

momentous period of his life; all the associations were tender and impressive.

This, however, was only the stepping stone to a wider sphere. Upon the recommendation of Staupitz, he was appointed by the Elector Fredrick to the chair of philosophy in the newly founded University of Wittenberg. It was an appointment he hardly coveted, since he had little relish for the Aristotelian philosophy. But the summons of the Elector was too imperative to be refused, and in such an office he might wield a potent power. The finger of the Deity indeed was visible; it was a wise arrangement which brought him thus early into contact with the rising mind of Germany. Next to the pulpit the University is supreme in the moral as in the intellectual life of a nation. Almost without control a professor can create the thought, and shape the plans of the future. In the pulpit we work upon the masses, and stimulate to action; in the school we form the character, and prepare for duty. The two combined are almost omnipotent in the inculcation of error, or the defence of truth. He is a giant for good or evil who knows how to expound at the desk and enforce from the pulpit. It was Luther's duty to do both. His appointment as philosophical professor, was followed by authority to deliver divinity lectures, and by his election to preach in the chapel of his convent, and in the city pulpit of Wittenberg. The youth of the age, and the nobility and peasantry of the nation, were thus brought within his reach. And soon his reputation began to spread, his influence to tell. In lectures and discourses he inaugurated a new style. There was a boldness of thought, an originality of conception, a beauty of diction, a power of illustration, a plainness, an earnestness, a tenderness of manner, which arrested attention and produced effect. He poured contempt on the philosophy of the schools; he set at naught the dicta of Aristotle; he proclaimed the Word of God as the only infallible standard, as the only true light, whose utterances were for every soul, and whose doctrines should be interpreted independently of human authority and church tradition. The youth of Wittenberg gathered round him; monks and professors sat in silence before him; princes admired his eloquence; the people applauded his courage. It was as the streaming forth of new light—as the opening up of a new fountain—as the depositing of new seed—as a resurrection of dry bones. . . . In Wittenberg the Church began to throb with life; the vibration shook the empire.

So in every moral crisis, in every religious movement, the pulpit and the school should join their hands, and lead the van. We cannot dispense with their teaching; we should not underrate their power. Both have often failed in the maintenance of truth, and in the inculcation of virtue, since as before the Reformation; but it has been for want of spirit, and devotion, and power, in the men who have been thrust into the leading offices. There is no reason abstractedly why the pulpit should decline in influence, or why the school should diminish its charms. No field can be wider, no subjects nobler, no attractions brighter, and no inducements stronger, than those of the preacher and the professor. The entire range of literature, of history, of philosophy, of science, is available for their work. It is their's to probe the conscience, to rouse the passions, to mould the character, to steer the life; and in doing this every theme and incident may apply,—from the holiness of God to the degradation of sin, from the joys of heaven to the woes of hell.