherents to be reformed even a little, and his tyranny to be limited." (455) "For with them conscience is nothing, but money, honors, power, are everything." (455. 477.) The Second Part of his Articles Luther concludes as follows: "In these four articles they will have enough to condemn in the council. For they cannot and will not concede to us even the least point in one of these articles. Of this we should be certain, and animate ourselves with the hope that Christ, our Lord, has attacked His adversary, and He will press the attack home both by His Spirit and coming. Amen. For in the council we will stand not before the Emperor or the political magistrate, as at Augsburg (where the Emperor published a most gracious edict, and caused matters to be heard kindly), but before the Pope and devil himself, who intends to listen to nothing, but merely to condemn, to murder, and to force us to idolatry. Therefore we ought not here to kiss his feet or to say, 'Thou art my gracious lord,' but as the angel in Zechariah 3, 2 said to Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan." (475.) Hence his Preface also concludes with the plaint and prayer: "O Lord Jesus Christ, do Thou Thyself convoke a council, and deliver Thy servants by Thy glorious advent! The Pope and his adherents are done for, they will have none of Thee. Do Thou, then, help us, who are poor and needy, who sigh to Thee, and beseech Thee earnestly, according to the grace which Thou hast given us, through Thy Holy Ghost, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Father, blessed forever. Amen." (459.)

## 63. Elector Opposed to Hearing Papal Legate

From the very beginning, Elector John Frederick was opposed to a council. And the question which particularly engaged his attention was, whether the Lutherans should receive and hear the papal legate who would deliver the invitation. Accordingly, on July 24, the Elector came to Wittenberg and through Brueck delivered four (five) articles to the local theologians and jurists for consideration with instructions to submit their answer in writing. (*C. R.* 3, 119.) August 1, Melanchthon wrote to Jonas: "Recently the Prince was here and demanded an opinion from all theologians and jurists... It is rumored that a cardinal-legate will come to Germany to announce the council. The Prince is therefore inquiring what to answer, and under what condition the synod might be permitted." (106.) The articles which Brueck presented dealt mainly with the questions: whether, in view of the fact that the Pope is a party to the issue and his authority to convene a council is questioned, the legate should be heard, especially if the Emperor did not send a messenger along with him, whether one would not already submit himself to the Pope by hearing the legate; whether one ought not to protest, because the Pope alone had summoned the council; and what should be done in case the legate would summon the Elector as a party, and not for consultation, like the other estates. (119f.)

In the preparation of their answer, the Elector desired the Wittenberg scholars to take into careful consideration also his own view of the matter, which he persistently defended as the only correct one. For this purpose he transmitted to them an opinion of his own on Brueck's articles referred to in the preceding paragraph. In it he maintained that the papal invitation must be declined, because acceptance involved the recognition of the Pope "as the head of the Church and of the council." According to the Elector the proper course for the Lutheran confederates would be to inform the legate, immediately on his arrival in Germany, that they would never submit to the authority which the Pope had arrogated to himself in his proclamation, since the power he assumed was neither more nor less than abominable tyranny; that they could not consider the Pope as differing from, or give him greater honor than, any other ordinary bishop; that, besides, they must regard the Pope as their greatest enemy and opponent; that he had arranged for the council with the sinister object of maintaining his antichristian power and suppressing the holy Gospel, that there was no need of hearing the legate any further, since the Pope, who was sufficiently informed as to their teaching, cared neither for Scripture nor for law and justice, and merely wished to be their judge and lord; that, in public print, they would unmask the roguery of the Pope, and show that he had no authority whatever to convoke a council, but, at the same time, declare their willingness to take part in, and submit their doctrine to, a free, common, Christian, and impartial council, which would judge according to the Scriptures. Nor did the Elector fail to stress the point that, by attending at Mantua, the Lutherans would *de facto* waive their former demand that the council must be held on German soil. (99ff.)

## 64. Elector Imbued with Luther's Spirit

Evidently, the Elector had no desire of engaging once more in diplomatic jugglery, such as had been indulged in at Augsburg. And at Smalcald, despite the opposing advice of the theologians, his views prevailed, to the sorrow of Melanchthon, as appears from the latter's complaint to Camerarius, March 1, 1637. (*C. R.* 3, 293.) The Elector was thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Luther, who never felt more antagonistic toward Rome than at Smalcald, although, as shown above, he was personally willing to appear at the council, even if held at Mantua. This spirit of bold defiance appears from the articles which Luther wrote for the convention, notably from the article on the Papacy and on the Mass. In the latter he declares: "As Campegius said at Augsburg that he would be torn to pieces before he would relinquish the Mass, so, by the help of God, I, too, would suffer myself to be reduced to ashes before I would allow a hireling of the Mass, be he good or bad, to be made equal to Christ Jesus, my Lord and Savior, or to be exalted above Him. Thus we are and remain eternally separated and opposed to one another. They feel well enough that when the Mass falls, the Papacy lies in ruins. Before they will permit this to occur, they will put us all to death if they can." (465.) In the Pope, Luther had recognized the Antichrist; and the idea of treating, seeking an agreement, and making a compromise with the enemy of his Savior, was intolerable to him. At Smalcald, while suffering excruciating pain, he declared, "I shall die as the enemy of all enemies of my Lord Christ." When seated in the wagon, and ready to leave Smalcald, he made the sign of the cross over those who stood about him and said: "May the Lord fill you with His blessing and with hatred against the Pope!" Believing that his end was not far removed, he had chosen as his epitaph: "Living, I was thy pest; dying, I shall be thy death, O Pope! *Pestis eram vivus, moriens ero mors tua, Papa!*"

The same spirit of bold defiance and determination not to compromise the divine truth in any way animated the Elector and practically all of the princes and theologians at Smalcald, with, perhaps, the sole exception of Melanchthon. Koestlin writes: "Meanwhile the allies at Smalcald displayed no lack of 'hatred against the Pope.' His letters, delivered by the legate, were returned unopened. They decidedly refused to take part in the council, and that in spite of the opinion of their theologians, whose reasons Melanchthon again ardently defended. For, as they declared in an explanation to all Christian rulers, they could not submit to a council which, according to the papal proclamation, was convoked to eradicate the Lutheran heresy, would consist only of bishops, who were bound to the Pope by an oath, have as its presiding officer the Pope, who himself was a party to the matter, and would not decide freely according to the Word of God, but according to human and papal decrees. And from the legal standpoint they could hardly act differently. Theologians like Luther could have appeared even before such a council in order to give bold testimony before it. Princes, however, the representatives of the law and protectors of the Church, dared not even create the appearance of acknowledging its legality." (2, 402.)

## 65. Opinion of Theologians

August 6 the Wittenberg professors assembled to deliberate on Brueck's articles and the views of the Elector. The opinion resolved upon was drawn up by Melancthon. Its contents may be summarized as follows: The Lutherans must not reject the papal invitation before hearing whether the legate comes with a citation or an invitation. In case they were invited like the rest of the princes to take part in the deliberations, and not cited as a party, this would mean a concession on the part of the Pope, inasmuch as he thereby consented "that the opinion of our gracious Lord [the Elector] should be heard and have weight, like that of the other estates." Furthermore, by such invitation the Pope would indicate that he did not consider these princes to be heretics. If the legate were rebuffed the Romanists would proceed against the Lutherans as obstinate sinners (*contumaces*) and condemn them unheard, which, as is well known, would please the enemies best. The Lutherans would then also be slandered before the Emperor as despisers of His Majesty and of the council. Nor did the mere hearing of the legate involve an acknowledgment of the papal authority. "For with such invitation [to attend the council] the Pope does not issue a command, nor summon any one to appear before his tribunal, but before another judge, namely, the Council, the Pope being in this matter merely the commander of the other estates. By hearing the legate, therefore, one has not submitted to the Pope or to his judgments... For although the Pope has not the authority to summon others by divine law, nevertheless the ancient councils, as, for example, that of Nicaea, have given him this charge, which external church regulation we do not attack. And although in former years, when the empire was under one head some emperors convoked councils, it would be in vain at present for the Emperor to proclaim a council, as foreign nations would not heed such proclamation. But while the Pope at present, according to the form of the law has the charge to proclaim councils, he is thereby not made the judge in matters of faith, for even popes themselves have frequently been deposed by councils. Pope John proclaimed the Council of Constance, but was nevertheless deposed by it." Accordingly the opinion continues: "It is not for us to advise that the council be summarily declined, neither do we consider this profitable, for we have always appealed to a council. What manner of suspicion, therefore, would be aroused with His Imperial Majesty and all nations if at the outset we would summarily decline a council, before discussing the method of procedure!" And even if the Lutherans should be cited [instead of invited], one must await the wording of the citation, "whether we are cited to show the reason for our teaching, or to hear ourselves declared and condemned as public heretics." In the latter case it might be declined. In the former, however, the citation should be accepted, but under the protest "that they had appealed to a free Christian council," and did not acknowledge the Pope as judge. "And if (*caeteris paribus*, that is, provided the procedure is correct otherwise) the council is considered the highest tribunal, as it ought to be considered, one cannot despise the command of the person to whom the charge is given to proclaim councils, whoever he may be. But if afterwards the proceedings are not conducted properly, one can then justly lodge complaint on that account." "To proclaim a council is within the province of the Pope; but the judgment and decision belongs to the council... For all canonists hold that in matters of faith the council is superior to the Pope, and that in case of difference the council's verdict must be preferred to that of the Pope. For there must be a supreme court of the Church, *i. e.*, the council." On account of the place, however they should not refuse to appear. (C. R. 3,119.)

