

By Henry O'Connor, S. J.

1524.

17. We shall now consider in what choice language Luther wrote when, only one year before the outbreak of the rebellion, he published a book the title of which is: "Two Imperial, Inconsistent, and Disgusting Orders concerning Luther."

18. "Here you see the poor mortal sack of worms (Mabensack), the Emperor, who is not sure of his life for a moments, shamelessly boasts that he is the true supreme protector of the Christian Faith."

19. Nor are the last words of this work very complimentary to the German princes. Luther writes: "From the bottom of my heart I bewail such a state of things in hearing of all pious Christians, that like me they may bear with pity such crazy, stupid, silly, furious, mad fools. . . . May God deliver us from them and out of mercy give us other rulers. Amen."

1525.

20. The rebellion is now on the point of breaking out. The peasants appeal to Luther. He writes a book, in which he advises them to keep quiet, and bids the princes give in to such demands as are reasonable.

It would be an injustice to Luther to say that he was not sincere in this his endeavor to stop the full outbreak of the revolution. All that can be said is, that even in this work he more than once used language calculated rather to excite than to calm the disturbed minds of the peasants.

21. This work always contains unmistakable proofs of the religious character of the rebellion. For the peasants published twelve articles, in which they insisted on what they looked upon as their rights. Now, Luther tells us that they "tried to prove (the articles) with sundry texts of Scripture." Moreover, the peasants say that they are willing to be advised, provided this be done "with clear, manifest, undeniable texts of Scripture." The "first articles" ran thus: "The whole parish shall have the power of electing and of deposing their parish priest." The third article declared: "There are to be no serfs, because Christ has liberated us all."

22. I said that even in his work Luther made use of expressions which, unintentionally on his part, were calculated to increase the excitement among the peasants. He writes: "First, as to disorder and rebellion, we are indebted to nobody on earth but to you, blind Bishops and mad priests and monks—who even nowadays are obstinate, and do not seem to rage and storm against the holy Gospel, although you know that it is true, and you cannot refute it. Moreover, in your worldly government you do nothing else but cheat and treasure up in order to serve your splendor and your pride, till the poor simple people neither can nor will, put up with it any longer."

23. On the following page Luther continues: "For this you must know, my dear lord, God ordains it in such a manner that people neither can nor will not ought to put up with your tyranny for any length of time. You must change and give it to the word of God. If you do not this in a friendly, willing spirit you will have to be forced into it by violent and subversive measures. If these peasants don't do it, others will have to do it. And even if you were to overcome them all, they are nevertheless not beaten; God will raise up others. For he is determined to strike you, and He will strike you. My dear lords, it is not peasants who oppose you, it is God who opposes you, in order to punish your fury."

24. "They have presented twelve articles, some of which are so reasonable and fair that they must reprove you of your good name before God and the world," . . .

25. "As to the first article, in which they claim liberty to hear the Gospel and the right of electing a parish priest, you cannot refuse it and yet save appearances."

26. "The other articles, in as far as they deal with (anzeigen) bodily oppression . . . are also reasonable. In the second part of the same work, Luther addresses himself to the peasants, and says: "My dear friends, you have hitherto always heard of my admitting what, I am sorry to say is only too true and undeniable, that the princes and lords who forbid the preaching of the Gospel and who oppress the people in such an unpeppable manner are, worthy, and have well deserved that God should cast them down from their seats, as they sin mightily against God and man, nor have they any excuse."

18. After this, Luther most earnestly exhorts the people to have nothing to do with rebellion or revolution. But was it not almost cartian, that the excit-

ed peasants would despise the good advice, and he would lay stress only on those parts of Luther's work, in which he speaks most vigorously about the injustice of the princes and the oppression of the peasants!

29. At any rate, Luther's well-meant advice was despised by the peasants, A most frightful revolution, which had already partly broken out before the publication of Luther's work, swept over several parts of Germany. Luther became so vexed, that he wrote a book "Against the murderous and rapacious hordes of the peasants."

This was in 1525. I most carefully read the whole work from beginning to end at the British Museum, London, in one of the old copies printed in the same year.

30. Luther says: "A rebellious man, of whom this can be proved, is already an outlaw in the sight of God and of the emperor, so that the first who is able and willing to strangle him, does what is right and good. For in the case of a man in open rebellion, every one is both chief justice and executioner, just as when a fire breaks out, whoever can extinguish it first does the best service. . . . Therefore, whoever can, ought to strike in here, to strangle and stab, secretly or openly, and he ought to remember that there is nothing more poisonous, disastrous, diabolical than a man in rebellion just as we must kill a mad dog if you don't kill him, he will kill you and a whole country with you."

33. Luther adds: "I think there is not one devil left in Hell, but they have all gone into the peasants. The raging is exceedingly great and beyond all measure."

32. Again he says; For the first, it the authorities can and will strike and punish such peasants, without first offering them just and reasonable terms. I will not forbid them although it is not according to the Gospel. For it (the authority) has the full right to do so since the peasants now no longer fight for the Gospel, but have manifestly become . . . rebellious murderers, robbers blasphemers, whom even heathen authorities have the right and the power to punish; yea, they are even obliged to punish such rascals. . . .

33. Luther, however, advises that after having prayed to God, the princes should, by way of superabundant generosity, make just and reasonable offers to the "mad peasants." "Then, if that won't do, let them immediately draw the sword."

34. He writes; "The present time is so strange that a prince can gain Heaven by spilling blood easier than another person can by praying."

