

# THE OPEN COURT.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO THE RELIGION OF SCIENCE.

No. 482. (Vol. X.—47.)

CHICAGO, NOVEMBER 19, 1896.

One Dollar per Year.  
Single Copies, 5 Cents

COPYRIGHT BY THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING Co.—Reprints are permitted only on condition of giving full credit to author and publisher.

## MARTIN LUTHER.<sup>1</sup>

BY GUSTAV FREYTAG.

[CONTINUED.]

### POLITICAL AND SOCIAL COMPLICATIONS.

Obedience to the authorities as being instituted by God was Luther's main political principle; only when the service of his God demanded it did contradiction blaze up. On his departure from Worms he was ordered not to preach, he who had just been outlawed. But while he did not allow his preaching to lag, the honest man was still filled with fear that it might be construed as disobedience. His conception of the constitution of the empire was still quite ancient and quite popular. As the subject must obey the authorities, so the princes and electors must obey the Emperor according to the law of the empire.

In the person of Charles V. he took a human interest throughout his life, not alone during that early time when he greeted him as the "dear sweet youth," even later, when he knew well that the Spanish Burgundian allowed to the German Reformation no more than political toleration. "He is pious and quiet"; said he of the Emperor, "he speaks in a year not so much as I do in a day; he is a child of fortune." He readily praised the Emperor's moderation, modesty, and forbearance. When he had begun to condemn the policy of the Emperor, and in secret mistrusted his character, he took care that among the guests of his table the ruler of the empire was spoken of reverentially, and said to the younger ones apologetically: "A politician cannot be so candid as we clergymen."

As late as 1530 it was his opinion that it was wrong on the part of the Prince-Elector to resist the Emperor with armed force; it was 1537 before he reluctantly submitted to the freer view of his friends,—but still the endangered prince must not begin the attack. So vivid remained in the man of the people the time-honored tradition of a firm, well-organised, federated State at a time when the proud structure of the old Saxon and Frankish emperors was crumbling so fast.

Yet in such loyalty to the empire there was not a trace of a slavish disposition; when his sovereign once induced him to write a letter intended for publication, his veracity rebelled against the address to the Em-

peror, "most gracious lord," saying the Emperor was not graciously disposed towards him. And in his frequent intercourse with the nobility he showed a reckless candor which more than once became terrible to the courtiers. He told his own sovereign the truth, in all humility, in such a manner as only a great character dared and only a good-hearted one could listen to.

On the whole, he thought little of the German princes, however much he esteemed some individually. Frequent and just are his complaints of their incapacity, their licentiousness, their vices. He also liked to speak of the nobility with irony; the awkwardness of most of them displeased him exceedingly. And he felt a democratic aversion for the hard and selfish lawyers who carried on the business of the princes, striving for favor and tormenting the poor people; he opened to the best of them only a very doubtful prospect of the grace of God.

On the other hand, his whole heart was with the oppressed; he sometimes scolded the peasants, their stubbornness, their greed in selling grain, but he also often praised their class, looked with hearty compassion on their burdens and remembered that he originally was one of them.

But all these things were of the temporal government; he was in the service of the spiritual. The popular view was firmly entrenched in his mind that two governing powers must rule the people side by side, the power of the Church and the force of the princes. And he was amply justified in proudly contrasting his province of duties and rights with temporal politics. In his spiritual domain there was public spirit, self-sacrifice, a wealth of ideal life; in the temporal government he found everywhere narrow self-seeking, robbery, fraud, and weakness. He angrily contended that the authorities should not presume to direct what belonged to the minister and the autonomy of his congregation. He judged all politics from the interest of his creed according to the law of the Bible. Where the word of the Scripture seemed to him to be endangered by temporal politics, he raised his voice, recking not whom it hurt.

It was not his fault that he was strong and the princes were weak, and no reproach can attach to him, the monk, the professor, the minister, if the league

<sup>1</sup>Translated by H. E. O. Heinemann.

of Protestant princes stood as helpless in the face of the shrewd diplomacy of the Emperor as a herd of deer. He was clearly conscious that Italian politics were not his affair; if the active Landgrave of Hesse on one occasion did not follow his spiritual advice, Luther esteemed him all the more for it in secret. "He has a head of his own, he is successful, he has an understanding of worldly affairs."

Since Luther's return to Wittenberg a flood of democracy was roaring among the people. Luther had opened the monasteries, now there was a demand for the adjustment of other social evils, the distress of the peasants, the church tithes, the traffic in benefices, the bad administration of the law. Luther's honest heart sympathised with this movement. He admonished and scolded the landlords and princes. But when the wild floods of the peasant wars began to deluge his work, when their bloody violence outraged his soul and he felt that visionaries and rioters exercised sway over the peasant bands and threatened extinction to his teachings, he hurled himself against the rude masses in the highest wrath. Fierce and warlike sounded his appeal to the princes, the thing most horrible to him had happened, the gospel of love was disgraced by the arbitrary insolence of those who called themselves his adherents.