In their subsequent judgments the theologians adhered to the view that the Protestants ought not to incur the reproach of having prevented the council by turning down the legate. Luther says, in an opinion written at Smalcald, February, 1537: "I have no doubt that the Pope and his adherents are afraid and would like to see the council prevented, but in such a manner as would enable them to boast with a semblance of truth that it was not their fault, since they had proclaimed it, sent messengers, called the estates, etc., as they, indeed, would brag and trump it up. Hence, in order that we might

be frightened and back out, they have set before us a horrible devil's head by proclaiming a council, in which they mention nothing about church matters, nothing about a hearing, nothing about other matters, but solely speak of the extirpation and eradication of the poisonous Lutheran heresy, as they themselves indicate in the bull *De Reformatione Curiae* [of September 23, 1536, St. L. 16 1913ff.]. Here we have not only our sentence which is to be passed upon us in the council but the appeal also with hearing, answer, and discussion of all matters is denied us, and all pious, honorable men who might possibly have been chosen as mediators are also excluded. Moreover, these knaves of the devil are bent on doing their pleasure, not only in condemning (for according to the said bull launched against us they want to be certain of that) but also in speedily beginning and ordering execution and eradication, although we have not yet been heard (as all laws require) nor have they, the cardinals, ever read our writing or learned its doctrine, since our books are proscribed everywhere, but have heard only the false writers and the lying mouths, having not heard us make a reply, although in Germany both princes and bishops know, also those of their party, that they are lying books and rascals, whom the Pope, Italy, and other nations believe... Hence they would like to frighten us into refusing it [the Council] for then they could safely say that we had prevented it. Thus the shame would not only cleave to us, but we would have to hear that, by our refusal, we had helped to strengthen such abominations of the Pope, which otherwise might have been righted." Such and similar reasons prompted Luther to declare that, even though he knew "it would finally end in a scuffle," he was not afraid of "the lousy, contemptible council," and would neither give the legate a negative answer, nor "entangle himself," and therefore not be hasty in the matter. (St. L. 16, 1997.) Even after the princes at Smalcald had resolved not to attend the council, Luther expressed the opinion that it had been false wisdom to decline it; the Pope should have been left without excuse; in case it should convene, the council would now be conducted without the Protestants.

## 66. Elector's Strictures on Opinion of Theologians

Elector John Frederick was not at all satisfied with the Wittenberg opinion of August 6. Accordingly, he informed the theologians assembled August 30 at Luther's house, through Brueck, that they had permitted themselves to be unduly influenced by the jurists, had not framed their opinion with the diligence required by the importance of the matter, and had not weighed all the dangers lurking in an acceptance of the invitation to the council. If the Lutherans would be invited like the other estates, and attend, they must needs dread a repetition of the craftiness attempted at Augsburg, namely, of bringing their princes in opposition to their preachers. Furthermore, in that case it would also be considered self-evident that the Lutherans submit to the decision of the majority in all matters. And if they refused, what then? "On this wise we, for our part, would be lured into the net so far that we could not, with honor, give a respectable account of our action before the world. For thereupon to appeal from such decision of the council to another would by all the world be construed against our part as capriciousness pure and simple. At all events, therefore, the Lutherans could accept the papal invitation only with a public protest, from which the Pope and every one else could perceive in advance, before the council convened, that the Lutherans would not allow themselves to be lured into the net of a papal council, and what must be the character of the council to which they would assent." (*C. R.* 3, 147.)

In this Protest, which the Elector presented, and which Melanchthon translated into Latin, we read: "By the [possible] acceptance [of the invitation to the council] they [the Lutherans] assent to no council other than a general, free, pious, Christian, and impartial one; not to one either which would be subject to, and bound by, papal prejudices (as the one promised by Clement VII), but to such a synod as will endeavor to bring godly and Christian unity within the Church by choosing pious, learned, impartial, and unsuspected men for the purpose of investigating the religious controversies and adjudicating them from the Word of God, and not in accordance with usage and human traditions, nor on the basis of decisions rendered by former synods that militate against the Word of God." (152. 157.)

## 67. Counter-Council Disadvised

The other matters which engaged the Elector's attention dealt primarily with measures of defense, the convening of a counter-council (*Gegenkonzil*) and the preparation of articles which all would unanimously accept, and by which they proposed to stand to the uttermost. August 20 Brueck brought these points up for discussion. And in a "memorandum" which the Elector personally presented to the theologians at Wittenberg on December 1, 1536, he expressed his opinion as follows: The Lutherans were not obligated to attend the council, neither would it be advisable. One could not believe or trust the opponents. Nothing but trickery, deception, harm, and destruction might be expected. At the council the Lutheran doctrine would be condemned, and its confessors excommunicated and outlawed. To be sure, the Lutheran cause was in God's hands. And as in the past, so also in the future God would protect it. Still they must not on this account neglect anything. Luther should therefore draw up articles from which he was determined not to recede. After they had been subscribed by the Wittenbergers and by all Evangelical pastors at the prospective meeting [at Smalcald], the question might also be discussed whether the Lutherans should not arrange for a counter-council "a universal, free, Christian council," possibly at Augsburg. The proclamation for this council might be issued "by Doctor Luther together with his fellow-bishops and ecclesiastics, as the pastors." However, one might also consider whether this should not preferably be done by the princes and estates. In such an event, however, one had to see to it that the Emperor be properly informed, and that the entire blame be saddled upon the Pope and his adherents, the enemies and opponents of our side. (141)

The seriousness with which the Elector considered the idea of a counter-council appears from the details on which he entered in the "memorandum" referred to where he puts especial emphasis on the following points: At this free, universal council the Lutherans were minded "to set forth their doctrine and faith according to the divine, holy Scriptures." Every one, whether priest or layman, should be heard in case he wanted to present anything concerning this doctrine from the Holy Scriptures. A free, safe, Christian passport was to be given to all, even to the worst enemy, leaving it to his discretion when to come and go. Only matters founded in the Scriptures were to be presented and discussed at such council. Human laws, ordinances, and writings should under no circumstances be listened to in matters pertaining to faith and conscience, nor be admitted as evidence against the Word of God. "Whoever would submit such matters, should not be heard, but silence enjoined upon him." To the verdict of such a holy and Christian council the Lutherans would be willing to submit their doctrine. (141.)

The theologians answered in an opinion of December 6, 1536, endorsing the Protest referred to above, but disapproving the counter-council. Concerning the first point they advised that a writing be published and sent to the Emperor and all rulers in which the Lutherans were to "request that ways and means be considered of adopting a lawful procedure [at the council] promoting the true Christian unity of Christendom." Concerning the counter-council, however, they advised at all events not to hasten with it. For to convoke it would produce a great and terrible appearance of creating a schism, and of setting oneself against all the world and contemplating taking the field soon. Therefore such great, apparent resistance should not be undertaken till one intends to do something in the matter openly and in deed. Concerning the defense, the Wittenberg theologians were of the opinion that it was the right and duty of the princes to protect and defend their subjects against notorious injuries (if, for example, an attempt should be made to force upon them the Romish idolatry, or to rend asunder the marriages of their pastors), and also against the Emperor, even after the council had condemned them as heretics. Luther signed this opinion with the following words: "I, too, Martin Luther, will help with my prayers and, if necessary, also with my fist." (126.)

## 68. Articles Drafted by Luther

In the memorandum of December 1 the Elector spoke of the articles Luther was to frame as follows: Although, in the first place, it may easily be perceived that whatsoever our party may propose in such a [popish] council as has been announced will have no weight with the opposition, miserable, blinded, and mad men that they are, no matter how well it is founded on Holy Scripture moreover, everything will have to be Lutheran heresy, and their verdict, which probably has already been decided and agreed upon, must be adopted and immediately followed by their proposed ban and interdict [decree excommunicating and outlawing our party], it will, nevertheless, be very necessary for Doctor Martin to prepare his foundation and opinion from the Holy Scriptures, namely, the articles as hitherto taught, preached, and written by him, and which he is determined to adhere to and abide by at the council, as well as upon his departure from this world and before the judgment of Almighty God, and in which we cannot yield without becoming guilty of treason against God, even though property and life, peace or war, are at stake. Such articles however, as are not necessary, and in which for the sake of Christian love, yet without offense against God and His Word, something might be yielded (though, doubtless, they will be few in number), should in this connection also be indicated separately by said Doctor Martin. And when Doctor Martin has completed such work (which, if at all possible for the Doctor, must be done between the present date and that of the Conversion of St. Paul [January 25], at the latest), he shall thereupon present it to the other Wittenberg theologians, and likewise to some prominent preachers whose presence he should require to hear from them, at the same time admonishing them most earnestly, and asking them whether they agreed with him in these articles which he had drawn up, or not, and thereupon, as they hoped for their souls salvation their sentiment and opinion be learned in its entirety, but not in appearance, for the sake of peace, or because they did not like to oppose the Doctor, and for this reason would not fully open their hearts, and still, at a later time would teach, preach, write, and make public something else or advise the people against said articles, as some have in several instances done before this. An agreement having been reached, the articles were to be subscribed by all and prepared in German and Latin. At the prospective meeting [at Smalcald] they should be submitted to the religious confederates for discussion and subscription. Hence, in the invitation, every prince should be asked "to bring with him two or three theologians, in order that a unanimous agreement might be reached there, and no delay could be sought or pretended." (139.) Accordingly, the Elector planned to have Luther draw up articles which were to be accepted by all, first at Wittenberg and then at Smalcald, without compulsion and for no other reason than that they expressed their own inmost convictions. The situation had changed since 1530, and the Elector desired a clearer expression, especially on the Papacy. Hence he did not appoint Melancthon, but Luther, to compose the articles. The truth was to be confessed without regard to anything else.

