

work, clothing or even shelter. I talked with one lady who had herself started, and even partly furnished, three day nurseries. In one of them, arranged for very little children, I saw a boy of eight lying in one of the little cribs. They had found him wandering about the street, where he had been for several days in the freezing cold, without food and wearing scarcely any clothing. He said his father had been taken to work away from Poland and had left him in the care of an old woman. She herself had no work or money, and the little boy was one day taken out and lost. He is an example of one of the scores of little drifting war-orphan to be taken care of. I saw hundreds of school-children getting their mid-day steaming soup and slice of bread. Many of the institutions distributed condensed milk, furnished by the Rockefeller Relief Fund. All that was given seemed pitifully little to offer those pale-cheeked, wide-eyed children, so patiently expectant of their right to live and be well fed.

Beseler is the name of the German governor at Warsaw. He is an elderly and courtly gentleman, tall and very robust, with white hair and moustache (the latter was quite icy the freezing day we met him out reviewing the troops). He gallantly kissed my hand and said some polite words to me in English. He is well liked everywhere, but does not care for nor go about much in society.

The Germans were not very tactful when they put the German colors and flag on the new passports which they gave to their Polish subjects. However, it was a matter of slight importance, and treated by the Poles as more or less of a joke. I saw no evidence of cruelty on the part of the Germans in Warsaw. The Polish people themselves said the city was far cleaner and more orderly than before the Germans took possession. Polish relief workers and German experts are laboring side by side in behalf of the health of the people. The words "Employment Bureau" I saw often written in German.

ON CIVIL AUTHORITY.¹

BY MARTIN LUTHER.

AN ADMONITION TO ABSTAIN FROM INSURRECTION.

Perceiving that the oppressed common people of Germany were inclined to take his demand for liberty as a promise of relief for their temporal wrongs, at which he was no wise

¹ Translated and edited by W. H. Carruth.

aiming, Luther issued early in the year 1522 an "Admonition to all Christians to Abstain from Insurrection and Rebellion," from which certain paragraphs of general import are here given. From all that follows it may be derived that Luther attempted to be a consistent non-resistant, meaning thereby abstinence from violence, but not from disobedience to commands which attempted to throttle Christian liberty. This, however, is to him wholly a spiritual matter and cannot be throttled by force. Hence all physical force is to be tolerated by the true Christian. Moreover, Luther perceived that all appeals to force by those who professed to be seeking true Gospel liberty were involving this cause with other interests and alienating the powers that be, thus making the propaganda of his cause more difficult. Both from principle and from policy Luther was a conservative in civil affairs. This explains his seeming indifference and inhospitality to the cause of physical, civil right and liberty.—W. H. C.

BY the grace of God the blessed light of Christian truth, hitherto suppressed by the pope and his followers, has risen again in these years, whereby their many harmful and shameful seductions, their many misdeeds and tyranny have been made so evident and thus frustrated, that it looks as though insurrections might come and priests, monks, bishops and the whole clerical estate be slain or expelled, unless they undertake a serious and considerable reform. For the common man, moved and aggrieved by his injuries suffered in property, body and soul, has been tried too far and burdened by them most faithlessly beyond all limits and can and will no longer endure it and has good reason to lay on with flails and clubs, as the teamster threatens. . . .

Now as I have said, since I am certain that the papacy and the clerical estate will not be overthrown by human hand or insurrection, but that his wickedness is so dreadful that no punishment will suffice for it save the wrath of God alone without intermediary, I have not been able to persuade myself to check those who threaten with fist and flail, knowing well that they will accomplish nothing, and that, while some may be assailed, there will be no general rebellion.

But although the fist may not strike in, and there is no need for me to repress it, I must instruct the heart a little. To begin with, I shall leave aside for the present civil authority and the nobility,

which should lay hold from the obligation of their regular power, each prince and lord in his own land. For what is done by regular authority is not to be regarded as insurrection. [Evidently Luther has in mind only the possible upsetting of ecclesiastical order]. . . . But the spirit of the common man is to be pacified and he is to be told that he should abstain from desires and speech which lead to rebellion, and do nothing without command of the authorities or the initiative of the powers that be. He should be persuaded to this course by the following considerations:

First, that nothing will come of it and that they are mere vain words and thoughts, whatever is said and thought on the subject. For, as you have heard, God proposes to be the avenger here, for they do not deserve such a light punishment [as civil violence]. . . .