His policy was the true one in this point also; there was in Germany, unfortunately, no better power than that of the princes; on them rested, in spite of all, the future of the fatherland. Neither the serfpeasantry, nor the robber knights, nor the disunited imperial cities standing like islands in the roaring billows, afforded any guaranty. He was quite right in the matter, but the same hard-headed, inflexible nature which up to that time had made his fights against the hierarchy so popular, was now turned against the people itself. A cry of amazement and horror ran through the masses. He was a traitor. He who for eight years had been the favorite and hero of the people became suddenly the faithless, most hated man. Again his safety and his life were threatened; even five years later it was dangerous for him, on account of the peasants, to travel to Mansfeld to his sick father. The fury of the masses also worked against his doctrine, the hedge-preachers and the new apostles treated him as a lost, depraved man. He was excommunicated, he was outlawed, he was cursed by the people.

#### LUTHER'S MARRIAGE.

Many well-meaning men had disapproved his assault on celibacy and convent life. The country noblemen threatened to seize the outlaw in the highway because he had destroyed the nunneries into which, as in foundlings' homes, the legitimate children of the

poor nobility were thrown in early youth. The Roman party triumphed, the new heresy was deprived of that which had made it powerful up to that time. Luther's life and doctrine seemed to be doomed to destruction.

At this juncture Luther decided to marry.

For two years Catharine von Bora had lived in the house of the city clerk, afterwards Mayor Reichenbach of Wittenberg, a strong, stately girl; like many others, the forsaken daughter of a family belonging to the country nobility of Meissen. Twice Luther had endeavored to secure a husband for her, as he had, with paternal care, done for several of her associates. At last Catharine declared she would marry no man unless it were Luther himself or his friend Amsdorf.

Luther was astonished, but he decided quickly. Accompanied by Lucas Cranach, he asked for her hand and was married on the spot. Then he invited his friends to the wedding dinner, asked at court for the venison which the sovereign was wont to present to his professors at weddings, and received the table wine as a wedding present from the city of Wittenberg.

Luther's mind at that time is a curious study. His entire being was at the highest tension, the wild primitive power of his nature worked in all directions; he was shaken to his inmost depths by the misery of burned villages and the bodies of the slain which he saw all about him. Had he been a fanatic in his ideas he might have ended his life then in despair. But above the stormy unrest which is perceptible in him up to his marriage, there shone to him like a pure light, just at that time, the conviction that he was the guardian of divine right, and in order to defend civil order and morals it was for him to lead the opinions of men, not to follow them.

However violently he declaimed in special things, he appears particularly conservative at this particular time, more firmly resolved within himself than ever. Besides, it is true, he was of opinion that he was not destined to live much longer, and during many hours he longingly awaited martyrdom. Thus he was in perfect accord with himself when he concluded his marriage. He had convinced himself completely of the necessity and scriptural propriety of marriage; for the last few years he had urged all his acquaintances to marry, finally even an old opponent, the Archbishop of Mayence.

He gives two reasons himself that influenced him in his determination to marry. He had deprived his father of his son for many years; it was to him like an atonement to leave to old Hans a grandson when he should die. There was also defiance; the adversaries triumphed in the supposed humiliation of Luther,

and all the world was offended at him; he wanted to give them still more offence in his good cause.

His was a vigorous nature, but there was in him not a trace of coarse sensuality. And we may assume that the best reason, which he confesses to no friend, was, after all, the decisive one. For a long time the talk of the people had known more than himself; now he knew himself that Catharine regarded him with favor. "I am not in love nor in passion, but I like her," he writes to one of his dearest friends.

And this marriage, concluded in opposition to the opinion of his contemporaries and the scornful howls of his adversaries, became an alliance to which we owe as much as to the years when he, a clergyman of the old Church, had borne arms for his theological convictions. For, from that time a husband, father, and citizen, he became also the reformer of the domestic life of his nation, and those very blessings emanating from his days on earth, in which Protestants and Catholics to-day have an equal share, came from the marriage between an excommunicated monk and a runaway nun.

For he was destined to work twenty-one laborious years more in developing his nation, and his greatest work, the translation of the Bible, was finished during that time; in this work, which he completed in company with his Wittenberg friends, he acquired the fullest control over the language of the people, which by this work, for the first time, developed its wealth and power.

We know with what grand purpose he undertook that work, he wanted to create a book for the people, he industriously studied forms of speech, proverbs, and technical terms living in the mouth of the people. The Humanists often wrote an awkward, involved style with unwieldy sentences, a degenerate reminiscence of the Latin style. Now, the nation received for daily reading a work expressing in simple words the most profound wisdom and the best spiritual treasures of the time.