Luther had received the order to draw up these articles as early as August 20, 1536. September 3 Brueck wrote to the Elector on this matter: "I also delivered to Doctor Martin the credentials which Your Electoral Grace gave to me, and thereupon also spoke with him in accordance with the command of Your Electoral Grace. He promised to be obedient in every way. It also appears to me that he already has the work well in hand, to open his heart to Your Electoral Grace on religion, which is to be, as it were, his testament." (147.) Luther, who at the time thought that his end would come in the near future, had no doubt used such an expression himself. His articles were to be his testament. In the preface to the articles he touched upon it once more, saying: "I have determined to publish these articles in plain print, so that, should I die before there will be a council (as I fully expect and hope, because the knaves who flee the light and shun the day take such wretched pains to delay and hinder the council), those who live and remain after my demise may be able to produce my testimony and



confession in addition to the Confession which I previously issued, whereby up to this time I have abided, and by God's grace will abide." (455.)

The Elector seems also to have enjoined silence on Luther with respect to the articles until they had been approved at Wittenberg. For in his letter to Spalatin, of December 15, 1536, Luther wrote: "But you will keep these matters [his journey to Wittenberg to discuss the articles] as secret as possible, and pretend other reasons for your departure. *Sed haec secreta teneas quantum potes, et finge alias causas abeundi.*" (St. L. 21b, 2135.) December 11 the Elector again called attention to the articles, desiring that Amsdorf, Agricola, and other outside theologians be called to Wittenberg at his expense to take part in the discussion. Shortly after, Luther must have finished the articles. The numerous changes and improvements appearing in the original manuscript, which is still preserved in the Heidelberg library, show how much time and labor he spent on this work. Concluding his articles, Luther says: "These are the articles on which I must stand, and, God willing, shall stand even to my death; and I do not know how to change or to yield anything in them. If any one wishes to yield anything, let him do it at the peril of his conscience." (501, 3.)

Toward the close of the year Luther submitted the draft to his colleagues, Jonas, Bugenhagen, Cruciger, Melancthon, and those who had come from abroad, Spalatin, Amsdorf, and Agricola. After thorough discussion it was adopted by all with but few changes, *e. g.* regarding the adoration of the saints, concerning which Luther had originally said nothing. (Kolde, 44.) Spalatin reports that all the articles were read, and successively considered and discussed. The Elector had spoken also of points in which a concession might be possible. In the discussion at Wittenberg, Spalatin mentioned as such the question whether the Evangelicals, in case the Pope would concede the cup to them, should cease preaching against the continuance of the one kind among the Papists; furthermore, what was to be done with respect to ordination and the adiaphora. Luther had not entered upon a discussion of these questions, chiefly, perhaps, because he was convinced that the council would condemn even the essential articles. (Compare Melancthon's letter of August 4, 1530, to Campegius, *C. R.* 2, 246.) After the articles had been read and approved, Spalatin prepared a copy (now preserved in the archives at Weimar), which was signed by the eight theologians present, by Melancthon, however, with the limitation that the Pope might be permitted to retain his authority "*iure humano*," "in case he would admit the Gospel." Perhaps Melancthon, who probably would otherwise have dissimulated, felt constrained to add this stricture on account of the solemn demand of the Elector that no one should hide any dissent of his, with the intention of publishing it later. (*C. R.* 3, 140)

## 69. Articles Endorsed by Elector

With these first subscriptions, Luther sent his articles to the Elector on January 3, 1537, by the hand of Spalatin. In the accompanying letter of the same date he informed the Elector that he had asked Amsdorf, Eisleben [Agricola], and Spalatin to come to Wittenberg on December 28 or the following days. "I presented the articles which I had myself drawn up according to the command of Your Electoral Grace and talked them over with them for several days, owing to my weakness, which intervened (as I think, by the agency of Satan); for otherwise I had expected to deliberate upon them no longer than one day. And herewith I am sending them, as affirmed with their signatures, by our dear brother and good friend, Magister George Spalatin, to deliver them to Your Electoral Grace, as they all charged and asked me so to do. At the same time, since there are some who, by suspicion and words, insinuate that we parsons (*Pfaffen*), as they call us, by our stubbornness desire to jeopardize you princes and lords, together with your lands and people, etc., I very humbly ask, also in the name of all of us, that by all means Your Electoral Grace would reprimand us for this. For if it would prove dangerous for other humble people, to say nothing of Your Electoral Grace, together with other lords, lands, and people, we would much rather take it upon ourselves alone. Accordingly, Your Electoral Grace will know well how far and to what extent you will accept these articles, for we would have no one but ourselves burdened with them, leaving it to every one whether he will, or will not, burden also himself with them." (St. L. 21b, 2142.)

In his answer of January 7, 1537, the Elector expressed his thanks to Luther for having drawn up the articles "in such Christian, true, and pure fashion," and rejoiced over the unanimity of his theologians. At the same time he ordered Chancellor Brueck to take steps toward having the most prominent pastors of the country subscribe the articles, "so that these pastors and preachers, having affixed their names, must abide by these articles and not devise teachings of their own, according to their own opinion and liking, in case Almighty God would summon Doctor Martin from this world, which rests with His good will." (Kolde, 45.) In the letter which the Elector sent to Luther, we read: "We give thanks to Almighty God and to our Lord Christ for having granted you health and strength to prepare these articles in such Christian, true, and pure fashion; also that He has given you grace, so that you have agreed on them with the others in Christian, also brotherly and friendly unity... From them we also perceive that you have changed your mind in no point, but that you are steadfastly adhering to the Christian articles, as you have always taught, preached, and written, which are also built on the foundation, namely, our Lord Jesus Christ, against whom the gates of hell cannot prevail, and who shall also remain in spite of the Pope, the council, and its adherents. May Almighty God, through our Lord Christ, bestow His grace on us all, that with steadfast and true faith we abide by them, and suffer no human fear or opinion to turn us therefrom!.. After reading them over for the second time we can entertain no other opinion of them, but accept them as divine, Christian, and true, and accordingly shall also confess them and have them confessed freely and publicly before the council, before the whole world, and whatsoever may come, and we shall ask God that He would vouchsafe grace to our brother and to us, and also to our posterity, that steadfastly and without wavering we may abide and remain in them." (21b, 2143.)

## 70. Melanchthon's Qualified Subscription

In his letter to Luther the Elector made special reference also to the qualified subscription of Melanchthon. "Concerning the Pope," he said, "we have no hesitation about resisting him most vehemently. For if, from good opinion, or for the sake of peace, as Magister Philip suggests, we should suffer him to remain a lord having the right to command us, our bishops, pastors, and preachers, we would expose ourselves to danger and burden (because he and his successors will not cease in their endeavors to destroy us entirely and to root out all our posterity), for which there is no necessity, since God's Word has delivered and redeemed us therefrom. And if we, now that God has delivered us from the Babylonian captivity, should again run into such danger and thus tempt God, this [subjection to the Pope] would, by a just decree of God, come upon us through our wisdom, which otherwise, no doubt, will not come to pass." (2145.) Evidently, the Elector, though not regarding Melanchthon's deviation as a false doctrine, did not consider it to be without danger.

At the beginning of the Reformation, Luther had entertained similar thoughts, but he had long ago seen through the Papacy, and abandoned such opinions. In the Smalcald Articles he is done with the Pope and his superiority, also by human right. And this for two reasons: first, because it would be impossible for the Pope to agree to a mere superiority *iure humano*, for in that case he must suffer his rule and estate to be overturned and destroyed together with all his laws and books; in brief, he cannot do it; in the second place, because even such a purely human superiority would only harm the Church. (473, 7. 8.) Melanchthon, on the other hand, still adhered to the position which he had occupied in the compromise discussions at Augsburg, whence, *e. g.*, he wrote to Camerarius, August 31, 1530 "Oh, would that I could, not indeed fortify the domination, but restore the administration of the bishops. For I see what manner of church we shall have when the ecclesiastical body has been disorganized. I see that afterwards there will arise a much more intolerable tyranny [of the princes] than there ever was before." (C. R. 2, 334.) At Smalcald, however, his views met with so little response among the princes and theologians that in his "Tract on the Primacy of the Pope" he omitted them entirely and followed Luther's trend of thought. March 1, 1537, Melanchthon himself wrote concerning his defeat at the deliberations of the theologians on the question in which articles concessions might be made in the interest of peace, saying that the unlearned and the more vehement would not hear of concessions, since the Lutherans would then be charged with inconsistency and the Emperor would only increase his demands. (C. R. 3, 292.) Evidently then, even at that time Melanchthon was not entirely cured of his utopian dream.

"If the Pontiff would admit the Gospel, *si pontifex evangelium admitteret*." A. Osiander remarked: "That is, if the devil would become an apostle." In the Jena edition of Luther's works Melanchthon's phrase is commented upon as follows: "And yet the Pope with his wolves, the bishops, even now curses, blasphemes, and outlaws the holy Gospel more horribly than ever before, raging and fuming against the Church of Christ and us poor Christians in most horrible fashion, both with fire and sword, and in whatever way he can, like a real werwolf, [tr. note: sic!] aye, like the very devil himself." (6, 557b.) The same comment is found in the edition of the Smalcald Articles prepared 1553 by Stolz and Aurifaber, where the passage begins: "O quantum mutatus ab illo [the former Melanchthon]!" (Koellner, 448. 457.) Carpzov remarks pertinently: "This subscription [of Melanchthon] is not a part of the Book of Concord [it does not contain the doctrine advocated by the Book of Concord], nor was it approved by Luther; moreover, it was later on repudiated by Philip himself." (*Isagoge* 823. 894.)