35. This cruel book of Luther caused such an amount of excitement, even among the friends of the Reformer, that he thought himself called upon to write a work in vindication of his previous publication. It was published in the same year, 1525. I have looked through it very carefully. Luther retracts nothing, but upholds everything that he had said in it. He expressly maintains that it was quite right for him to say, that everybody ought to strike into the peasants, strangle them, stab them secretly or openly. Luther's deliberate opinion concerning his previous publication is clearly expressed in the following passage: "Therefore my little book (against the peasants) is quite in the right and shall remain so, even if all the world were to be scandalized at it."

36. In order to bring Luther's behavior towards the peasants home to the people of this country, let me make the following supposition. A man publishes a book in Ireland, in which he says to the Irish landlords: "The tenants neither can, nor will, nor ought to put up with your tyranny for any length of time." He tells the tenants that they have "ample reason to break forth with the flail and the club." A revolution being on the point of breaking out, he now advises the tenants to keep quiet but it is too late; and the rebellion sweeps over the greater part of the Sister Isle. Our friend then says that, "whoever can, ought to strike in here, to strangle and stab, secretly or openly. For in the case of a man in open rebellion, everybody is both chief justice and executioner." What would Englishmen think of such a monster? Yet this is exactly the way Luther treated the poor German peasants.

37. In order to show that I am not unfair to Luther in stating that he over-excited the poor German peasants, I will refer the reader to the opinion expressed by an eminent Protestant historian

of Germany. Karl Hagen writes: "even Luther . . . in his earlier writings, contributed considerable to foster the rebellious feeling among the people; for once he actually incited the German nation to bathe itself in the blood of the Papists, and he declared that they do a thing agreeable to God who would make away with the bishops, destroy churches and convents!" . . . He "calls . . . the princes . . . impious, miserable rascals . . . silly fools, whose tyranny and caprice people neither could, nor would put up with for any length of time. Was it surprising that this judgement of the Reformer, concerning the reigning powers, remained uppermost in the minds of his readers and that on the other hand they doubted the correctness of his doctrine of unconditional obedience?"

38. Some people think the religion had nothing to do with the outbreak of the rebellion. Let us again listen to the Protestant historian, when he says: "All those preachers (of the new gospel) who earned such extraordinary applause, who gathered hundreds of thousands of hearers around about them, were at the same time men of free opinion in State matters, and in their speeches did not neglect also to dwell upon political questions and on the necessity of a change for the better, and this was done with the same fervor that they bestowed on religious questions."

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PROSPECTUS OF THE ST. BONIFACE COLLEGE

The College of St. Boniface, incorporated by an Act of Parliament, and affiliated to the University of Manitoba, is, since the 1st of August, 1885, directed by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, under the high patronage of His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface. Its course of studies comprises the Greek, Latin, French and English languages and literature; History, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, higher Mathematics, mental Philosophy, Natural Sciences and Theology. The terms have been made as easy as possible. \$15 a month for board, and \$3 a month for those who take their meals in town and sleep in the college, beside a small additional fee, for a few dormitory articles, of \$2 a year; the whole to be paid half yearly in advance. The uniform consists of a frock coat, with trousers, necktie and felt hat, all black. Each student is to be sufficiently provided with other articles of clothing. The discipline of the College, strict in point of morality, is, as far as possible, paternal in character. The scholastic year opens on the third Wednesday of August and ends about the 20th of June. A. AUGUST 28TH, 1885.

Table with columns for location, arrival, departure, and other details for the Albert Lea and the East.

ST. BONIFACE ACADEMY

CONDUCTED BY THE SISTERS OF CHARITY. This Institution, under the distinguished patronage of His GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF ST. BONIFACE, is conducted by Sisters of Charity. The latter would respectfully direct the attention of parents and friends of education in general to the condition of well-being and comfort in which they begin this scholastic year. The new edifice, situated a few steps from the old one, is equal to any establishment of the kind in Canada or elsewhere. Spacious apartments, well lighted and ventilated; comfortable class-rooms; vast dormitory; bath rooms; water-works; the most improved system of heating, and perfect security against fire; gardens and play-grounds, laid out in the most salubrious and agreeable sites; such are some of the principal advantages afforded by the new building. The course of studies followed by the pupils, under the direction of His GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP TACHE, comprehends religious instruction, the usual branches of English and French education, pleasing arts and domestic economy. It has received the approbation of most competent authorities. Difference of religion is no obstacle to admission, but external compliance with the rules is required from all. The St. Boniface Academy counts thirty-seven years of existence. Reports of parents and progress of each pupil will be sent occasionally to her parents and guardians. TERMS—Entrance fee (once for all), \$5.00. Board and Tuition, per month, \$10.00. (A deduction is made when two or more of the same family are sent.) Music and use of Piano, per month, \$3.00. Drawing per month, \$1.00. Bed and bedding, per month \$1.00. Washing, per month, \$2.50. Payments to be made every two months in advance. Pupils coming from other institutions must furnish certificates of good conduct from the establishment they left. Every pupil should be provided with sufficient underclothing, a plain toilet case, a table knife and fork, spoons and goblet, six table napkins and a napkin ring. The uniform, strictly obligatory, is a black merino dress, and a mantilla of the same color, a straw hat trimmed in blue for summer, and a white hood for winter, a white veil of plain tulle. Parents are invited to inquire at the Institution for certain particulars before preparing the uniform. When desired it can be furnished in the establishment, as also articles for toilet, drawing and fancy work, but payment in advance is required. Reports of parents and stationery are furnished at current prices. Other books and letters are subject to the inspection of the Directress. No deduction for pupils withdrawing before the end of the two monthly term, unless in case of sickness or for other cogent reasons. Pupils receive visits of their parents, near relatives and guardians, on Sunday, between the hours of divine service and after Vespers, until 5:30 and on Thursday from 1 to 5:30 p.m. No other visitors are admitted, unless they are recommended by parents or guardians.

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