Together with the other works of Luther, the Bible became the foundation of the New-German language. And this language, in which our whole literature and spiritual life found its expression, has become an indestructible possession which even in the saddest times, and, though disfigured and defaced, has yet served to remind the several German tribes that they are one. And even at the present time the language of culture, poetry, and science which Luther created is the bond that holds together all German minds in union.

Nor did Luther render less important services for the civil life of the Germans. Domestic devotion, marriage, and education of children, municipal life

and school affairs, manners, recreations, all sentiments of the heart, all social pleasures were consecrated by his teachings and writings. Everywhere he strove to set new goals and to lay deeper foundations. Not a department of human duty about which he did not compel the people to reflect. His influence spread far and wide among the people by his numerous sermons and short writings, and also by countless letters in which he gave advice and consolation to special inquirers.

If he urged his contemporaries unremittently to examine whether a desire of the heart was justified or not, what the father owed to the child, the subject to the authorities, the councilman to the citizens; the progress made through him was so great for the reason that here also he emancipated the conscience of the individual and substituted everywhere spiritual self-control in place of external compulsion against which selfishness had previously defiantly rebelled. How finely he comprehended the necessity of developing children by school education, especially in the dead languages, how warmly he recommended his beloved music for introduction in the schools, how great his foresight became when he admonished the councilmen to found public libraries. And again, how conscientiously he sought to secure rights for the hearts of lovers in engagements and marriages, as against hard parental authority. His horizon, it is true, was bounded by the words of the Scripture, but ever through his preaching, action, scolding, there sounds the beautiful keynote of his broadly human nature, the need of liberty and courtesy, of love and morality. He overthrew the old sacrament of marriage but he shaped more highly, nobly, freely the spiritual relations between husband and wife. He attacked the clumsy convent schools, and everywhere in village and city, wherever his influence reached, better institutions of culture for the youth grew up. He abolished the mass and Latin church hymns; in return, he gave the regular sermon and the church hymn to both admirers and opponents.

The great importance which Luther's teaching acquired not only in the heart of the people but in the political affairs of the empire became apparent in Luther's life as early as nine years after the days of Worms. At Worms he was looked upon as a solitary, damnable heretic with whose death the dangerous, false doctrine would cease. In 1530 at the Diet of Augsburg the princes and estates of the Empire who had renounced their adherence to the old Church, submitted to the Emperor a confession of faith which became the basis of a secure political position for Protestantism. In spite of all the clauses appended, it was in fact the first treaty of peace which the vic-

torious new doctrine concluded with the Holy Roman Empire.

It was a strange dispensation that honest Luther, as he had done at the Wartburg in years gone by, should once more await the result in hiding at another fortified place of his sovereign, the fortress of Coburg, in the dress and with the beard of a knight, and once more he dated his letters mysteriously from the wilderness, or from the kingdom of the birds, encouraging Melancthon to remain steadfast. For, while his friends and fellow-laborers were engaged in composing the Confession of Augsburg, he who was still an outlaw could not be led into the hands of Catholic lords or under the eyes of the Emperor who had outlawed him.

This sentence of outlawry of 1521 had, however, lost its force. A few months after it had been pronounced, the growing excitement of the people and the immoderate zeal of other malcontents forced the enemies of Luther to admit that it would be very fortunate if Luther, who had disappeared, were still alive. Since that time he had risen against the socialistic agitation among the people with equal might as against popery; and by the magic of his strong character as well as the wealth of his soulful sentiment he had done so much for law and order among the people that even his adversaries felt some of the good effects.

He had met with great successes, but at the same time he found the limits of his influence. At Worms he was the only one, the true representative of the popular conscience and the spiritual leader of the whole powerful movement which was rising in the people. In 1530 he was the head and leader of a great party, but only a party, beside which other factions and parties were arising. Even within the old Church the respect for public opinion had become greater, and faith was more sincere and heartfelt. Beside Luther's, the teachings of Zwingli had also gained ground, and among the lower classes the ideas of the Anabaptist worked against him as against the structure of the old Church.

Nor did Luther himself escape change. He was no longer the martyr longing for death, but the prudent adviser of princes and a zealous, severe architect of his new Church. And the man who at the Wartburg wrestled in scruples of conscience over the celibacy of monks, was writing not only explanations of Biblical texts but loving letters, full of good humor, to his own home, to the companions of his table, and to his little son, about the diet of jackdaws that crowded around the towers of the fortress of Coburg, and about a beautiful heavenly garden in which pious children sing and play, ride horses with golden reins, and shoot with the crossbow. The apostle of the new gospel became a great spiritual paterfamilias to the people.