## 71. Luther's Articles Sidetracked at Smalcald

It was a large and brilliant assembly, especially of theologians, which convened at Smalcald in February, 1537. Luther, too, was present. On January 7 the Elector had written: "We hope that our God will grant you grace, strength, and health that you may be able to make the journey to Smalcald with us, and help us to right, and bring to a good issue, this [matter concerning the Pope] and other matters."

As stated above, the Elector's plan was to elevate Luther's articles to a confession officially recognized and subscribed to by all Lutheran princes, estates, and theologians. Accordingly, on February 10, at the first meeting held at Smalcald, Chancellor Brueck moved that the theologians deliberate concerning the doctrine, so that, in case the Lutherans would attend the council, they would know by what they intended to stand, and whether any concessions were to be made, or, as Brueck put it, whether anything good [perhaps a deliverance on the Papacy] should be adopted, or something should be conceded.

Self-evidently, Brueck had Luther's articles in mind, although it cannot be proved that he directly and expressly mentioned them or submitted them for discussion and adoption. Perhaps, he felt from the very beginning that the Elector would hardly succeed with his plans as smoothly and completely as anticipated. For Luther, desiring to clear the track for the whole truth in every direction, the Reformed as well as the Papistic, both against the "false brethren who would be of our party" (Preface to Sm. Art. 455, 4), as well as against the open enemies, had in his articles so sharpened the expressions employed in the Wittenberg Concord of 1536 concerning the Lord's Supper that the assent of Philip of Hesse and the attending South German delegates and theologians (Bucer, Blaurer, Wolfart, etc.) was more than doubtful. Luther's letter to the adherents of Zwingli, December 1, 1537, shows that he did not at all desire unnecessarily to disturb the work of union begun by the Wittenberg Concord. (St. L. 17, 2143.) Still, he at the same time endeavored to prevent a false union resting on misunderstanding and self-deception. And, no doubt, his reformulation of the article on the Lord's Supper was intended to serve this purpose. Besides, owing to a very painful attack of gravel, Luther was not able to attend the sessions, hence could not make his influence felt in a decisive manner as desired by the Elector.

This situation was exploited by Melanchthon in the interest of his attitude toward the Zwinglians, which now was much more favorable than it had been at Augsburg, 1530. From the very outset he opposed the official adoption of Luther's articles. He desired more freedom with regard to both the Romanists and the Reformed than was offered by Luther's articles. The first appears from his subscription. Concerning the article of the Lord's Supper, however, which the Strassburgers and others refused to accept, Melanchthon does not seem to have voiced any scruples during the deliberations at Wittenberg. Personally he may even have been able to accept Luther's form, and this, too, more honestly than Bucer did at Smalcald. For as late as September 6, 1557, he wrote to Joachim of Anhalt: "I have answered briefly that in doctrine all are agreed, and that we all embrace and retain the Confession with the Apology and Luther's confession written before the Synod of Mantua. *Respondi breviter, consensum esse omnium de doctrina: amplecti nos omnes et retinere Confessionem cum Apologia et confessione Lutheri scripta ante Mantuanam Synodum.*" (C. R. 9, 260.) But, although Melanchthon, for his person, accepted Luther's article on the Lord's Supper, he nevertheless considered it to be dangerous to the Concord with the Southern Germans and to the Smalcald League. Privately he also made known his dissatisfaction in no uncertain manner. And in so doing, he took shelter behind Philip of Hesse, who, as at Augsburg, 1530, still desired to have the Zwinglians regarded and treated as weak brethren.

Kolde relates: "On the same day (February 10) Melanchthon reported to the Landgrave: 'One article, that concerning the Sacrament of the Holy Supper, has been drawn up somewhat vehemently,

in that it states that the bread is the body of the Lord which Luther at first did not draw up in this form, but, as contained in the [Wittenberg] Concord, namely, that the body of the Lord is given with the bread, and this was due to Pomeranus, for he is a vehement man and a coarse Pomeranian. Otherwise he [Melanchthon] knew of no shortcoming or complaint in all the articles.' ... 'He also said' (this the Landgrave reports to Jacob Sturm of Strassburg as an expression of Melanchthon) 'that Luther would hear of no yielding or receding, but declared: This have I drawn up; if the princes and estates desired to yield anything, it would rest with them,' etc. The estates, Melanchthon advised, might therefore in every way declare that they had adopted the Confession and the Concord, and were minded to abide by them. At the same time he promised to demand at the prospective deliberation of the theologians, 'that the article of the Sacrament be drawn up as contained in the Concord. 'Melanchthon's assertion that Bugenhagen influenced Luther's formulation of the article on the Lord's Supper is probably correct. At any rate, it can be proved that Luther really changed the article. For a glance at the original manuscript shows that he had at first written, in conformity with the Concord, 'that the true body and blood of Christ is under the bread and wine,' but later on changed it to read: 'that the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper are the true body and blood of Christ.'" (48.) Melanchthon was diplomatic enough to hide from the Landgrave his strictures on Luther's articles about the Pope, knowing well that in this point he could expect neither approval nor support.

## 72. Articles Not Discussed in Meeting of League

As the Southern Germans regarded Luther's formulation of the article on the Lord's Supper with disfavor, the Landgrave found little difficulty in winning over (through Jacob Sturm) the delegates of Augsburg and Ulm to Melancthon's view of declaring adherence only to the Confession and the Wittenberg Concord. Already on February 11 the cities decided to "decline on the best grounds" the Saxon proposition. Following were the reasons advanced: It was not necessary at present to enter upon the proposition, since the council would make slow progress, as the Emperor and the King of France were not yet at peace. They had not understood this (the adoption of the Saxon proposition) to be the purpose of the invitation to bring scholars with them. They had a confession, the Augustana, presented to the Emperor. It was also to be feared that deliberations on the question whether any concessions should be made, might lead to a division; nor would this remain concealed from the Papists. If the Elector desired to present some articles, he might transmit them, and they, in turn, would send them to their superiors for inspection. (Kolde, *Analecta*, 296.)

In the afternoon of February 11 the princes according to the report of the Strassburgers, expressed their satisfaction with the resolution of the cities. At the same time they declared that they were not minded to make any concessions to the Papists, nor to dispute about, or question, anything in the Confession or the Wittenberg Concord, "but merely to review the Confession, not to change anything against its contents and substance, nor that of the Concord, but solely to enlarge on the Papacy, which before this, at the Diet, had been omitted in order to please His Imperial Majesty and for other reasons;" that such was the purpose of the deliberation for which the scholars had been summoned; and that this was not superfluous, since "they were all mortal, and it was necessary that their posterity be thoroughly informed as to what their doctrine had been, lest others who would succeed to their places accept something else." The report continues: "The cities did not object to this." (296.) According to this report, then, Luther's articles were neither discussed nor adopted at the official meeting of the princes and estates belonging to the Smalcald League. Without mentioning them, they declared in their final resolution: Our scholars have "unanimously agreed among themselves in all points and articles contained in our Confession and Apology, presented at the Diet of Augsburg, excepting only that they have expanded and drawn up more clearly than there contained *one article*, concerning the Primacy of the Pope of Rome." (Koellner, 468.) Koestlin remarks: "Since the princes decided to decline the council absolutely, they had no occasion to discuss Luther's articles." (2, 403.)

## 73. Meeting of Theologians

At Smalcald the first duty imposed upon the scholars and theologians was once more to discuss the Augustana and the Apology carefully, and to acknowledge both as their own confessions by their signatures. Thereupon they were, in a special treatise, to enlarge on the Papacy. The Strassburg delegates report: "It has also come to pass that the scholars received orders once more to read the articles of the Confession and to enlarge somewhat on the Papacy, which they did." (Kolde, *Analecta*, 298.) However, since neither the Augustana nor its Apology contained an article against the Papacy, the demand of the princes could only be satisfied by a special treatise, the "Tractatus de Potestate et Primatu Papae," which Melanchthon wrote and completed by February 17, whereupon it was immediately delivered to the princes.

The princes had furthermore ordered the theologians, while reviewing and discussing the Augustana (and its Apology), to reenforce its doctrine with additional proofs. Owing to lack of time and books, this was not carried out. February 17 Osiander reports to the Nuernberg preachers: "We are enjoying good health here, although we traveled in stormy weather and over roads that offered many difficulties, and are living under a constantly beclouded sky, which unpleasantries are increased by troublesome and difficult questions in complicated matters... The first business imposed on us by the princes embraces two things: first, to fortify the Confession and the Apology with every kind of argument from the Holy Scriptures, the fathers, councils, and the decrees of the Popes; thereupon, diligently to discuss in detail everything concerning the Primacy, which was omitted in the Confession because it was odious. The latter we completed so far to-day that we shall immediately deliver a copy to the princes. The former, however will be postponed to another time and place, since it requires a longer time, as well as libraries, which are lacking here." (C. R. 3, 267.)