• Second, although it were possible that a rebellion might really take place and God punish them thus mercifully, this manner is no use and never brings the improvement that one seeks. For insurrection has no sense and usually hits the innocent more than the guilty. Therefore no rebellion is right, however just its cause, and always more harm than help comes of it, according to the saying, "It goes from bad to worse." To this end are "the civil power and the sword instituted, to punish evil doers and protect the well disposed, that rebellion may be prevented," as St. Paul says (Romans xiii. 4 and 1 Peter ii. 13-14). But when Mr. Omnes rebels he can neither reach nor hold any such distinction of good and bad, but falls upon the multitude as they come, and terrible wrong is sure to result.

Therefore keep an eye on the government. So long as it does not lay on and direct, hold thee still in hand, mouth and heart and take no part. But if thou canst persuade the government to lay hold and direct, that thou mayest do. If it will not, then thou too shouldst not will. But if thou go ahead, then art thou in the wrong and even worse than the other side. I hold and shall always hold with the party against which rebellion is raised, however wrong its cause, and against the party that rebels, however right its cause, because rebellion cannot proceed without the shedding of innocent blood.

Third, rebellion is forbidden by God, saying through Moses, Execute the right in righteousness; and again, Vengeance is mine, I will repay; and besides we have the saying, He who strikes back is in the wrong; and again, No one can be his own judge. No, rebellion is nothing but judging and avenging oneself. God cannot abide this; hence it is impossible that rebellion should do otherwise

than make the matter worse, because it is against God and God is not with it.

Fourth, in this cause rebellion is certainly an especial instigation of the Devil. [That is, the Devil wants to avoid the charges laid against the papacy by turning counter charges of rebellion against the reformers.]

But if thou askest, What shall we do if the government will take no steps? Shall we endure it longer and increase their arrogance? I answer, thou shalt do none of these. But three things thou shalt do: First, acknowledge thy sin, which God's severe justice has plagued with this anti-Christian condition. . . . Second, Thou shalt pray in all humility against the papal rule. . . . Third, let thy mouth be a mouth of the spirit of Christ, of which St. Paul says, "The Lord Jesus will slay him with the mouth of his spirit."

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Recently I published a book to the Christian nobility, showing them what their Christian office and work is; but how they followed it is evident enough. Therefore I must now do my best and write what they should leave and not do. And I expect they will follow this just as they followed that, by remaining princes and nevermore Christians. For God Almighty has made our princes mad, so that they think they may do and command to their subjects whatsoever they will. And the subjects are also astray in thinking that they are bound to obey in this line and so utterly that they, the princes, have now begun to order people to surrender books and to believe and hold whatever they direct, thus presuming to sit in God's throne and to rule conscience and belief and to take the Holy Ghost to school in accordance with their own mad wits. And yet they claim that we must not tell them the truth, but should continue to call them "My gracious Lord."

They write and send forth pamphlets alleging that the emperor thus directs and they wish of course to be obedient Christian princes; just as if they were really in earnest and we could not see the rogue behind their ears. For we should quickly see, if the emperor should take from them a castle or a city or do some other wrong, how cunningly they would show reason for resisting the emperor and not being obedient. But where the game is to skin the poor man and wreak their whims against God's word, it must forsooth be called obedience to imperial command. Of old such people were called knaves, but now we must call them obedient Christian princes. And yet they will allow no one a hearing or defence, however earn-

estly he offers it; whereas this would be intolerable if the emperor or anybody else dealt so with them. Such are the princes who dominate the empire in German lands, and hence it must stand so well in all our principalities as we now see!

Now because the wrath of such fools tends toward the destruction of Christian faith and the denial of the divine word and the blasphemy of God's majesty, I can and will no longer stand idly by, but must resist my ungracious lords and masters, at least in words. And since I did not fear their idol, the pope, who threatened to take from me my soul and the hope of heaven, I must show that I do not fear his scurf and water-blisters, which threaten to take my life and my foothold on earth. God grant that they have cause to be angry till their gray coats rot, and help us that we perish not for fear of their threats. AMEN.

CIVIL AUTHORITY IS A DIVINE INSTITUTION.

In the first place we must find a good basis for the civil sword and law, so that no one may doubt that it is in the world by the will and institution of God. Now the passages which support it are these: Romans xiii: "Let every soul be in subjection to power and authority; for there is no power save from God. And the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and whoever resisteth will receive to himself condemnation." And again 1 Peter ii: "Be subject to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, or to the governors, as being sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers and for the commendation of the good."