#### LUTHER'S PRIVATE LIFE.

As the years advanced, Luther felt ever more keenly the divine nature of all that the world offered which was sweet, good, and hearty. In that sense he was always pious and always wise, both out in nature and in his innocent pleasantries with his companions, while teasing his wife, or holding his children in his arms. Full of joy at its splendor he stood before a tree hanging full of fruit: "If Adam had not fallen, we should always have admired all trees." Astonished, he took a big pear in his hand: "Lo, six months ago it was lower under the ground than it is long and big now, and was hidden in the extreme end of the root. These minute and least observed creatures are the greatest wonders. God is in the smallest creature, as in the leaf of a tree or a blade of grass."

Two little birds made a nest in Dr. Luther's garden and flew home in the evening, often frightened by passers-by; he called to them: "Oh, you dear little birds, do not fly away, I love you with all my heart if you could only believe me. But thus we also lack faith in our God."

He took great pleasure in the company of honest men; he then drank wine merrily, and the conversation coursed lively over big things and small. He judged with splendid humor his enemies and acquaintances, laughed and told merry stories, and when he got into discussions would rub his hands over his knee, which gesture was peculiar to him. Often he would sing to himself, play the lute, or direct a chorus. Whatever made men honorably merry was pleasing to him, his favorite art was music; he judged leniently of dancing and—fifty years before Shakespeare—spoke benevolently of comedy, for he said that it teaches like a mirror how each should conduct himself.

When he sat together with Melancthon, it was Master Philip, the mild, the scholar, who would add a wise qualification to the too daring assertions of his strong friend. If there was talk of rich people and Frau Catharine could not refrain from observing longingly: "Had my lord been so inclined he could have become very rich," Melancthon answered gravely: "That is impossible, for those who work for the general good cannot follow their own advantage."

There was one subject, however, about which the two men were apt to get into disputes. Melancthon was very fond of astrology, while Luther looked upon that science with sovereign contempt. On the other hand, by his method of Biblical exegesis—and also, by secret political cares—Luther had reached the conviction that the end of the world was near at hand, which, again, appeared very doubtful to the learned Melancthon. So, when Melancthon began to speak about celestial signs and aspects and explained Luther's successes by the fact that he was born under

the sign of the sun, Luther exclaimed: "I care not so much about your Sol. I am a peasant's son. My father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were honest peasants."—"Yes," replied Melanchthon, "in the village, too, you would have been a leader, either chief officer of the village or head farm-hand over the others."—"But," exclaimed Luther triumphantly, "I have become a bachelor of arts, a master, a monk,—that was not written in the stars; then I pulled the Pope's hair and he pulled mine, I took a nun to wife and begat children with her. Who saw those things in the stars?" And again Melanchthon continued in his astrological interpretations, beginning about Emperor Charles and declared it was ordained that he should die in 1584. Then Luther burst out violently: "The world will not endure as long as that. For if we beat back the Turk, the prophecy of Daniel will be fulfilled and the end at hand. Then the day of judgment is surely at our doors."

When Melanchthon fell dangerously ill, Luther visited him. On seeing the signs of approaching death in the face of his dear friend and co-worker, Luther turned toward the window and prayed that the Lord should spare his faithful servant's life. Then he addressed the patient, saying: "Be of good cheer, Philip, thou shalt not die!" Melanchthon recovered and Luther wrote triumphantly that "with God's help he would have brought the Master Philip back from the grave."

How amiable he is as the father of his family! When his little children stood at the table and looked longingly at the fruit and peaches he said: "Who wants to see the image of one that is happy in hope, he has here the true counterfeit. Oh, that we might behold the day of doom thus merrily! Adam and Eve no doubt had much better fruit, ours are mere crab-apples by comparison. The serpent, too, I think, was then a most beautiful creature, kindly and charming; it still wears its little crown, but after the curse it lost its feet and its handsome body." So he watched his little son of three years playing and talking to himself: "This child is like a drunken man, it knows not that it lives, and yet it lives securely and merrily on, skipping and jumping. Such children like to be in large wide apartments where they have room." And he drew the child to him: "You are our Lord's little fool, under his grace and forgiveness of sins, not under the law; you are not afraid, you are secure and care about nothing; as you act, is the uncorrupted way. Parents are always fondest of the youngest children; my little Martin is my dearest treasure, such little children require most the care and love of the parents. Hence, the love of parents always descends in the simplest way. How must Abraham have felt when he was about to sacrifice his youngest and dearest son?

He could not have said anything about it to Sarah. That errand must have been hard to him."

