



THE CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA

Vol. XV.

S. T. BARTLETT, Editor
WM. BRIGGS, Publisher

TORONTO, APRIL, 1913

WESLEY BUILDINGS
TORONTO, ONTARIO

No. 4

A TRIP THROUGH THE LUTHER COUNTRY

II. SCHOOL DAYS AT EISENACH

FREDERICK E. MALOTT

FROM Mansfeld Martin Luther was sent at the age of fourteen years to Magdeburg, the chief city of Northern Saxony—a city having a population to-day of a quarter of a million, and noted then, as now, for its thriving trade, as well as for its fortifications as a military stronghold.

Here he went to school to the "Noll-brethren," a brotherhood of pious priests and laymen, who had combined to promote the practice of a godly life, and to labor at the same time for the social and moral welfare of the people. Their chief work was the instruction of youth. Hans Luther left his son with these men for one year, and then, for some reason that we do not know, sent him to Eisenach, a beautiful town on the border of the great Thuringian Forest, to attend St. George's School—a school that had been named after the patron saint of the district.

On setting out from Berlin for my trip through the Luther Country, I heard on all sides from those familiar with the district, "You must be sure to see Eisenach and the Wartburg." The town and district are well worth a visit, both for the natural beauty of the region and for the many historical associations of the place.

Here John Sebastian Bach, the great musician, was born in 1685. Here Fritz Reuter, the poet, lived. Here is situated the far-famed "Wartburg" one of the best preserved and most famous of old German castles. Here Martin Luther spent two important periods of his life. The whole region is interesting in the extreme.

Near Eisenach, Martin Luther's mother was born and at the time of which I am writing, numerous relatives of the family were living in and near the town. This may have had something to do with Hans Luther's choice of the Eisenach

School for his son. From none of these relatives, however, does the young student seem to have received any aid.

It was customary in those days for boys, even of good families to go from door to door singing hymns as a means of

was rendered somewhat independent of the parental purse.

Young Luther had a remarkably clear and sweet voice. He tells us in his writings that he supplemented his income in this way.

One day as he was singing on the streets of Eisenach he attracted the attention of a benevolent woman named Frau Cotta. She conceived so strong an affection for the boy that she took him into her home and treated him, from that day until his school days came to a close, as one of her family. She herself gave him an education in music and furnished him money for his school expenses.

The house in which the Cotta family lived still stands. To-day it is a sort of Cafe and Museum combined. There I refreshed myself one evening after a tramp on the mountain, and a most delightful place of refreshment it is. The proprietor, thinking my traveling companion and I were Americans, ran off a number of Yankee tunes on his gramophone for our delectation. These, he thought, would be highly pleasing to us, but we were there for other purposes than hearing ragtime tunes reproduced on a squeaky gramophone. After refreshment we visited the "Luther Room." It is still furnished much as it might have been when the peasant boy occupied it as a student. The books, MSS., and pictures are, of course, a later importation. Near this house stands a bronze statue of the great Reformer, designed by Doudorf.

It must have been a great change for the humble peasant's son to be cared for in the patrician home of the Cotta family. The school, too, stood in marked contrast to the school at Mansfeld. In after years Luther spoke gratefully of the kindness
(Continued on Page 82.)



THE LUTHER HOUSE, EISENACH.

getting small gifts of food or money to assist them while at school. Remittances from home were usually small, and in this way the boy with a good voice found that it had commercial value, and by it

in the patrician home of the Cotta family. The school, too, stood in marked contrast to the school at Mansfeld. In after years Luther spoke gratefully of the kindness
(Continued on Page 82.)