

last effects of divine vengeance. Jesus must not suffer, without first announcing to Jerusalem the manner in which it should one day be punished for its unworthy treatment of him. As he went to Calvary, therefore, carrying his cross on his shoulders, and followed by a great multitude of people, and of women, who smote on their breasts, and bewailed his death, he stopped, turned himself towards them, and thus addressed them: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us: and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Luke xxiii. 27-31.

Did ever Jeremiah more bitterly deplore the destruction of the Jews? What stronger language could our Saviour employ to make them understand their wretched and hopeless condition—that horrible famine, fatal to children, fatal to mothers, who saw their breasts become dry, and had nothing to give them but their tears—and who, in the end, even ate the fruit of their womb.

## ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

### REFORMATION.—LUTHER.

[CONTINUED.]

The profligate extension of the doctrine of Indulgences, at length, called forth the great Reformer.

From the year 1100, Indulgences had been among the sources of papal revenue. To stimulate the Crusaders, Urban II. granted the remission of all penances to those who should embark in the enterprises for the recovery of the Holy Land. The next use of Indulgences was for the support of the fanatical and furious war against the Waldenses. To make Rome the centre of unity to Christendom, and to collect within it the chief personages of Europe, had long been a policy of the papal court, with respect to both power and revenue.

In 1300, Boniface VIII. proclaimed for this purpose the Jubilee, a grand general meeting of the subjects of the Romish faith at Rome, for a month—to be renewed every fifty years. To allure the multitude, Indulgences were published to the European world. The Jubilee was found so productive to the papal treasury, that the half century was deemed too slow a return, and Urban VI. reduced the years to thirty-three. Paul II. went further still, and reduced them to twenty-five. The Jubilee, which returned in 1500, under Alexander VI., exhibited the deeper scandals of a profligate institution: adding to its original corruption the daring scorn of virtue and public feeling that grows from long impunity.

The Indulgences, once the simple release of the penitent from the censures or penances of the church, had soon assumed the more important character of a release from the guilt of human offenses, and the presumed sentence of Heaven. The merits of the saints had been reinforced by the merits of the Saviour: the Pope, thus furnished with an unlimited stock of applicable innocence, declared himself in a condition to make the peace of every culprit, living or dead: and the sinner who was opulent enough to satisfy the papal price of salvation, was at once secure from the visitations of divine justice; and was empowered even to purchase the release of his less lucky relatives from the fires of purgatory, past, present, and to come.

The election of Leo X. precipitated the crisis. Leo, educated in the love of the arts, a personal voluptuary, of expensive habits, and of that epicurean spirit which looked only to putting off the evil day, had drawn deeply on the wealth of the popedom. To raise money became indispensable: and he attempted it under the double pretext of the war against the Turks, and the building of St. Peter's. Large sums were raised by the sale of Indulgences throughout Europe, and the money was instantly absorbed by the expenditure of the wasteful and giddy court of Rome. But the sum to be extorted from Saxony was appropriated to the payment of an early debt of Leo to his sister Magdalen, incurred when, in the time of Alexander VI., he had fled to Genoa. The payment of this debt was probably a matter of peculiar im-

portance to the Pope—for it was through the influence of Magdalen's husband, Francheschetto Cibo, an illegitimate son of Innocent VIII., that he had been created Cardinal at the age of fourteen, and thus placed within sight of the papal throne. Magdalen appointed, as her receiver, Arcemboldi, a man remarkable for his extortion, and Albert, Archbishop of Mentz and Magdeburgh. Albert delegated the office to Tetzal, a Dominican monk, of singularly reprobate character, but whose reckless violence in the collection of this unpopular tribute probably wiped away his sins in the eyes of the superior plunderers.

Tetzal was a Dominican, a member of the order which had usurped the most extraordinary power ever possessed by monks—the masters and agents of the Inquisition—the haughtiest opponents of all efforts at reformation, and the most furious persecutors in an age of religious tyranny. The new delegate was known for his activity, his popular address, and his contempt of principle. In his harangues on the efficacy of Indulgences, he gave the most revolting license to his tongue, and by alternate terror and temptation, wrought strongly upon the popular feelings.

By a singular coincidence, Luther, at this period, had been preparing lectures for his class on the scripture grounds of repentance. Indulgences made a natural portion of the subject. He found himself ignorant of their history; he was thus urged to examine their origin; and the results of his inquiry were speedily made known in his surprise and scorn at the whole guilty pretension.

An accident in the course of his professional duty brought his discovery into action. Luther, like priests of his order, regularly took his seat in the confessional. But in the year 1517, when Tetzal's Indulgences were become popular, it was found that the purchasers refused to undergo the ordained penances, on the ground that they were already remitted by the Indulgence. Luther, in his strong disgust at this evasion of the ancient discipline, refused to give the absolution. They applied to Tetzal. The Dominican, eager for the credit of his commodity, and secure in the protection of the Romish See, expressed the haughtiest contempt for the interference of an obscure German monk, and followed up his scorn by the more formidable threat of throwing Luther, and all who adhered to him, into the prison of the Inquisition. As one of the commission charged with the extirpation of heresy, he could have effected his purpose at a word; and to give evidence of his being in earnest, Tetzal ordered a pile for the burning of heretics to be raised: where all might see and learn the peril of remonstrating with the delegate of the popedom.