His beloved daughter Magdalen lay at the point of death, and he complained: "I love her very dearly, but, dear Lord, since it is Thy will, that Thou wilt take her hence, I will gladly know her to be with Thee. Magdalen, my little daughter, you would gladly remain here with your father and you will also gladly go to the Father beyond?" And the child said: "Yes, dear father, as God wills."

And when she died, the father knelt by the bedside weeping bitterly, and prayed that God might save her. And she went to her last sleep in her father's arms.

And when the people came to help bury the body, and spoke to the Doctor according to the custom, he said: "I am happy in the spirit, but the flesh is not satisfied; this parting vexes one above all measure. It is strange to know that she is in peace and happiness, and yet to be so sad."

His *dominus* or lord Catharine, as he was fond of calling his wife in letters to friends, speedily developed into an efficient housewife. And she had no little trouble. Little children, the husband often ailing, a number of boarders, teachers and poor students, an ever open house, from which scholarly or noble guests were seldom absent; and with all that, a scanty household and a husband who would rather give than receive and who, in his zeal, on one occasion, when she was lying in childbed, even took the silverware given to the children by their god-parents in order to give alms. In 1527, Luther was unable to advance eight florins to his former prior and friend Briesger. Sadly he wrote to him: "Three little silver cups (wedding presents) are in pawn for fifty florins, the fourth has been sold, the year has brought debts of one hundred florins. Lucas Cranach refuses to take my bail any longer so that I may not ruin myself completely."

Sometimes Luther declined presents, even such as were offered by his sovereign; but it appears that his regard for wife and children instilled in him some practical ideas in later years. When he died his estate amounted, approximately, to eight or nine thousand florins, comprising a little country place, a big garden, and two houses. It was surely the merit of Frau Catharine principally.

From the way in which Luther treated her we see how happy his domestic life was. If he made allusions to the profuse talk of women he had little cause, for he was not a man himself by any means that could be called chary of words. If she is heartily glad to be able to serve up all kinds of fish from the little lake in their garden, the doctor in turn is happy at her joy and does not fail to append to it a pleasing reflexion on the happiness of modest wants. Or, if reading the

psalter becomes too tedious for her and she replies that she hears enough of sanctification, that she reads much every day and can also speak about it, but that God only wants her to act accordingly, the doctor at this sensible answer sighs: "So does dissatisfaction with the Word of God begin; there will come many new books, and the Scriptures will be thrown into the corner again."

But this firm relationship of two good persons was, for a long time, not without secret suffering. We can only surmise at what was gnawing at the heart of the wife if, as late as 1527, in a dangerous illness, Luther took a last farewell of her with the words: "You are my honored and legitimate wife, so you shall assuredly esteem yourself."

Similarly as with those dear to him, Luther also conversed with the high powers of his faith. All the good figures from the Bible were to him like true friends, his vivid imagination had shaped their natures familiarly and he loved to picture to himself their circumstances with the ingenuousness of a child. When Veit Dietrich asked him what kind of a person the Apostle Paul might have been, Luther quickly replied: "He was an insignificant, slim little man like Philippus Melancthon." The Virgin Mary was to him a graceful picture. "She was a fine girl," he said admiringly, "she must have had a good voice." And the Saviour he loved best to imagine as a child in the house of his parents, carrying the meal to the father in the wood-yard, and Mary asking as he staid too long: "Where have you been so long, my little one?" The Saviour should not be imagined on the rainbow with a halo, not as the executor of the law—that conception is too lofty and terrible for man—only as the poor sufferer living among sinners and dying for them.

His God, also, was to him, at all times, master of the house and father. He loved to delve into the economy of nature. He indulges in astonished reflexion how much wood God must create. "No one can calculate what God needs only to feed the sparrows and useless birds; they cost Him more in a year than the income of the King of France. And then, think of all the other things."

"God understands all trades. In his tailoring he makes for the stag a coat that lasts a hundred years. As a shoemaker he gives him shoes for his feet, and in the sun he is a cook."

"He could well get rich if he desired, if he stopped the sun, enclosed the air, if he threatened death to the Pope, the Emperor, the bishops, and doctors, unless they paid him a hundred thousand florins at once. But he does not do so, and we are ungrateful beasts."

And he seriously reflects where the food for so many people comes from. Old Hans Luther had as-

serted there were more men than sheaves of grain; the doctor, on the contrary, believed that more sheaves grew than men, but more men than shocks of grain; a shock yields scarcely a bushel and a man cannot live on that for a year.

Even a heap of manure invited cordial reflexion: "God has to clear away as much as he has to create. If he did not continually clean up, men would long since have filled up the world with refuse."

And if God often punishes the pious more severely than the impious, he acts like a serious master of the house who thrashes his son more frequently than the hired servant. But while he silently gathers a treasure as an inheritance for the son, the hired man is at last discharged. And cheerfully he draws the conclusion: "If our Lord and Master can pardon me for having vexed Him for well nigh twenty years by reading masses, He can also put to my credit that at times I have quaffed a good drink in His honor. May the world construe it as it pleases."