The discussion of the Confession was also to serve the purpose of obtaining mutual assurance whether they were all really agreed in doctrine. This led to deliberations on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper as well as on the question what concessions might be made to the Romanists. According to a report of Melanchthon, March 1, the theologians were to discuss the doctrines, not superficially, but very thoroughly, in order that all disagreement might be removed, and a harmonious and complete system of doctrines exist in our churches. They were to review the Confession in order to learn whether any one deviated in any article or disapproved of anything. But Melanchthon remarks that this object was not reached, since the special request had been voiced not to increase the disagreement by any quarrel and thus to endanger the Smalcald League. (C. R. 3, 292.) In a second letter of the same date he says that a real doctrinal discussion had never come to pass, partly because Luther's illness prevented him from taking part in the meetings, partly because the timidity of certain men [the Landgrave and others] had prevented an exact disputation lest any discord might arise. (296.) March 3 he wrote to Jonas in a similar vein saying that the reports of violent controversies among the theologians at Smalcald were false. For although they had been in consultation with one another for the purpose of discovering whether all the theologians in attendance there agreed in doctrine the matter had been treated briefly and incidentally. (298.)

As far as the Lord's Supper is concerned Melanchthon's report concerning the superficial character of the doctrinal discussions is little if at all exaggerated. He himself was one of those timid souls of whom he spoke having from the beginning done all he could not only to bar Luther's articles from the deliberations but also to prevent any penetrating discussion of the Lord's Supper. Assent to the Wittenberg Concord was considered satisfactory although all felt, and believed to know, that some of the Southern Germans did not agree with the loyal Lutherans in this matter. Of the attending theologians who were under suspicion Bucer, Blaurer, Fagius, Wolfart, Fontanus, and Melander, only the first two took part in the deliberations. (292.) March 1 Melanchthon wrote to Camerarius: "Bucer spoke openly and clearly of the Mystery [the Lord's Supper] affirming the presence of Christ. He

satisfied all of our party also those who are more severe. Blaurer, however, employed such general expressions as, that Christ was present. Afterward he added several more ambiguous expressions. Osiander pressed him somewhat hotly; but since we did not desire to arouse any very vehement quarrel, I terminated the discussion. Thus we separated, so that agreement was restored among all others, while he [Blaurer] did not seem to contradict. I know that this is weak but nothing else could be done at this time, especially since Luther was absent, being tortured by very severe gravel pains." (292.)

This agrees with the report Veit Dietrich made to Foerster, May 16, stating: At the first meeting of the committee of the theologians they completed the first nine articles of the Augustana. Blaurer, Wolfart, and some others of those who were doctrinally under suspicion (*nobis suspecti de doctrina*) were present. "However, when the article of the Lord's Supper was to be discussed on the following day, the meeting was prevented, I do not know by whom. It is certain that the princes, too, desired another meeting, because they feared a rupture of the [Smalcald] Alliance, if any doctrinal difference should become evident, which, however, would occur if the matter were thoroughly discussed. Since the disputation was prevented, we were commissioned to write on the Power of the Pope in order to have something to do. Report had it that Blaurer did not approve the Concord of Wittenberg; certainly, he asked Philip for expressions of the Fathers (which are now in my possession), in order to be better furnished with arguments. This prompted Pomeranus and Amsdorf again to convene the theologians against Melancthon's will. Then the Lord's Supper was discussed. Bucer indeed satisfied all. Blaurer, however, while speaking vaguely of the other matters, nevertheless publicly attacked the statement that the ungodly do not receive the body of Christ." Wolfart declared that he was present at the Concord made at Wittenberg, and had approved it. It was unpleasant for him [Dietrich] when hereupon Stephanus Agricola and then Wolfart rehashed some old statements, *vetera quaedam dicta*. (370.)



## 74. Luther's Articles Subscribed

As to the articles of Luther, Veit Dietrich reports that they were privately circulated at Smalcald and read by all. They were also to be read at the meeting of the theologians on February 18. (*C. R.* 3, 371.) As a matter of fact, however, neither a public reading nor a real discussion, nor an official adoption resulted. The Strassburg delegates report: "Doctor Martin Luther has also drawn up some special articles, which he purposed to send to the council on his own accord, copies of which we have designated with W." The Strassburgers, then, were in position to send home a copy of these articles. Furthermore Osiander relates in a letter dated February 17: "Besides this, Luther has also written articles at Wittenberg, short indeed, but splendid and keen (*illustres et argutos*), in which everything is summed up in German wherefrom we cannot recede in the council without committing sacrilege. To-morrow we shall read them publicly in our meeting, in order that any one who wishes to add anything to them may present this in the presence of all. They will also, as I hope, deliberate on the [Wittenberg] Concord in the matter concerning the Lord's Supper. I regard Bucer as being sincerely one of us; Blaurer, however, by no means. For Philip tells of his having remarked that he was not able to agree with us." (268.) On February 18, however, Luther was taken ill and an official, public reading and discussion of his articles did not take place on this day nor, as already stated, at a later date.

Luther's articles, however, were nevertheless adopted at Smalcald, though not by the South Germans. When all other business had been transacted, they were presented for voluntary subscription. Bugenhagen had called the theologians together for this purpose. He proposed that now all those who wished (*qui velint*) should sign the articles Luther had brought with him. Hereupon Bucer declared that he had no commission to do this. However, in order to obliterate the impression that he declined to subscribe because of doctrinal differences, he added that he knew nothing in Luther's articles which might be criticized. Blaurer of Constance, Melander of Hesse, and Wolfart of Augsburg followed his example in declaring that they had no commission to sign the articles. In order not to endanger the Smalcald League, Bugenhagen, as appears from his proposition refrained from urging any one to sign. This was also the position of the other theologians.

Veit Dietrich reports: "Bucer was the first to say that he had no orders to sign. He added, however, that he knew of nothing in these articles that could be criticized, but that his magistrates had reasons for instructing him not to sign them. Afterwards Blaurer, Dionysius Melander, and your Boniface [Wolfart of Augsburg] said the same [that they had not been authorized by their superiors to sign]. The thought came to me immediately why Bucer, who taught correctly, should have been the first to refuse his signature, since it was certain that the others, Blaurer and if you will, also your man, would not subscribe because they did not approve of the dogma of the Lord's Supper. This would have led to an open doctrinal schism, which the Elector, Ernst of Lueneburg, and the Counts of Anhalt would, under no circumstances, have tolerated among the confederates. But, since Bucer did not subscribe, it was not necessary to dispute about the doctrine. When we saw this, I was also pleased that Luther's articles received no attention [in the official subscription], and that all subscribed merely to the Augustana and the Concord. And there was no one who refused to do this." (371.)

While thus Bucer, Fagius, Wolfart, Blaurer, and Fontanus refused to affix their signatures, the attending loyal Lutheran theologians endorsed Luther's articles all the more enthusiastically. And while the signatures affixed to the Augustana and the Apology total 32, including the suspected theologians, 44 names appear under Luther's articles. Among these is found also the abnormal subscription of Melander of Hesse: "I subscribe to the Confession, the Apology, and the Concord in the matter of the Eucharist," which is probably to be interpreted as a limitation of Luther's Article of the Lord's Supper.

Although, therefore, the subscription of the Smalcald Articles lacked the official character and was not by order of the Smalcald League as such, it nevertheless is in keeping with the actual facts

when the Formula of Concord refers to Luther's Articles as "subscribed at that time [1537] by the chief theologians." (777, 4; 853, 7.) All true Lutheran pastors assembled at Smalcald recognized in Luther's articles their own, spontaneous confession against the Papists as well as against the Zwinglians and other enthusiasts.

## 75. Endorsed by Princes and Estates

The Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord makes the further statement that the Smalcald Articles were to be delivered in the Council at Mantua "in the name of the Estates, Electors, and Princes." (853, 7.) Evidently this is based on Luther's Preface to the Smalcald Articles written 1538, in which he says concerning his Articles: "They have also been accepted and unanimously confessed by our side, and it has been resolved that, in case the Pope with his adherents should ever be so bold as seriously and in good faith, without lying and cheating to hold a truly free Christian Council (as, indeed, he would be in duty bound to do), they be publicly delivered in order to set forth the Confession of our Faith." (455.)

Kolde and others surmise that Luther wrote as he did because, owing to his illness, he was not acquainted with the true situation at Smalcald. Tschackert, too, takes it for granted that Luther, not being sufficiently informed, was under the erroneous impression that the princes and estates as well as the theologians had adopted, and subscribed to, his articles. (300. 302.) Nor has a better theory of solving the difficulty hitherto been advanced. Yet it appears very improbable. If adopted, one must assume that Luther's attention was never drawn to this error of his. For Luther does not merely permit his assertion to stand in the following editions of the Smalcald Articles, but repeats it elsewhere as well. In an opinion written 1541 he writes: "In the second place, I leave the matter as it is found in the articles adopted at Smalcald; I shall not be able to improve on them; nor do I know how to yield anything further." (St. L. 17, 666.)

The Elector, too, shared Luther's opinion. In a letter of October 27, 1543, he urged him to publish in Latin and German (octavo), under the title, Booklet of the Smalcald Agreement — *Buechlein der geschehenen Schmalkaldischen Vergleichung*, the "Articles of Agreement, Vergleichungsartikel," on which he and Melancthon had come to an agreement in 1537, at Smalcald, with the other allied estates, scholars, and theologians. (St. L. 21b, 2913.) October 17, 1552, immediately after he had obtained his liberty, the Elector made a similar statement. (C. R. 7, 1109.) Nor did Spalatin possess a knowledge in this matter differing from that of Luther and the Elector. He, too, believed that not only the theologians, but the princes and estates as well, with the exception of Hesse, Wuerttemberg, Strassburg, etc., had subscribed to Luther's articles. (Kolde, 51.)