Moreover this same right of the sword has been from the beginning of the world. For when Cain slew his brother Abel, he was so afraid that he would be slain in turn that God laid an especial prohibition thereon and suspended the use of the sword on his account, forbidding any one to kill him; which fear he would not have had unless he had seen and heard from Adam that murderers were to be slain.

Furthermore God established and confirmed it again in express words after the flood, Genesis ix: "Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Which must not be understood as a plague or punishment by God upon the murderers, since many murderers remain alive through atonement or favor and die not by the sword; but it applies to the right of the sword: that a murderer deserves death and that he may lawfully be slain by the sword. Now though the law be interfered with and the sword be

slow, so that the murderer may die a natural death, yet this does not make the Scripture false when it says: "Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," for it is the fault of men that this law, ordained of God, is not executed, just as other divine commands are violated.

[Here Luther cites further Exodus xxi, and the reply of John the Baptist to the soldiers. And in apparent contradiction to these passages the non-resistance utterances of Jesus, Paul and Peter. These and other passages are difficult, as seeming to say that New Testament Christians should have no civil sword.]

Wherefore sophists say that Christ thereby abolished the law of Moses, making of these New Testament commands counsels for the righteous and accordingly divide Christian doctrine and the Christian state into two portions: one they call that of the righteous and assign Christ's counsels thereto; the other the unrighteous, or imperfect, to which they assign the commandments of Moses. And this they do from pure wickedness and evil will without any reason in Scripture, not seeing that Christ in the very same place applies all his teaching so strictly that he will not allow one jot to be removed, and condemns to hell those who do not love their enemies.

Therefore we must reply to the contrary, that Christ's words are meant for everybody, whether righteous or unrighteous; for righteousness and unrighteousness are not a matter of works and do not form separate classes among Christians, but they are a matter of heart and faith and love, so that whoever believes and loves most is most perfect, be he outwardly man or woman, prince or peasant, monk or layman; for love and faith make no sects nor outward distinction.

Thirdly, we must here divide the children of Adam and all men into two parts, the first belonging to the kingdom of God, the other to the kingdom of this world. Those who belong to the kingdom of God are all true believers in and under Christ; for Christ is the king and lord in the kingdom of God, as witness the second Psalm and all Scripture; for indeed to that end did he come, to begin the kingdom of God and to establish it in the world. . . .

Lo now, these people need no civil sword nor law. And if all the world were genuine Christians, i. e., true believers, then no prince, king, lord, sword nor law were necessary nor useful in the world. For why should they have it? They have the Holy Ghost in their hearts, who instructs them and guides them so that they

do wrong to no one, love everybody, gladly and willingly suffer wrong from everybody, even death. Where there is nothing but doing right and sufferance of wrong there is no need of quarrel, contention, court, judge, punishment, law nor sword. Therefore it is impossible that the civil sword should find need of doing justice among Christians, since they do of their own accord much more than any law or doctrine demands.

Askest thou then, Why has God given so many laws to all men, and why does Christ teach so much in the Gospel that should be done? To be brief Paul says, the law is given on account of unrighteousness, i. e., that those who are not Christians may be kept outwardly from evil deeds, as we shall hear later. Now since no man is a Christian or righteous by nature, but all are sinners and wicked, God prevents them by the law from doing outward works of wickedness according to their will. . . .

Fourthly, to the kingdom of this world, or under the law, belong all who are not Christians; for since few believe and the fewest act in Christian wise, resisting no evil, yea doing no evil themselves, God has established for them outside the kingdom of God and the Christian estate another government and subjected them to the sword, so that though they would like to they cannot do mischief, and that if they do it at least they cannot do it without fear nor with peace and success. Just as we shut a wild and raging animal in chains and bands so that it cannot tear and bite after its fashion, although it would like to, while a tame and gentle animal does not need this but is harmless without chains and bands.

Now if any one proposed to rule the world according to the Gospel and to suspend all civil law and authority, alleging that they were all baptized and Christians, among whom the Gospel will have no law and authority, nor is it needed—my dear man, guess what he would be doing! He would be breaking the chains and the bands from wild animals, so that they might tear and bite everybody and at the same time allege that they were fine, tame, gentle animals. But I should have the evidence in my wounds. So the wicked would misuse Gospel freedom under the Christian name, pursue their knavery and claim to be Christians and be subject to no law nor sword; as even now some do in their foolish rage.