He also wondered a great deal that God was so angry with the Jews. "For fifteen hundred years they have been praying violently, with earnestness and great zeal, as their little books of prayer show, and all through that time He does not answer them with a little word. If I could pray as they pray I would give two hundred florins' worth of books. It must be a great, unutterable wrath. O dear Lord, rather punish with pestilence than keep so silent."

Like a child, Luther prayed every morning and evening, often in the day, even during meals. Prayers which he knew by heart he repeated again and again with fervent devotion, preferring the Lord's Prayer; then again he recited to God the little catechism; he always carried the psalter with him, which served him as his book of prayer. When he was in passionate anxiety his prayer became a storm, a wrestling with God, the power, greatness, and holy simplicity of which it is difficult to compare with other human emotions. At such times he was the son lying in despair at the feet of his father, or the faithful servant imploring his sovereign. For his conviction was unchangeable that it was impossible to influence the resolutions of God by prayers and admonitions. And thus in his prayer there is an alternate outpouring of emotion and complaint, nay, serious exhortations.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

#### THE HEART OF OAK BOOKS.<sup>1</sup>

It is related of Alexander von Humboldt, whose fame in his time was second only to that of Napoleon, that an ingenious

<sup>1</sup> *The Heart of Oak Books.* A Collection of Traditional Rhymes and Stories for Children, and of Masterpieces of Poetry and Prose for Use at Home and at School, Chosen with Special Reference to the Cultivation of the Imagination and the Development of a Taste for Good Reading. Edited by Charles Eliot Norton. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. 1895. Book I., 96 pp., 25 cents; Book II., 268 pp., 45 cents; Book III., 308 pp., 55 cents; Book IV., 370 pp., 60 cents; Book V., 378 pp., 65 cents.

Asiatic wishing once to communicate with the celebrated *savant* but not knowing his place of abode, addressed his letter simply to "Alexander von Humboldt, Europe," and that the letter safely reached its destination. Among a list of names which Prof. Max Müller sent to The Open Court Publishing Co. some eight or nine years ago, as the prospective recipients of complimentary copies of his *Three Introductory Lectures on the Science of Thought*, was that of Charles Eliot Norton, unaccompanied by address. The gentleman who then discharged the onerous functions of chief of our distributing department, at that time wrestling with its first and only publication, and to whom the laurels of Mr. Sullivan, of Boston, were doubtless more familiar than those of the gentle academician of Harvard, applied for further details. Prof. Max Müller answered, with the frankness which characterises him, and which debarred the least suspicion of geographical foreshortening, that he thought "Prof. Charles Eliot Norton, United States of America," would be quite sufficient.

The incident is characteristic. Professor Norton's name may not be one to conjure with in Texan ranches or Colorado mining camps, and its influence may also not be paramount in more aspiring and more pretentious centres of æstheticism, such as our own endeared Chicago; yet Professor Norton is a scholar who by universal acknowledgment is the type and representative of the best that American culture has produced—a culture that, seeing it could not well be Indian or aboriginal unless we had started where the Aztecs left off, is still essentially European in its foundations and largely drawing from Europe. The choice of Professor Norton, therefore, as the editor of *The Heart of Oak Books* (and of his assistants, Miss Kate Stephens and Mr. George H. Browne), is significant. It has gained for the enterprise the sanction of high scholarship and taste, and placed upon it from the start the imprint of acknowledged competency. It has given to the series its dominant note of classicism and purity, of naturalness and freedom, as distinguished from the mechanical elocutionism and narrow pedantry of the old-time readers, and it has determined its aim and ideal, which is the culture of the imagination pure and simple through literature. "The imagination," says Professor Norton, "is the supreme intellectual faculty. . . . Upon its healthy development depend not only the sound exercise of the faculties of observation and judgment, but also the command of the reason, the control of the will, and the quickening and growth of the moral sympathies. The means for its culture which good reading affords is the most generally available and one of the most efficient."

Going upon the assumption that there are few children in whom a taste for good reading cannot be developed by careful and judicious training, Professor Norton is of opinion that this training should begin early and be made easy. The child's first reading "should mainly consist in what may cultivate his ear for the music of verse, and may rouse his fancy. And to this end nothing is better than the rhymes and jingles which have sung themselves, generation after generation, in the nursery or on the playground. 'Mother Goose' is the best primer. No matter if the rhymes be nonsense verses; many a poet might learn the lesson of good versification from them, and the child in repeating them is acquiring the accent of emphasis and of rhythmical form. Moreover, the mere art of reading is the more readily learned if the words first presented to the eye of the child are those which are already familiar to the ear." Book I. is the embodiment of this view.