Evidently, then, Luther's statement was generally regarded as being substantially and approximately correct and for all practical purposes in keeping, if not with the exact letter and form at least with the real spirit of what transpired at Smalcald and before as well as after this convention. It was not a mere delusion of Luther's, but was generally regarded as agreeing with the facts, that at Smalcald his articles were not only subscribed by the theologians, but adopted also by the Lutheran princes and estates, though, in deference to the Landgrave and the South German cities, not officially and by the Smalcald League as such.

## 76. Symbolical Authority of Smalcald Articles

The importance attached to the Smalcald Articles over against the Reformed and Crypto-Calvinists appears from a statement made by the Elector of Saxony, October 17, 1552 (shortly after his deliverance from captivity), in which he maintained that the Lutheran Church could have been spared her internal dissensions if every one had faithfully abided by the articles of Luther. He told the Wittenberg theologians that during his captivity he had heard of the dissensions and continued controversies, "which caused us no little grief. And we have therefore often desired with all our heart that in the churches of our former lands and those of others no change, prompted by human wisdom, had been undertaken nor permitted in the matters [doctrines] as they were held during the life of the blessed Doctor Martin Luther and during our rule, and confirmed at Smalcald, in the year 1537, by all pastors and preachers of the estates of the Augsburg Confession then assembled at that place. For if this had been done, no doubt, the divisions and errors prevailing among the teachers of said Confession, together with the grievous and harmful offenses which resulted therefrom, would, with the help of God, have been avoided." (C. R. 7, 1109.)

In the Prolegomena to his edition of the Lutheran Confessions, Hase remarks concerning the symbolical authority of Luther's articles: "The formula of faith, drawn up by such a man, and adorned with such names, immediately enjoyed the greatest authority. *Fidei formula a tali viro profecta talibusque nominibus ornata maxima statim auctoritate floruit.*" To rank among the symbolical books, Luther's articles required a special resolution on the part of the princes and estates as little as did his two catechisms; contents and the Reformer's name were quite sufficient. Voluntarily the articles were subscribed at Smalcald. On their own merits they won their place of honor in our Church. In the situation then obtaining, they voiced the Lutheran position in a manner so correct and consistent that every loyal Lutheran spontaneously gave and declared his assent. In keeping with the changed historical context of the times, they offered a correct explanation of the Augsburg Confession, adding thereto a declaration concerning the Papacy, the absence of which had become increasingly painful. They struck the timely, logical, Lutheran note also over against the Zwinglian and Bucerian [Reformed and Unionistic] tendencies. Luther's articles offered quarters neither for disguised Papists nor for masked Calvinists. In brief they gave such a clear expression to genuine Lutheranism that false spirits could not remain in their company. It was the recognition of these facts which immediately elicited the joyful acclaim of all true Lutherans. To them it was a recommendation of Luther's articles when Bucer, Blaurer, and others, though having subscribed the Augsburg Confession, refused to sign them. Loyal Lutherans everywhere felt that the Smalcald Articles presented an up-to-date touchstone of the pure Lutheran truth, and that, in taking their stand on them, their feet were planted, over against the aberrations of the Romanists as well as the Zwinglians, on ground immovable.

In the course of time, the esteem in which Luther's articles were held, rose higher and higher. Especially during and after the controversies on the Interim, as well as in the subsequent controversies with the Crypto-Calvinists, the Lutherans became more and more convinced that the Smalcald Articles and not the Variata, contained the correct exposition of the Augsburg Confession. At the Diet of Regensburg, in 1541, the Elector, by his delegates, sent word to Melancthon "to stand by the Confession and the Smalcald Agreement [Smalcald Articles] in word and in sense." The delegates answered that Philip would not yield anything "which was opposed to the Confession and the Smalcald Agreement," as he had declared that "he would die rather than yield anything against his conscience." (C. R. 4, 292.) In an opinion of 1544 also the theologians of Hesse, who at Smalcald had helped to sidetrack Luther's articles put them on a par with the Augustana. At Naumburg in 1561, where Elector Frederick of the Palatinate and the Crypto-Calvinists endeavored to undermine the authority of Luther, Duke John Frederick of Saxony declared that he would abide by the original Augustana and its "true declaration and norm," the Smalcald Articles.

Faithful Lutherans everywhere received the Smalcald Articles into their *corpora doctrinae*. In 1567 the Convention of Coswig declared them to be "the norm by which controversies are to be decided, *norma decidendi controversias*." Similarly, the Synod of Moelln, 1559. In 1560 the ministerium of Luebeck and the Senate of Hamburg confessionally accepted the Articles. Likewise, the Convention of Lueneburg in 1561, and the theologians of Schleswig-Holstein in 1570. The Thorough Declaration could truthfully say that the Smalcald Articles had been embodied in the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church "for the reason that these have always and everywhere been regarded as the common, unanimously accepted meaning of our churches and, moreover, have been subscribed at that time by the chief and most enlightened theologians, and have held sway in all evangelical churches and schools." (855, 11.)

## 77. Editions of Smalcald Articles

In 1538 Luther published his Articles, which *editio princeps* was followed by numerous other editions, two of them in the same year. In the copy of the Articles which Spalatin took at Wittenberg the title reads: "Opinion concerning the Faith, and What We Must Adhere to Ultimately at the Future Council. *Bedenken des Glaubens halben, und worauf im kuenftigen Konzil endlich zu beharren sei.*" The *editio princeps* bears the title: "Articles which were to be Delivered on Behalf of Our Party at the Council of Mantua, or Where Else It Would Meet. *Artikel, so da haetten aufs Konzilium zu Mantua, oder wo es wuerde sein, ueberantwortet werden von unsers Teils wegen.*" These titles designate the purpose for which the articles were framed by order of the Elector. In the edition of 1553, published by John Stolz and John Aurifaber, Luther's Articles are designated as "prepared for the Diet of Smalcald in the year 1537, *gestellt auf den Tag zu Schmalkalden Anno 1537.*" Says Carpzov: "They are commonly called Smalcald Articles after the place where they were composed [an error already found in Brenz's letter of February 23, 1537, appended to the subscriptions of the "Tract on the Power and Primacy of the Pope" (529). See also Formula of Concord 777, 4; 853, 7], as well as solemnly approved and subscribed since the articles were composed by Luther and approved by the Protestants at Smalcald a town in the borders of Saxony and Ducal Hesse, and selected for the convention of the Protestants for the reason that the individuals who had been called thither might have an easy and safe approach." (*Isagoge*, 769.)

The text of the Smalcald Articles, as published by Luther, omits the following motto found in the original: "This is sufficient doctrine for eternal life. As to the political and economic affairs, there are enough laws to trouble us, so that there is no need of inventing further troubles much more burdensome. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. *His satis est doctrinae pro vita aeterna. Ceterum in politia et oeconomia satis est legum, quibus vexamur, ut non sit opus praeter has molestias fingere alias quam miserrimas [necessarias]. Sufficit diei malitia sua.*" (Luther, Weimar 50, 192. St. L. 16 1918.) Apart from all kinds of minor corrections, Luther added to the text a Preface (written 1538) and several additions, some of them quite long, which, however, did not change the sense. Among these are sec. 5, secs. 13 to 15, and secs. 25-28 of the article concerning the Mass; secs. 42-45 concerning the False Repentance of the Papists; secs. 3-13 about Enthusiasm in the article concerning Confession. The editions of 1543 and 1545 contained further emendations. The German text of Luther's first edition of 1538 was received into the Book of Concord, "as they were first framed and printed." (853, 7.) The first Latin translation by Peter Generanus appeared in 1541, with a Preface by Veit Amerbach (later on Catholic Professor of Philosophy at Ingolstadt). In 1542 it was succeeded by an emended edition. In the following year the Elector desired a Latin-German edition in octavo. The Latin translation found in the Book of Concord of 1580 was furnished by Selnecker; this was revised for the official Latin Concordia of 1584.

## 78. Tract on the Power and Primacy of the Pope

Melanchthon's "Tract Concerning the Power and Primacy of the Pope, *Tractatus de Potestate et Primatu Papae*," presents essentially the same thoughts Luther had already discussed in his article "Of the Papacy." Melanchthon here abandons the idea of a papal supremacy *iure humano*, which he had advocated at Augsburg 1530 and expressed in his subscription to Luther's articles, and moves entirely in the wake of Luther and in the trend of the Reformer's thoughts. The Tract was written not so much from his own conviction as from that of Luther and in accommodation to the antipapal sentiment which, to his grief, became increasingly dominant at Smalcald. (C. R. 3, 270. 292f. 297.) In a letter to Jonas, February 23, he remarks, indicating his accommodation to the public opinion prevailing at Smalcald: "I have written this [Tract] somewhat sharper than I am wont to do." (271. 292.) Melanchthon always trimmed his sails according to the wind; and at Smalcald a decidedly antipapal gale was blowing. He complains that he found no one there who assented to his opinion that the papal invitation to a council ought not be declined. (293.) It is also possible that he heard of the Elector's criticism of his qualified subscription to Luther's articles. At all events, the Tract amounts to a retraction of his stricture on Luther's view of the Papacy. In every respect, Smalcald spelled a defeat for Melanchthon. His policy toward the South Germans was actually repudiated by the numerous and enthusiastic subscriptions to Luther's articles, foreshadowing, as it were, the final historical outcome, when Philippism was definitely defeated in the Formula of Concord. And his own Tract gave the *coup de grace* to his mediating policy with regard to the Romanists. For here Melanchthon, in the manner of Luther, opposes and denounces the Pope as the Antichrist, the protector of ungodly doctrine and customs, and the persecutor of the true confessors of Christ, from whom one must separate. The second part of the Tract, "Concerning the Power and the Jurisdiction of the Bishops, *De Potestate et Iurisdictione Episcoporum*," strikes an equally decided note.