To such people you must say, Indeed it is true that Christians on their account are subject to no law nor sword, nor need to be, but look to it first that you have a world full of real Christians before you try to rule it in Christian Gospel fashion. This you will never be able to do, for the world and the great mass is and

will always be un-Christian, although they be all baptized and bear the Christian name. But Christians, as the saying is, live far apart. Therefore it is not possible that Christian government be made universal in all the world, or even in a single country or any great mass of people. For there are always many more wicked than righteous. Therefore to propose to rule a whole land or the world by the Gospel, is just as if a shepherd should put together in one stable wolves, lions, eagles, and sheep, and permit them to mix freely with one another, saying, "Feed and be good and peaceful together; the stable is open, there is pasture enough; you have no need to fear dogs nor clubs." The sheep indeed would keep the peace and graze and be ruled in peace; but they would not live long nor would any one animal hold its own against the others.

Hence we must discriminate carefully between these two kinds of government and let both remain: the one that makes righteous, and the other that secures outward peace and checks evil deeds. Neither is adequate in the world without the other, for without Christ's spiritual government no one can become righteous in the sight of God, that is, by any civil government. And Christ's rule does not apply to all men, but Christians are ever very few in the midst of un-Christians. And where the civil rule and law alone prevail, there is nothing but hypocrisy, even though the commands were the commands of God. For without the Holy Ghost in his heart no one can become really righteous, let him do ever so fine works. But when the spiritual rule alone prevails over land and people, there the bridle is slipped from wickedness and free play given to all knavery, for the vulgar world cannot accept or understand it.

Fifthly, you may say here, If then Christians do not need the civil sword and law, why does Paul say (Romans xiii) to all Christians: "Let all souls be in subjection to power and authority"? Answer: I have just said that Christians among themselves and with and for themselves need no law or sword, for it is of no use or need to them. But because a real Christian on earth does not live to himself, but to his neighbor, serving him, therefore from his nature and spirit he does what he does not need but which his neighbor needs and has use for. Now since the sword is a great and necessary help to all the world to maintain peace, punish sin, and restrain the wicked, therefore he submits most willingly to the rule of the sword, pays taxes, honors authorities, serves, helps and does all he can that will advance authority and keep it going in honor and respect, despite the fact that he does not need this on his own account but

is considering what is useful and good for others, as Paul in Romans xiii. teaches.

So you see in the words of Christ, that he teaches that Christians among themselves should have no civil sword nor law. But he does not forbid that one should serve and be subject to those who have the civil sword and rule. But rather, just because you do not need nor have them, you should serve those who have not risen so high as you and do still need them. Though you do not need to have your enemy punished, your frail neighbor needs it, and you should help him that he may have peace and his enemy be restrained, which cannot be unless power and authority are feared and respected. Christ does not say: Thou shalt not serve or be subject to civil power, but: Thou shalt not resist evil, as if he meant: Conduct thyself so that thou endure everything, so that thou have no need of government to help and serve and be useful to thee, but on the other hand so that thou mayest help and serve and be useful to it. I would have thee higher and indeed too noble to need it, but it shall need thee.

Now if you ask whether a Christian may also wield the civil sword and punish the wicked, since the words of Christ are so hard and clear: "Resist not evil," that the sophists have been compelled to shift it into a counsel (instead of a command), I answer: You have now heard two points: one, that there can be no sword among Christians, wherefore you cannot wield it over and among Christians, since they do not need it; therefore you must out with the question as to the other portion, who are not Christians, whether you may use it among them. There is the other point, that you are bound to serve the sword and to support it with all your power, body and goods, honor and soul, for it is an office which you do not need and yet is useful and necessary to the whole world and to your neighbor. Therefore, when you see that there is a lack of executioners, sheriffs, judges, lords and princes, and you feel yourself fit, you ought to offer yourself for this service and solicit it, in order that the necessary power may not be despised and impotent or even perish; for the world can and will not go without it.

My reasoning: In this case you would be going about entirely in the service and works of others, which would be serving not yourself or your goods and honor, but only your neighbor and others, and you would not do it with the purpose of avenging yourself or returning evil for evil; but for the good of your neighbor and for the maintenance of shelter and peace for others. For as to yourself you stay by the Gospel and conduct yourself according

to the word of Christ, willingly receiving the stroke on the cheek in return, or letting go your cloak and your mantle, if only you and your affairs are involved.