The next step is to "the short stories which have been told since the world was young; old fables in which the teachings of long experience are embodied, legends, fairy tales, which form the traditional common stock of the fancies and sentiment of the race." Book II, and in part Book III. are devoted to this object. In the remainder of the Series our attention is directed to

literature proper, and particularly to poetry. "Poetry," says Professor Norton, "is one of the most efficient means of education of the moral sentiment, as well as of the intelligence. It is the source of the best culture. A man may know all science and yet remain uneducated. But let him truly possess himself of the work of any one of the great poets, and no matter what else he may fail to know, he is not without education."

Such is the editor's purpose, and we at once see the scope and availability of the series. The selections run the entire course of English classical literature and exhibit many unique features. Besides the neglected songs of Shakespeare and the poetical gems of the literature at large, the Fables of Æsop and the foreign tales of Grimm, Andersen, Niebuhr, etc., are longer pieces like Lamb's *Adventures of Ulysses*, extracts from Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, etc., which form rounded wholes and sustain the interest aroused to the end. The usual bulky paraphernalia of elocutionism are missing, and in their place are substituted merely a pronouncing vocabulary of proper names, an index of writers with the dates of their births and deaths, and brief notes as to the sources. The series constitutes thus "a body of reading, adapted to the progressive needs of childhood and youth," culled from the best master-works of English literature. It is not only adapted to school use, but is also designed for the home, where it can readily be made to exert a fruitful influence on domestic taste and culture. We cannot too cordially recommend these books, as a needed and opportune means of popular enlightenment.

\* \* \*

To this series which is concerned, and justly so, with literature pure and simple, we could imagine, at least for the middle and upper classes, a companion-book made up of selections from the scientific classics. Professor Norton does not exclude other means of cultivating the imagination. The recognition of law in nature, most classically expressed by Kant, has stirred philosopher and poet from time immemorial and underlies the productions of literature and science alike. The ultimate source of both, in fact, is much the same. The boy who solves an original problem in geometry experiences the same flush of emotional delight as does the *blasé* professor of literature, who follows with light, elastic sympathy Falstaff's unerring interpretations of life. It is true, Euler's *Treatise on Spherical Trigonometry* may not be as exciting reading, nor fraught with the same breathless human interest, as the story of Aladdin's Lamp. Nor can every one call with Hamilton the *Mécanique Analytique* of Lagrange a magnificent poem. Nevertheless, it is certain that the masterpieces of science contain a mine of material which could well be used as supplementary readings collaterally with instruction in science, and which would introduce into the same a poetical and human interest. Even in the readers proper, beautiful passages could be introduced from writers of the stamp of Tyndall; and extracts from the biographies of Galileo, Kepler, the Bernoullis, Herschel, Sir Thomas Young, Davy, Faraday, and Mayer, might rival in cultured interest the famous Trafalgar scene from Southey's *Life of Nelson*.

A partial beginning has been made in this direction. Just recently Dr. Friedrich Dannemann, a German scholar, has published a book<sup>1</sup> purporting to be an elementary history of the physical sciences but giving that history in the form of unmodified extracts from the great and classical works of the original inquirers themselves. The selections embrace the whole succession of great investigators from Aristotle to Kirchhoff. The greater part of this book is not literature and is not intended to take the place of literature. But to the student of science it is a delightful book nev-

<sup>1</sup> *Grundriss einer Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften, zugleich eine Einführung in das Studium der naturwissenschaftlichen Literatur*. Von Dr. Friedrich Dannemann. I. Band: erläuterte Abschnitte aus den Werken hervorragender Naturforscher. Mit 44 Abbildungen in Wiedergabe nach den Originalwerken. Leipzig: Wilhelm Engelmann. 1896. Pages, 375. Price, M. 6

1898

ertheless, and it shows that something similar to it embodying the suggestions made above might profitably be made use of in that cultivation of the heart and understanding which Professor Norton lays so much just stress upon. T. J. McCORMACK.

NOTES.