The Tract, which was already completed by February 17, received the approval of the estates, and, together with the Augustana and the Apology, was signed by the theologians upon order of the princes. (C. R. 3, 286.) Koellner writes: "Immediately at the convention Veit Dietrich translated this writing [the Tract] into German, and (as appears from the fact that the Weimar theologians in 1553 published the document from the archives with the subscriptions) this German translation was, at the convention, presented to, and approved by, the estates as the official text, and subscribed by the theologians." (464.) Brenz's letter appended to the subscriptions shows that the signing did not take place till after February 23, perhaps the 25th of February. For on the 26th Melanchthon and Spalatin refer to it as finished.

With reference to the Concord of 1536, let it be stated here that, although mentioned with approval by the theologians and also included in Brenz's and Melander's subscriptions to the Smalcald Articles, the princes and estates nevertheless passed no resolution requiring its subscription. Melanchthon writes that the princes had expressly declared that they would abide by the Wittenberg Concord. (C. R. 3, 292.) Veit Dietrich's remark to Foerster, May 16, 1537, that only the Augustana and the Concord were signed at Smalcald, is probably due to a mistake in writing. (372.)

## 79. Authorship of Tract

The Tract first appeared in print in 1540. A German translation, published 1541, designates it as "drawn up by Mr. Philip Melanchthon and done into German by Veit Dietrich." (C. R. 23 722.) In the edition of the Smalcald Articles by Stolz and Aurifaber, 1553, the Tract is appended with the caption: "Concerning the Power and Supremacy of the Pope, Composed by the Scholars. Smalcald, 1537." In the Jena edition of Luther's Works the Smalcald Articles are likewise followed by the Tract with the title: "Concerning the Power and Supremacy of the Pope, Composed by the Scholars in the Year 37 at Smalcald and Printed in the Year 38." (6, 523.) This superscription gave rise to the opinion that the German was the original text. At any rate, such seems to have been the belief of Selnecker, since he incorporated a Latin translation, based on the German text, into the Latin edition of his Book of Concord, privately published 1580. Apart from other errors this Latin version contained also the offensive misprint referred to in our article on the Book of Concord. In the official edition of 1584 it was supplanted by the original text of Melanchthon. The subtitle, however, remained: "Tractatus per Theologos Smalcaldicos Congregatos Conscriptus."

To-day it is generally assumed that by 1553 it was universally forgotten both that Melanchthon was the author of the Tract, and that it was originally composed in Latin. However, it remains a mystery how this should have been possible – only twelve years after Dietrich had published the Tract under a title which clearly designates Melanchthon as its author, and states that the German text is a translation. The evidence for Melanchthon's authorship which thus became necessary was furnished by J. C. Bertram in 1770. However, before him Chytraeus and Seckendorf, in 1564, had expressly vindicated Melanchthon's authorship. Be it mentioned as a curiosity that the Papist Lud. Jac. a St. Carolo mentioned a certain "Articulus Alsmalcaldicus, Germanus, Lutheranus" as the author of the Tract. In the Formula of Concord and in the Preface to the Book of Concord the Tract is not enumerated as a separate confessional writing, but is treated as an appendix to the Smalcald Articles.



## 80. A Threefold Criticism

On the basis of the facts stated in the preceding paragraphs, Kolde, followed by others believes himself justified in offering a threefold criticism. In the first place, he opines that Luther's Articles are "very improperly called 'Smalcald Articles.'" However, even if Luther's Articles were not officially adopted by the Smalcald League as such, they were nevertheless, written for the Convention of Smalcald, and were there signed by the assembled Lutheran theologians and preachers and privately adopted also by most of the princes and estates. For Luther's Articles then, there is and can be no title more appropriate than "Smalcald Articles." Tschackert remarks: "Almost all [all, with the exception of the suspected theologians] subscribed and thereby they became weighty and important for the Evangelical churches of Germany; and hence it certainly is not inappropriate to call them 'Smalcald Articles,' even though they were written at Wittenberg and were not publicly deliberated upon at Smalcald." (302.)

"It is entirely unhistorical," Kolde continues in his strictures, "to designate Melancthon's Tract, which has no connection with Luther's Articles, as an 'Appendix' to them when in fact it was accepted as an appendix of the Augustana and Apology." (50.) It is a mistake, therefore, says Kolde, that the Tract is not separately mentioned in the Book of Concord, nor counted as a separate confessional writing. (53.) Likewise Tschackert: "On the other hand, it is a mistake to treat Melancthon's Tract as an appendix to the Smalcald Articles, as is done in the Book of Concord. The signatures of the estates have rather given it an independent authority in the Church." (302.) However, there is much more of a connection between Luther's Articles and the Tract than Kolde and Tschackert seem to be aware of. Luther's Articles as well as the Tract were prepared for the Convention at Smalcald. Both were there signed by practically the same Lutheran theologians. The fact that in the case of the Smalcald Articles this was done voluntarily rather enhances and does not in the least diminish, their importance. Both also, from the very beginning, were equally regarded as Lutheran confessional writings. The Tract, furthermore, follows Luther's Articles also in substance, as it is but an acknowledgment and additional exposition of his article "Of the Papacy." To be sure, the Tract must not be viewed as an appendix to Luther's Articles, which, indeed, were in no need of such an appendix. Moreover, both the Articles and the Tract may be regarded as appendices to the Augsburg Confession and the Apology. Accordingly, there is no reason whatever why, in the Book of Concord, the Tract should not follow Luther's Articles or be regarded as closely connected with it, and naturally belonging to it. Koellner is right when he declares it to be "very appropriate" that the Tract is connected and grouped with the Smalcald Articles. (469.)

Finally, Kolde designates the words in the title "composed, *conscriptus*, by the scholars" as false in every respect. Likewise Tschackert. (303.) The criticism is justified inasmuch as the expression "composed, *zusammenggezogen*, *conscriptus*, by the scholars" cannot very well be harmonized with the fact that Melancthon wrote the Tract. But even this superscription is inappropriate, at least not in the degree assumed by Kolde and Tschackert. For the fact is that the princes and estates did not order Melancthon, but the theologians, to write the treatise concerning the Papacy, and that the Tract was presented in their name. Koellner writes: "It is certainly a splendid testimony for the noble sentiments of those heroes of the faith that the Elector should know of, and partly disapprove, Melancthon's milder views, and still entrust him with the composition of this very important document [the Tract], and, on the other hand, equally so, that Melancthon so splendidly fulfilled the consideration which he owed to the views and the interests of the party without infringing upon his own conviction." "Seckendorf also," Koellner adds "justly admires this unusual phenomenon." (471.) However, Koellner offers no evidence for the supposition that the Elector charged Melancthon in particular with the composition of the Tract. According to the report of the Strassburg delegates, the princes declared that "the scholars" should peruse the Confession and enlarge on the Papacy. The

report continues: "The scholars received orders ... to enlarge somewhat on the Papacy which *they* did, and thereupon transmitted *their* criticism to the Elector and the princes." (Kolde, *Anal.*, 297.) This is corroborated by Melanchthon himself, who wrote to Camerarius, March 1, 1537: "We received orders (*iussi sumus*) to write something on the Primacy of Peter or the Roman Pontiff." (C. R. 3, 292.) February 17 Osiander reported: "The first business imposed on *us* by the princes was ... diligently to explain the Primacy which was omitted from the Confession because it was regarded as odious. The latter of these duties *we* have to-day completed, so that *we* shall immediately deliver a copy to the princes." (3, 267.) These statements might even warrant the conclusion that the theologians also participated, more or less in the drawing up of the Tract, for which however, further evidence is wanting. Nor does it appear how this view could be harmonized with Veit Dietrich's assertion in his letter to Foerster, May 16: "Orders were given to write about the power of the Pope the primacy of Peter, and the ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Philip alone performed this very well." (3, 370.) However, entirely apart from the statement of Osiander, the mere fact that the theologians were ordered to prepare the document, and that it was delivered by and in the name of these theologians, sufficiently warrants us to speak of the document as "The Tract of the Scholars at Smalcald" with the same propriety that, for example, the opinion which Melanchthon drew up on August 6, 1536, is entitled: "The First Proposal of the Wittenberg Scholars concerning the Future Council." (C. R. 3, 119.)

## VIII. Luther's Efforts at Restoring Catechetical Instruction

### 81. Modern Researches Respecting Luther's Catechisms

Besides G. v. Zezschwitz (*System der christlichkirchlichen Katechetik*, 3 volumes, 1862 to 1874) and numerous other contemporary and later students, G. Buchwald, F. Cohrs, and O. Albrecht have, since the middle of the past century, rendered no mean service by their researches pertaining to Luther's Catechisms. Buchwald edited the three series of sermons on the Five Chief Parts which Luther delivered in 1528, pointed out their important bearing on his Catechisms, and shed new light on their origin by discovering and exploiting the Stephan Roth correspondence. He published the results of his labors in 1894 under the title, "The Origin of the Two Catechisms of Luther and the Foundation of the Large Catechism. *Die Entstehung der beiden Katechismen Luthers und die Grundlage des Grossen Katechismus*." F. Cohrs enriched this department of knowledge by his articles in the third edition of Herzog's *Realenzyklopaedie*, and especially by his five-volume work on *The Evangelical Catechism; Attempts Prior to Luther's Enchiridion*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Paedagogica*, 1900 to 1907. In 1905 O. Albrecht was entrusted with the preparation of Luther's Catechisms for the Weimar Critical Edition of Luther's Complete Works. He also contributed the extensive historical sections of the first of the three parts of Vol. 30, where the Catechisms are treated.