And so it is fairly consistent, that you satisfy at the same time the kingdom of God and that of the World, outwardly and inwardly, at the same time suffering evil and wrong and yet punishing evil and wrong; at once resisting and not resisting evil. For with the one course you are considering yourself and your own, in the other your neighbor and his welfare. For yourself and your own you hold to the Gospel and suffer wrong like a genuine Christian on your own account; for your neighbor and his interests you follow the law of love and tolerate no wrong to him, which is not forbidden, or rather is commanded by the Gospel in another place.

In this spirit the sword has been wielded by all saints from the beginning of the world, by Adam and all his descendants. . . . But if any one should allege that the Old Testament is superseded and no longer valid, wherefore such examples could no longer be commended to Christians, I answer that it is not so; for St. Paul says (1 Cor. x): "They did all eat the same spiritual meat and drink the same spiritual drink from the rock which is Christ, as did we." That is, they had the same spirit and faith in Christ that we have and were Christians as much as we. Therefore, in whatsoever they did right, therein all Christians do right, from the beginning of the world to its end, for time and outward circumstance make no difference among Christians. Moreover it is not true that the Old Testament is superseded so that we may not hold by it, or would do wrong if we followed it throughout, as Jerome and many others have stumblingly taught; but it is superseded in the sense that one is free to observe it or to pass it over, and that it is no longer necessary to follow it at the peril of one's soul as it was of old.

[This Luther then confirms by the cases of John the Baptist, who bade the soldiers be content with their pay, of Peter who approved of the centurion Cornelius, of Philip, who baptized the eunuch of Ethiopia, and of Paul, who baptized the captain Paul Sergius of Cyprus, continuing:]

Moreover, there is beyond this the clear and strong saying of Paul, Rom. xiii, "The powers that be are ordained of God; and the power beareth not the sword in vain, but is the servant of God toward thee, avenger against the wrong-doer."

Therefore thou shouldst esteem the sword, or power, just as one does marriage, or agriculture, or any other vocation, which

are also ordained of God. Now just as a man can serve God in the married state, in agriculture or in a trade, for the benefit of his neighbor, and must serve his neighbor if need be, so in power also he can serve God, and ought to serve in this way if the need of his neighbor requires it, for those who punish the evil and shield the good are God's servants and workmen. But it is also free to omit, if it is not necessary, just as marrying and tilling the soil are voluntary, where there is no necessity.

But if thou sayest: Why then did not Christ and the apostles wield it? my answer is: Tell me, why did not Christ take a wife? Or why was he not a shoemaker or a tailor? If an occupation or an office were to be condemned because Christ did not occupy it, where would be all offices and occupations except that of preacher, the only one that he pursued? Christ pursued his own office and occupation, but he did not thereby condemn any other. It was not fitting for him to wield the sword, for he was to hold the only office whereby his kingdom is ruled and is really of service to his kingdom. . . .

Now from all this it appears what the true understanding is of Christ's words (Matt. v), "Resist not evil," etc.; namely that a Christian must be so constituted that he will suffer all evil and injustice, will not avenge himself, nor defend himself in court, but that he will have absolutely no need of civil power and law for himself. But for others he may and should seek vengeance, justice, protection and aid, and contribute thereto by any means in his power. Likewise power should seek and instigate, aid and defend him of itself or at the suggestion of others without any complaint on his part. If it does not do this, he must let himself be skinned and abused, and resist not evil, as Christ's words say. . . .

And here thou wilt ask, whether bailiffs, hangmen, jurists, advocates and all that sort of officials can be Christians, and can be saved? I answer, if power and the sword are tools of God, as has just been shown, then everything must be a service of God that is needed by power to wield the sword. It must be that he who catches the wicked, accuses them, throttles and slays them, is shielding, excusing, justifying and saving the good. Therefore when they do it with a purpose, not to seek their own in it, but only to administer law and power and to help restrain the wicked, it is without spiritual peril for them and they may employ it as any one else pursues another trade and make their living by it. For as has been said, love of one's neighbor does not regard its own and does not

consider how great or how small, but how necessary and useful the works may be for one's neighbor or for the community.

And now we come to the chief heading of this sermon. For after we have taught that there must be civil authority on earth, and how one can administer it Christianly and unto salvation, we must now teach how long its arm is and how far its hand can reach, lest it reach too far and lay hold on God's realm and rule. And this is very necessary to know, for unbearable and terrible damage arises if too much reach is given it, while it is not without damage if it be too much restricted. Here it punishes too much, and there too little, although it is more tolerable that it err on the latter side and punish too little than to err on the other side and punish too much, since it is always better to let a knave live than to take the life of a good man, inasmuch as the world has and must have knaves a plenty, but of good men few.