It is one of the idle rumours of late years, that Luther's opposition arose from discontent at the sale of Indulgences being taken out of the hands of the Augustines. But these monks never had been employed in the sale in Germany. The charge was not dreamt of in the Reformer's lifetime; it has been openly abandoned by the more distinguished of the Romish historians: and, in addition, Luther was at this period a monk, a public adherent of the popedom, and a personal admirer of Leo, whose vices were still overshadowed, at the distance of Germany, by his love of literature, his munificence, and his rank as the head of Christendom.

The true cause of his hostility—the noble and generous hostility of truth and virtue, to the most corrupting means of the most corrupting delusion that ever broke down the morals or the liberty of man—was, in its palpable contradiction of Scripture. Luther instantly applied himself to the proof. The forms of his scholastic education still clung to him, and he threw the question into the shape of a controversy in the schools. He published his celebrated ninety-five Propositions, embracing the whole doctrine of Penance, Purgatory, and Indulgences, hung them on the church door in one of the thoroughfares of Wittemberg, and challenged a public disputation.

The challenge was not accepted, and he published his "Propositions." This was virtually the first sound of the Reformation. The public mind was now, for the first time, turned to the great controversy between Religion and Idolatry. Luther's letter, sent at the same time to Albert, Archbishop of Mentz, briefly contains the principles of his doctrine.

"I do not complain," said he, "so much of the manner in which the Indulgences are published, (which I have not witnessed,) as of the injuries

which they must do to the multitude, who believe that if they purchase these pardons, they are secure of their salvation, and safe from future punishment. The souls intrusted to your care are thus stimulated to what will lead them to ruin; and how hard must be the account which you will have to render to God for all those! From this cause I could be silent no longer; for no one can be certain of his salvation by any gift conferred on him by a bishop. It is by the GRACE OF GOD ALONE that salvation can be obtained!

"Works of piety and charity are infinitely better than Indulgences; and yet they are not preached to the people with so great pomp or zeal—nay, they are supplanted by Indulgences.

"The first and only duty of bishops is, to instruct the people in the Gospel, and the love of Christ. Jesus never commanded Indulgences to be published. What horror, therefore, must that bishop experience, and how great his danger, if he allow the sale of Indulgences to be substituted among his flock for the doctrines of Revelation! Shall not Christ say to such persons, 'Ye strain at a gnat and swallow a camel?' What can I do, most excellent prelate and illustrious prince, but entreat you, by the Lord Jesus Christ, to direct your attention to this subject, to destroy the book which you have sanctioned by your arms, and impose on the preachers of Indulgences a very different way of recommending them, lest some one should arise and confute both them and that book, to the great reproach of your Highness. The consequences of this I dread extremely; and I fear it must happen, unless a speedy remedy be applied."

This letter showed equally that he had yet to learn the insincere character of the Archbishop of Magdeburgh, and to form his own views into confidence and system. The time for both was at hand.

The Propositions produced so powerful an effect on the mind of Germany, that Tetzal found himself compelled to stoop to the controversy. He published two theses, comprehending the extraordinary number of one hundred and fifty-six propositions, and in an assembly of three hundred monks, combated the obnoxious tenets. But, by taking the Pope's infallibility as the groundwork of his proof, he left the question as open as before; his groundwork was denied, and the disputation closed in his burning Luther's book, and in the students of Wittemberg burning his in retaliation.

But the authority of the Pope was still resistless. Ages of dominion, the unhesitating homage of the immense priesthood, who larded it over the public mind of Europe with the jealousy and the vindictiveness of superstition, and the popular ignorance, which saw in the Pontiff the fountain of faith, of temporal authority, and of supernatural powers, had accumulated a weight of sovereignty on the popedom that had never before been possessed by man. Among the most striking proofs of this prescriptive power, is Luther's prostration before the Roman throne, while he assailed, with the most heroic vigour, the abominations of its subordinates. Of Leo, whose personal character was hitherto undeveloped in Germany, and in whom he saw only the monarch of the church, Luther long spoke with almost submissive veneration.

"But what can this most excellent person do alone in so great a confusion?" is the language of some of his letters on the church disturbances. "One who is worthy to have been Pontiff in better times, or in whose pontificate the times ought to have become better. In our age, we deserve only such popes as Julius the Second, or Alexander the Sixth, or some atrocious monsters similar to what the poets have created; for even in Rome herself, nay, in Rome more than anywhere else, good popes are held in ridicule."

Of his theses against the corruptions of the church, he had the same fears. He was eminently anxious that they should not be construed into any attempt towards shaking off his allegiance to his spiritual sovereign. Startled at his own celebrity, he made it the subject of frequent and sincere apologies to his ecclesiastical superiors. In his letter, written in 1518, to Jerome Scultetus, the bishop of Brandenburg, he explains the necessity which urged him to publication.

"On the appearance of the new doctrine of indulgences, not only my intimate friends, but many who were unknown to me, requested, by letters and verbally, my opinion. For some time