This first part of 826 pages, which appeared in 1910, represents the latest important research work on the origin of Luther's Catechisms. In its preface R. Drescher says: "The writings of 1529 to 1530, in their totality were a difficult mountain, and it gives us particular joy finally to have surmounted it. And the most difficult and laborious part of the way, at least in view of the comprehensive treatment it was to receive, was the publication of the Large and the Small Catechism, including the three series of Catechism Sermons. ... The harvest which was garnered fills a large volume of our edition."

## 82. Meaning of the Word Catechism

The term *catechismus* (catechism), like its related terms, *catechesis*, *catechizari*, *catechumeni*, was common in the ancient Church. In his *Glossarium*, Du Cange defines it as "*institutio puerorum etiam recens natorum, ante quam baptizentur*— the instruction of children, also those recently born, before their baptism." The synonymous expression, *catechesis*, he describes as "*institutio primorum fidei Christianae rudimentorum, de quibus catecheseis suas scripsit S. Cyrillus Jerusolymitanus*— instruction in the first rudiments of the Christian faith, about which St. Cyril of Jerusalem wrote his catechizations." (2, 222f.) Also Luther was acquainted with this usage in the ancient Church. He began his Catechism sermon of November 30, 1528, with the words: "These parts which you heard me recite the old Fathers called catechism, *i. e.*, a sermon for children which children should know and all who desire to be Christians." (Weimar 30, 1, 57.) At first Luther seems to have employed the term but seldom; later on, however, especially after 1526, more frequently. Evidently he was bent on popularizing it. Between the Preface and the Decalog of the first Wittenberg book edition of the Small Catechism we find the title, "A Small Catechism or Christian Training —*Ein kleiner Katechismus oder christliche Zucht*." No doubt, Luther added the explanation "christliche Zucht" because the word catechism had not yet become current among the people. May 18, 1528, he began his sermon with the explanation: "*Catechismus dicitur instructio* — Catechism is instruction"; likewise the sermon of September 14: "Catechism, *i. e.*, an instruction or Christian teaching," the sermon of November 30: "Catechism, *i. e.*, a sermon for children." In the Preface to his Small Catechism he again explains the term as "Christian doctrine." Thus Luther endeavored to familiarize the people with the word catechism.

The meaning of this term, however, is not always the same. It may designate the act of instructing, the subject-matter or the doctrine imparted, a summary thereof, the text of the traditional chief parts, or a book containing the catechismal doctrine, text, or text with explanation. Luther used the word most frequently and preferably in the sense of instruction. This appears from the definitions quoted in the preceding paragraph, where catechism is defined as "sermon," "instruction," "Christian training," etc. "You have the catechism" (the doctrine), says Luther, "in small and large books." Bugenhagen defines thus: "*Katechismus, dat is, christlike onderrichtinge ut den teyn gebaden Gades*." In the Apology, Melancthon employs the word catechism as identical with *kathechesis puerorum*, instruction of the young in the Christian fundamentals. (324, 41.) "Accordingly," says O. Albrecht, "catechism means elementary instruction in Christianity, conceived, first, as the act; then, as the material for instruction; then, as the contents of a book, and finally, as the book itself." This usage must be borne in mind also where Luther speaks of his own Catechisms. "German Catechism" means instruction in, or preaching on, the traditional chief parts in the German language. And while "Enchiridion" signifies a book of small compass, the title "Small Catechism" (as appears from the old subtitle: "*Ein kleiner Katechismus oder christliche Zucht*") means instruction in the chief parts, proceeding with compact brevity, and, at the same time, these parts themselves together with the explanations added. (W. 30, 1, 454. 539.) As the title of a book the word catechism was first employed by Althamer in 1528, and by Brenz as the subtitle of his "Questions" (*Fragestuecke*). A school-book written by John Colet in the beginning of the sixteenth century bears the title "*Catechyzon, The Instructor*." (456.)

Not every kind of Christian instruction, however, is called catechism by Luther. Whenever he uses the word, he has in mind beginners, children, and unlearned people. In his "German Order of Worship, *Deutsche Messe*," of 1526, he writes: "Catechism is an instruction whereby heathen who desire to become Christians are taught and shown what they must believe, do, not do, and know in Christianity, hence the name catechumens was given to pupils who were accepted for such instruction and who learned the Creed previous to their baptism." (19, 76.) In his sermon of November 30,

1528: "The Catechism is a sermon for children, which the children and all who desire to be Christians must know. Whoever does not know it cannot be numbered among the Christians. For if he does not know these things, it is evident that God and Christ mean nothing to him." (30, 1, 57.) In his sermon of September 14: "This [catechism] is preaching for children, or, the Bible of the laity, which serves the plain people. Whoever, then, does not know these things, and is unable to recite them and understand them, cannot be considered a Christian. It is for this reason, too, that it bears the name catechism, *i. e.*, instruction and Christian teaching, since all Christians at the very least should know this much. Afterward they ought to learn more of the Scriptures. Hence, let all children govern themselves accordingly, and see that they learn it." (27.) May 18 Luther began his sermon thus: "The preaching of the Catechism was begun that it might serve as an instruction for children and the unlearned. ... For every Christian must necessarily know the Catechism. Whoever does not know it cannot be numbered among the Christians." (2.) In the short Preface to the Large Catechism: "This sermon is designed and undertaken that it might be an instruction for children and the simpleminded. Hence, of old it was called in Greek catechism, *i. e.*, instruction for children, what every Christian must needs know, so that he who does not know this could not be numbered with the Christians nor be admitted to any Sacrament." (CONC. TRIGL., 575, 1; 535, 11.)

## 83. Chief Parts of Catechism

In Luther's opinion the elementary doctrines which form the subject-matter of the Catechism are comprised in the three traditional parts: Decalog, Creed, and Lord's Prayer. These he considered to be the gist of the doctrine every one must learn if he would be regarded and treated as a Christian. "Those who are unwilling to learn it," says Luther, "should be told that they deny Christ and are no Christians; neither should they be admitted to the Sacraments, accepted as sponsors at Baptism, nor exercise any part of Christian liberty." (CONC. TRIGL. 535, 11.) Of course, Luther considered these three parts only a minimum, which, however, Christians who partake of the Lord's Supper should strive to exceed, but still sufficient for children and plain people. (575, 5.) Even in his later years, Luther speaks of the first three parts as the Catechism proper.

However, probably in consequence of the controversy with the Enthusiasts, which began in 1524, Luther soon added as supplements the parts treating of Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Confession. In the Large Catechism, where Baptism and the Lord's Supper appear as appendices, Luther emphasizes the fact that the first three parts form the kernel of the Catechism, but that instruction in Baptism and the Lord's Supper must also be imparted. "These" (first three), says he, "are the most necessary parts, which one should first learn to repeat word for word. ... Now, when these three parts are apprehended, it behooves a person also to know what to say concerning our Sacraments, which Christ Himself instituted, Baptism and the holy body and blood of Christ, namely, the text which Matthew and Mark record at the close of their gospels, when Christ said farewell to His disciples and sent them forth." (579, 20.) Luther regarded a correct knowledge of Baptism and the Lord's Supper not only as useful, but as necessary. Beginning his explanation of the Fourth Chief Part, he remarks: "We have now finished the three chief parts of the common Christian doctrine. Besides these we have yet to speak of our two Sacraments instituted by Christ, of which also every Christian ought to have at least an ordinary, brief instruction, because without them there can be no Christian; although, alas! hitherto no instruction concerning them has been given." (733, 1.) Thus Luther materially enlarged the Catechism. True, several prayer- and confession-books, which appeared in the late Middle Ages, also treat of the Sacraments. As for the people, however, it was considered sufficient for laymen to be able to recite the names of the seven Roman sacraments. Hence Luther, in the passage cited from the Large Catechism, declares that in Popery practically nothing of Baptism and the Lord's Supper was taught, certainly nothing worth while or wholesome.

## 84. Parts Inherited from Ancient Church

The text of the first three chief parts, Luther considered a sacred heirloom from the ancient Church. "For," says he in his Large Catechism, "the holy Fathers or apostles have thus embraced in a summary the doctrine life, wisdom, and art of Christians, of which they speak and treat, and with which they are occupied." (579, 19.) Thus Luther, always conservative, did not reject the traditional catechism, both bag and baggage, but carefully distinguished between the good, which he retained, and the worthless, which he discarded. In fact, he no more dreamt of foisting a new doctrine or catechism on the Christian Church than he ever thought of founding a new church. On the contrary, his sole object was to restore the ancient Apostolic Church, and his catechetical endeavors were bent on bringing to light once more, purifying, explaining, and restoring, the old catechism of the fathers.

In his book *Wider Hans Worst*, 1541, Luther says: "We have remained faithful to the true and ancient Church; aye, we are the true and ancient Church. You Papists, however, have apostatized from us, *i. e.*, from the ancient Church, and have set up a new church in opposition to the ancient Church." In harmony with this view, Luther repeatedly and emphatically asserted that in his Catechism he was merely protecting and guarding an inheritance of the fathers, which he had preserved to the Church by his correct explanation. In his *German Order of Worship* we read: "I know of no simpler nor better arrangement of this instruction or doctrine than the arrangement which has existed since the beginning of Christendom, *viz.*, the three parts, Ten Commandments, Creed, and the Lord's Prayer." (W. 19, 76.) In the ancient Church the original parts for catechumens and sponsors were the *Symbolum* and the *Paternoster*,

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