In the first place we must note that the two portions of the children of Adam, one of which is in the kingdom of God under Christ, but the other in the kingdom of this world and under the civil authority, have two different sets of law; for every kingdom must have its laws and statutes, and without laws no realm nor rule can exist, as daily experience sufficiently shows. The civil government has laws which apply no further than to the body and property and to whatever is outward on earth. For over the soul God can and will have no one rule but himself. Therefore when the civil power presumes to give laws to the soul it is interfering with the government of God and only seducing and ruining souls. This we propose to make so clear that it can be grasped, so that our noblemen, the princes and bishops, may see what fools they are when they try to force people by their laws and commands to believe thus and so. . . .

[At some length Luther here develops the thought that it is impossible and absurd to try to direct the thoughts and the beliefs of men; that these are matters between the soul and its creator.]

Accordingly, if thy prince or civil lord commands thee to adhere to the pope, or to believe thus and so, or directs thee to put away certain books, thus shalt thou say: "It is not meet for Lucifer to sit beside God; dear sir, I am bound to obey thee with body and goods; command me according to the measure of thy authority on earth, and I will obey. But if thou command me to believe, or to put away certain books, I will not obey; for in this thou art a

tyrant and reachest too high, commanding wherein thou hast neither right nor power, etc." If then he take thy property therefor and punish thy disobedience, blessed art thou, and thank God that thou art worthy to suffer for the sake of the divine word. Let him rage, the fool! for he will find his judge. For I say to thee, if thou contradict him not and give way, so that he may deprive thee of thy faith or of the books, thou hast of truth denied God.

To give an instance of this: In Meissen, Bavaria, and in the Mark and other places, the tyrants have published a decree that people shall deliver their New Testaments to the officials here and there. In this matter their subjects should act thus: Not a leaf, not a word should they deliver, on peril of their salvation. For whoever does it is surrendering Christ to Herod's hands; for they are acting like murderers of Christ, like Herod. But this much they must tolerate: that the officials run through their houses and take away by force either books or other property. They must not resist violence, but suffer it. But they must not endorse it, nor be instrumental to it, nor follow or obey it, not by a footstep nor the movement of a finger. For such tyrants act as civil princes must,—they are worldly princes. And the world is God's enemy; therefore they must do what is against God and pleasing to the world, that they may not lose standing but remain worldly princes. Therefore do not wonder if they rage and ramp against the Gospel; they must live up to their name and title.

Know thou that from the beginning of the world a wise prince has been a rare bird, and still rarer a pious prince. They are usually the greatest fools or the worst knaves on earth. Therefore we must always be prepared for the worst from them and expect little good, especially in divine matters concerning the salvation of the soul. For they are God's jailers and hangmen and his divine wrath uses them to punish the wicked and keep outward peace. Our God is a great lord, and therefore he must have such noble, highborn, rich hangmen and jailers, and he intends that they shall have wealth, honor and respect in full measure from every one. . . .

But if again thou say: "Civil authority does not indeed compel any one to believe, but only prevents by outward means misleading people with false doctrine. How else could we restrain heretics?" I answer: That is for the bishops to do; that is their office and not that of princes. For heresy can never be prevented by force, but it takes another device. This is another contest and dispute than with the sword. Here God's word must fight for us. If that does not suffice, the end will not be attained by civil authority, not

though it fill the world with blood. Heresy is a matter of the spirit and cannot be cut with steel nor burned by fire, nor drowned in water. . . .

Moreover, there is no greater support for belief or heresy than when it is attacked without God's word and by mere force. For one certainly feels that such force has no just case and is acting counter to right, because it is acting without God's word and knows not how to help itself save by force, as unreasoning beasts do. For even in worldly affairs one cannot use force unless wrong has first been overcome by right. Then how much more impossible is it to deal with these high spiritual matters by force and without right and God's word?

See then what cunning shrewd noblemen are these! They wish to drive out heresy, and yet resort only to means whereby they strengthen the adversary, justifying the heresy and laying themselves under suspicion. Dear man, wouldst thou expel heresy thou must learn the knack of rooting it out of the heart first of all and turning the heart away from it. This thou wilt never attain by force, but wilt only strengthen it. And how will it profit thee to strengthen heresy in the heart and only weaken it outwardly on the tongue, forcing it to lie? But God's word illumines the heart and therewith all heresies and errors fall away.