Louis Prang & Co. are again in the field with their valuable and interesting Christmas publications and calendars. Their art publications are distinguished throughout from analogous European productions by bearing the stamp of American life and American taste. In place of the smooth but cold elegance of the Continental art of Europe, we find here a peculiar warmth of sentiment. Mr. Prang's style of art is famous all over the country for its technical perfection, a fact which is scarcely doubted by anybody, but we would find the importance of his work rather in the attention which he devotes to the choice of subjects and the tinge of thought with which his artists are ensouled. In addition to the flowers which naturally remain always fashionable, he decks the Christmas market of the present year with designs that appeal to special classes of people and timely events. We notice among the new things "The Songs of the Birthdays," an illustration of nursery rhymes. One of the calendars celebrates the Horse Show for 1897, representing scenes from horse-life, including some tragic events—a horse lamenting a fallen soldier, a runaway, etc., and we must add that the execution of the various horses-pictures is exquisite. Another calendar is devoted to the Christian Endeavor movement. It bears the picture of the Rev. Francis E. Clarke and is illustrated throughout with pansies, the chosen emblem of the Christian Endeavorers yet also the flower which the French free thinkers long ago selected as the symbol of free thought because *pansee* means not only "bear in mind," but also "think." Col. Ingersoll has now a chance to send to the friends who so fervently prayed for the salvation of his soul an appropriate New Year's greeting whose Bible quotations would please the men of Christian Endeavor while its artistic adornment would express the Colonel's own sentiments.

*Borderland Studies* has not been inaptly chosen by Dr. George M. Gould as the title of his collection of "miscellaneous addresses and essays pertaining to medicine and the medical profession and their relations to general science and thought." (Philadelphia: P. Blakiston, Son & Co. 380 Pages. Price, \$2.00.) His best thought and expression have been employed upon the problems relating to that aerial region which lies between life and death, and from the atmosphere of this domain his work has taken a marked and characteristic coloring. The titles of the essays are such as the following: "Vivisection," "Life and Its Physical Basis," "The Epidemic of Quackery," "Football," "The Power of Will in Disease," "The Modern Frankenstein," "Dreams, Sleep, and Consciousness," and "Immortality." Four of the essays comprising this book appeared in early numbers of *The Open Court* and *Monist*, and some of our readers may still remember their irresistible momentum and spirit. We wish the limits of space permitted us to reproduce some of the passages of Dr. Gould's book. Its author is a hard bitter. His impetuous ardor, drastic diction, kaleidoscopic imagery impart to his book an undeniable fascination, which few readers can withstand. On many practical questions of the day his judgments are courageous and sound, and illumined by broad knowledge. That on the main fundamental problems of science and philosophy we differ from him, does not lessen our appreciation of the merits of his book.

The exploration of the pre-historic ruins of Copan, Honduras, conducted by the Peabody Museum of Archæology and Ethnology of Harvard, have been made the subject of an elegant *Preliminary*

*Report* published in a memoir of quarto size, and provided with a large number of excellent plates and photographic illustrations, showing the site, character of the ruins, and the monuments and works of art exhumed. The Museum explorations have extended over a period of four years—from 1891 to 1895—and the present report has been compiled from the field notes of the various leaders of these explorations. The undertaking has been a costly one and the results fruitful, although little satisfactory progress has yet been made in the interpretation of the monolithic monuments found. The ruins of Copan have been the object of curiosity for four centuries, and the present memoir contains the newest and most exact information which can be had concerning them. (Cambridge, Mass.: Published by the Museum.)

The *Old South Leaflets* are a series of tiny brochures published at cost price by the Directors of the Old South Work, Old South Meeting-house, Boston, Mass., and treating of the early periods of American history. Their aim, which is purely educational is to disseminate a thorough knowledge of the beginnings and development of American history, mainly by publishing reprints of original documents and extracts from classical histories of this period. Among the latest issues are: "Winthrop's 'Little Speech' on Liberty"; "The Destruction of the Tea"; "Debate on the Suffrage in Congress"; "The Dutch Declaration of Independence." The last which has come into our hands is "Hamilton's Report on the Coinage," communicated to the House of Representatives January 28, 1791. This report concisely and classically defines the financial policy which with brief intervals the United States have followed ever since.

Mr. Kakichi Ohara of Otsu, Omi, Japan, has finished his translation of *The Gospel of Buddha* into Chinese, and we are in receipt of a number of copies which he has kindly sent us. At the same time we are informed through the *Journal of the Maha-Bodhi Society* that Laucheng Chey, a Buddhist priest of Perak in the Malayan Peninsula, desires to translate *The Gospel of Buddha* into Romanised Malay, the language of his people.

THE OPEN COURT

"THE MONON," 324 DEARBORN STREET.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, Post Office Drawer F.

E. C. HEGELER, PUBLISHER.

DR. PAUL CARUS, EDITOR.

Terms: Throughout the Postal Union, \$1.50 per year, 75 cents for six months; in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, \$1.00 per year, 50 cents for six months.

N. E. Binding Cases for single yearly volumes of THE OPEN COURT will be supplied on order. Price, 75 cents each. Temporary Binders, 50 cents.

CONTENTS OF NO. 482.

MARTIN LUTHER. (Continued.) Political and Social Complications.—Luther's Marriage.—Luther's Private Life. GUSTAV FREYTAG..... 5127  
THE HEART OF OAK BOOKS. T. J. McCORMACK.... 5132  
NOTES..... 5134