

orthodox views of Luther's followers concerning the existence, power, nature, and demeanor of devils. Luther's belief in the Devil was crude, but he was even here morally great, strong in his religious sentiment, and serious in his demand that every one personally should honestly wage a war with the powers of evil, and that no church, no intercession of saints, no formulas or rituals had any saving power. Luther's followers retain all the crudities of their master, and to some extent his moral seriousness, but they fall below the manliness of his spirit.

Feyerabend's "Theatrum Diabolorum," which, as the title says, "is a useful and sensible book," contains a great number of essays written by such prominent little authorities as Jodocus Hockerus Osnaburgensis, Hermannus Hamelmannus, Andreas Musculus, Andreas Fabricius Chemicensis, Ludovicus Milichius, and others. The Reverend Hocker, in forty-eight chapters, explains almost all possible problems connected with devils, whose number in chap. 8 is, according to Borrhaus, calculated to be not less than 2,665,866,746,664. Almost all these treatises, poor though they may be as literary, theological or pastoral exhortations, yet show the rationalistic tendency of discovering the devil in the vices of man, and this method became more and more established, until in these latter days Satan himself was boldly and directly declared by Protestant theologians to be a mere abstract idea—a personification of evil. Yet this step was not taken at once, and mankind had to pass first through a long period of wavering opinions, conflicting propositions, uncertainties, venomous controversies, and anxious research for the truth.

SHAKESPEARE'S IDEA OF THE DEVIL.

The Protestant Devil became somewhat more cultured than the Catholic Devil, for the advancement noticeable in the civilization of Protestant countries extended also to him. Says Mephistopheles in "Faust:"

"Culture, which smooth the whole world licks,
Also unto the devil sticks."

To note the progress, let us compare Wytoun, who wrote early in the fifteenth century, and Shakespeare. Wytoun's witches are ugly, old hags; Shakespeare's, although by no means beautiful, are yet interesting and poetical; they are "so withered and so wild in their attire, that they look not like the inhabitants o' th' earth, and yet are on it." It is a poetical fiction representing temptation. And in this same sense the very word devil is frequently used by Shakespeare. We are told, "'tis the eye of childhood that fears a painted devil;" and one fiend is the invisible spirit of wine. "The Devil," so we read in "Hamlet," "hath power to assume a pleasing shape." And the meaning of this sentence is plainly psychological, as we learn from another passage in which Polonius says to his daughter:

"With devotion's visage
And pious action do we sugar o'er
The Devil himself."