But shouldst thou say: "Then if there is to be no civil sword among Christians, how shall they be governed outwardly? Why, there must remain authorities among Christians," I reply: Among Christians there shall and can be no authority, but each is subject to the other, as Paul says (Rom. xii), Let each regard the other as his superior. There is no chief among Christians but Christ alone. And what authority can there be when they are all equal and have the same right, power, property, and honor, and none desires to be the other's superior, but every one wishes to be subject to the other? Where there are such people it would be impossible to set up any authority, even if they tried, since the nature of the case will not permit having chiefs if no one will or can be chief. But if the people are not such, they are not genuine Christians.

What then are priests and bishops? I answer: Their activity is not authority or power, but only an office and a service, for they are no higher nor better than other Christians. Therefore they must not put laws and commandments upon others without their will and consent, but their rule is nothing but executing the will of God, in guiding Christians and overcoming heretics. . . . Now those who have not faith are not Christians and do not belong in

Christ's kingdom, but in the kingdom of this world, where they must be checked and ruled by the sword and outward government.

It would seem to be time now to show how a prince shall conduct himself in this matter, for the sake of those who would like to be Christian lords and princes and reach eternal life, who are indeed very few. . . . Now those who wish to be Christian princes must lay aside the thought that they are to rule and use force. For all life that is lived and sought for its own good and profit is accursed. Cursed are all works that are not done in love. And they are done in love when they are aimed with the whole heart at the use, honor, and welfare of others, and not at one's own pleasure, profit, honor, and comfort.

Therefore I will not discuss here worldly interests and laws, for this would lead too far and there are law books more than plenty. Although, if a prince is not wiser than his lawyers and does not have deeper understanding than is in his law books, he will surely rule after the saying in Proverbs xxviii: "A prince who lacks wisdom will unjustly oppress many." . . . For however good and proper laws are, they are all subject to one limitation, that they cannot make head against necessity. Hence a prince must have the law firm in his hand in the form of the sword, and measure with his own reason when and where the law is to be administered with severity or to be mitigated, so that reason may always dominate the law and be the supreme law and master of all law. Just as a house-father, while fixing definite time and quantity of food and labor for servants and children, must keep such regulations within his control so that he may alter or suspend it if a case arises in which the servant is ill, imprisoned, detained, deceived or interfered with in any other way, and not exercise the same severity toward the sick as toward the well. I say this that it may not be considered enough and a commendable course to follow the written law, the lawyers' law; something more is needed.

Solomon despaired of all law, even such as Moses had given him at God's command, and of all his princes and counsellors, and turned to God himself and prayed him for a wise heart wherewith to rule his people. A prince should follow this example and act in the fear of the Lord, depending neither on dead books nor live heads but holding to God alone, filling his ears with appeals for right understanding beyond that of any books and masters as to how to rule his subjects wisely. Accordingly I have no law to prescribe to a prince, but wish to instruct his heart so that it shall be so disposed and inclined in all laws, counsels, sentences and dis-

putes that God will certainly help him settle them well and after God's heart.

First of all, he must consider his subjects and set his heart aright. This he will do if he sets his whole mind upon being useful and serviceable to them. And let him not think thus: "Land and people are mine; I will do as I please"; but rather thus: "I belong to the land and the people; I ought to do what is useful and good for them; I should not seek how I may hold my head high and rule, but how they may be secured in a good peace and protected." And he should take an example of Christ and say: "Behold, Christ, the highest prince, came and served me instead of seeking to gain power, property and honor by me; he considered only my need and did all he could that I might win power, property and honor in and through him. Thus will I do: not seek my own interests in my subjects, but theirs, and will serve them through my office, shield them, hear their complaints and defend them and so rule them that they and not I shall have use and benefit from it." . . .

Secondly, the prince must keep an eye on the great jackanapes, his counselors, and govern himself toward them so that he despise none, but trust none so as to leave all to him; for God can endure neither of these courses. He once spoke through an ass, therefore no man is to be despised. On the other hand, he cast down from heaven the highest angel. Therefore no man is to be depended on, be he ever so shrewd, bold or great; but one should hear every one and wait to see through which one God will speak and work. For this is the greatest mischief in lords and courts, when a prince gives his mind in charge to the great jackanapes and flatterers and neglects to look after things himself. Especially since it concerns not merely one man when a prince errs and is foolish, but land and people have to pay for his folly.

And guard most against those who say, "Oh, Gracious Lord, doesn't Your Grace trust me more than this? Who will serve Your Grace?" For such a one is certainly not single-minded, but wishes to be lord in the land and to make a puppet of thee. . . .

And sayest thou, If one is to trust no one, how is one to rule land and people? I answer: Rule and risk it; but trust another and depend on him, that shalt thou not, save on God alone. Thou must indeed confide the offices to people and take the risk, but trust them no further than people who are liable to err, and thou must watch and not sleep; just as a teamster trusts his horses and wagon that he drives, not letting them go as they will, but holding reins and whip over them and never sleeping.

Thirdly, the prince must take care to deal justly with evil-doers. Here he must be very prudent and wise, lest his punishment be their ruin. And here again I know no better example than David: He had a captain named Joab, who did two wicked deeds and slew treacherously two loyal captains whereby he deserved death doubly; yet he did not slay him during his own lifetime but left it to his son Solomon, doubtless because he himself could not do it without great damage and uproar. So a prince must punish the wicked not as it were picking up a spoon and stepping on a platter, on account of one skull putting land and people into danger and filling a land with widows and orphans.

Therefore he should not follow the councillors and fire-eaters who stir him up and egg him on to begin war, saying, "Ah ha! shall we endure such words and wrong?" It is a very poor Christian who will risk the whole land for the sake of a single castle.

In brief, one must apply here the proverb, He who cannot wink at some things cannot rule. Be this, then, the prince's rule: Where he cannot punish wrong without doing a greater wrong, he should let his rights go, no matter how clear they may be, for he should not consider the harm done himself, but the injury to others which they must incur by his attempt to punish. For how have so many women and children deserved to become widows and orphans in order that thou avenge thyself upon a vain mouth or a wicked hand that has done thee harm?

Askest thou: Shall then a prince never make war, nor his subjects follow him to battle? I reply that this is a far-reaching question, but to treat it most briefly in Christian fashion I say that no prince should make war against his chief, as emperor or king or any other feudal superior, but let whoever robs rob. For we must not resist the authorities by violence, but only by appeal to the truth. If they heed it, good; if not, thou art justified and sufferest wrong for God's sake.

But if the adversary is thine equal, or inferior, or a foreign potentate, then first shalt thou offer him right and peace, as Moses teaches the children of Israel. If he will not accept, then consider thy best good and defend thee force against force, as Moses lays it all down precisely in Deuteronomy xii. And here too thou must not consider thy personal interest and how thou mayest remain lord, but thy subjects to whom thou owest aid and protection, that all may be done in love. For since thine entire land is in danger, thou must risk the appeal to God's aid, lest all be destroyed. And even though thou canst not avoid making some widows and orphans,

yet must thou try to keep everything from going to ruin, leaving nothing but widows and orphans.

And in this subjects are bound to follow and risk life and property. For in such a case one must risk his goods and himself for the sake of the other. And in such a war it is Christian and a work of love to slay the enemy with good heart, rob, burn, and do every sort of damage, until he is overcome after the fashion of war; excepting that one must keep from sin, not violate women and girls, and when the enemy is beaten give mercy and peace to those that surrender and humble themselves, so that, in this case, all in all, one may apply the saying: God helps the strongest.

And what if a prince is in the wrong? Are his people bound to follow him? I answer, No, for it is not proper for any one to act contrary to the right; rather one must obey God, who wishes the right more than men. And what if the subjects do not know whether the prince is right or not? I answer, Since they do not know and cannot find out by any possible diligence, they may obey without peril to their souls. For in such a case we must apply the law of Moses, Exodus xxi, where he directs that one who has slain a man in ignorance and unintentionally shall be acquitted by the court by flight to a place of refuge.

Fourthly, which should have been Firstly, for what has been said above, a prince should act toward his God as a Christian, that is, subject himself to him with his whole trust, praying for wisdom to rule well as did Solomon.

So we will leave the subject here with this summary, that a prince should divide himself in four quarters: the first to God with hearty trust and earnest prayer; the second to his subjects with love and Christian service; the third to his counselors and mighty men with shrewd reason and frank common sense; the fourth to the evil-doers with discreet earnestness and severity. Thus his office will be right outwardly and inwardly and will please God and men. But he must weigh the grief and the envy that go with it; such a program will soon be burdened with its cross.

THE PROFESSORS' WAR.

BY ONE OF THEM.

THIS is no time, as a number of patriots have observed, for arguments. I shall not argue; I shall not even tell any one. I shall, however, put my cards on the table, though they be but four in number. I start from four assumptions: