

# Ecclesia Militans

The Church in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth  
Centuries



Stabat Mater Press

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Published by Stabat Mater Press  
[www.stabatmaterpress.com](http://www.stabatmaterpress.com)

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Printed in the United States of America

ISBN (Paperback): 9798286751532

**Nihil Obstat.**

JACOBUS CANONICUS CARR, V.G  
CENSOR DEPUTATUS.

**Imprimi potest.**

+ GULIELMUS,  
EPISCOPUS ARINDELENSIS,  
VICARIUS GENERALIS.

**WESTMONASTERII,**

**die 16 Jan., 1907.**



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# Chronological Outline

- 1506 † Christopher Columbus.
- 1511 Establishment of first American bishoprics.
- 1512 Eighteenth General Council—Lateran V.
- 1517 Publication of Theses of Luther.
- 1520 Excommunication of Luther.
- 1521 Diet of Worms.
- 1525 Revolt of the peasants.
- 1527 Rome sacked by troops of Charles V.
- 1529 Diet of Spires. Publication of Luther's Catechism.
- 1531 League of Smalkald.
- 1532 Cranmer pronounces divorce between Henry and Catherine.
- 1535 † Blessed John Fisher. Blessed Thomas More.
- 1545 Nineteenth General Council—Trent.
- 1546 † Martin Luther.
- 1552 Forty-two Articles of Church of England.
- 1552 † St. Francis Xavier.
- 1554 England's reunion with Holy See.
- 1555 Religious Peace of Augsburg.
- 1556 † St. Ignatius of Loyola. Thomas Cranmer.
- 1560 Suppression of Catholicism in Scotland.
- 1562 Ratification of the Thirty-nine Articles in England.

- 1563 Close of the Council of Trent.
- 1571 Battle of Lepanto. Edicts of persecution against Catholics in England.
- 1572 St. Bartholomew's Day. † St. Francis Borgia. John Knox.
- 1579 Foundation of English seminary in Rome.
- 1582 Reform of the calendar. † St. Teresa.
- 1587 † Mary Stuart. Persecutions in Japan.
- 1595 Henry IV. of France absolved by Clement VIII.
- 1595 † St. Philip Neri.
- 1600 The great Jubilee.
- 1605 Gunpowder Plot in London.
- 1611 Reductions in Paraguay.
- 1618 Thirty Years' War.
- 1622 Congregation de Propaganda Fidei founded.
- 1622 † St. Francis of Sales.
- 1632 Colony of Maryland founded.
- 1637 Suppression of Christianity in Japan.
- 1647 Presbyterian Confession of Scotland.
- 1648 Peace of Westphalia.





# The Religious Revolt

## I. General Causes of the Religious Revolt

**T**he opening decades of the sixteenth century witnessed a movement which, ere the century was little more than half over, had bred a spirit of rebellion against all authority, such that, during a hundred and fifty years, every country of Europe in succession was convulsed by civil and religious wars. The religious revolt, erroneously styled the Reformation, had its origin in Germany.

Up to the close of the fifteenth century the social condition of the Germanic people seems to have been little short of ideal. The peasantry, industrious and frugal, were protected by wise and beneficent laws; the artisan population flourished under the direction of the great guilds, education was open to all, and culture, evidenced by the splendid works of art to be found everywhere in church and guild hall, exercised a refining influence over the lives and homes of even the poorer classes. Never were works of zeal and charity better seconded by the people, or the needs of their parishioners more cared for by their pastors. Intellectual activity received a fresh impetus from the invention of printing. The multitude of books, adapted for both simple and learned, poured forth from the numerous presses of town and monastery, would pass credence if authentic records were

not there to testify to their number and excellence. Contemporary authors are unanimous in attesting the high average morality of the Germanic peoples of this time. The political aspect of affairs was less happy: causes were at work which would have demanded a great central authority either to give them wise direction, or to check undue development. But herein the ideals of the sovereign and of the subordinate princes conflicted. Great emperors, such as Maximilian I. (1493-1519), and great legists, saw the necessity of consolidating the Empire, which was but a loose suzerainty; but their patriotic efforts in this direction were rendered abortive by the princes, whose only aim was to shake off all allegiance and claim complete independence. Moreover, a strong revolutionary spirit was inculcated and fostered by the Renaissance legists, many of whom, fresh from the great Bologna University, strove to supersede the old Germanic laws by the famous Justinian code. Though the great legislator condemned the existence of slavery as contrary to the natural law, the provisions of his code necessarily dealt with a state of society that had but just shaken off the trammels of paganism, and in which only two great social classes existed, the lord and the slave, the holder of wealth and his chattels. The Teutonic laws, while recognizing and providing for serfdom, were yet the natural development of feudal tenure. They protected the rights of the free labourer, the producer of wealth, and favoured the growth of the great mediaeval institutions by which trade and commerce were regulated. It is not as a question of the respective values of the two systems that this dispute has to be considered, but as introducing an element of insecurity and unrest among a hitherto contented people. The breach in the continuity of their national life and customs, bitterly resented by the peasant class, left them an easier prey to the more serious innovations that were to follow. Janssen considers this disunion between the emperor and his subject princes

and the introduction of the Justinian code to be powerful factors in preparing that state of things in Germany which made the religious revolt possible. It is no doubt true that the great nobles found in the Roman code a powerful auxiliary in strengthening their hands Just at a time when an ever-growing commerce was redistributing the wealth of the country. Hitherto, especially in Germany, land had been capital, and had been made productive by labour. Now capital was taking the form of money, and monopolies were upsetting the relations between the various branches of industry. Already the first symptoms were to be seen of an evil that has continued to our own day. Capitalists were taking advantage of defenceless labourers, and the ranks of the rich and of the poor were parting gradually farther asunder. These considerations explain the strong language of the theologians of the day and of men as widely different as Ribadeneira, the historian of St. Ignatius, and Sully, Minister of Henry IV., against commerce and manufactures.

When the sixteenth century opened, the struggle for wealth had already assumed vast proportions. The sight of the rapidly-made fortunes of merchants whetted the general appetite for money, which, like a mischievous leaven, was at work in every rank of society. At this period, says Janssen, were witnessed the most extraordinary contrasts—an almost unparalleled self-devotion in the multiplication of religious Orders, and of works of charity, with a sordid selfishness that made money-grabbers out of bishop and prince, priest and noble, monk and peasant alike. Through the devotion of centuries, the Church had grown to be the richest body in the Empire. Hence, ecclesiastical preferments became the great prizes in the race for wealth. A most deplorable abuse was that many monasteries closed their doors to all but nobility or wealth. Add to this the evil of nominations to benefices being in the hands of laymen, and the rapid deterioration of

morals can be understood. Beginning from above, it gradually worked down through the masses, and the worldliness and splendour of episcopal and abbatial palaces were reflected, as far as means allowed, around the hearth of the peasant. Such examples could not but bear sad fruit. Men grew up with a contempt for the station in which they were born. We find complaints that the poor squandered their narrow means in striving to dress and live like their betters; and that every form of robbery, violence, fraud, usury, falsification of goods and coins was rife; that passions were let loose, and that feastings, gaming, fighting, and dueling were the order of the day.

One other feature of the times must be noted. In Germany, as elsewhere, literary men were banded into schools—the Humanists and the Schoolmen, or, as they were often styled, the Poets and the Theologians. Their disputes were acrimonious, and the Humanists often passed from attacking their opponents to attacking the profession of their opponents, the Order to which they belonged, the Church which protected them, and the doctrines preached from her pulpits. Hence the people were familiarized with the sound of conflicting opinions, accustomed to hear public disputations on controverted points, and they were nothing loath to be called on to judge of the merits of the rival teachers. We find that the wildest propositions were made, often unchecked, as to the right of free examination of doctrine and, above all, free interpretation of the Bible. A special rancour embittered the quarrel when a great Humanist, Reuchlin, an eminent Greek scholar, revived the study of Hebrew in Germany. All eyes were drawn towards the Jews, just then in no great favour, and fears were entertained lest Judaism should assert itself. The excited violence of the partisans for and against the Hebraic movement widened the breach between Humanists and Theologians to the utmost. Their mutual flattery and the abuse of their opponents form a strange page

in the literature of the times. Things were at this juncture when the publication of an Indulgence by Pope Leo X., in 1515, fanned the flame to still greater fury. The Indulgence was granted for donations towards completing the dome of St. Peter's in Rome, then in course of construction. An attack on the Indulgence was led by Luther in October, 1517, when he openly combated not merely the Indulgence as then promulgated, but the doctrines on which the granting of an Indulgence is based and the authority of the Holy See which grants it.

## II. Lutheranism and its Early Effects

Luther's earlier career was a preparation for this act. An unhappy childhood, followed by brilliant studies which won for him extravagant praise; a sudden adoption of the religious state through motives of terror; an exaggerated scrupulosity; a constant resistance to his superiors, who strove in vain to check the extravagant practices by which he sought to regain peace of mind—all presaged some such violent course on the part of a man whose judgment seems to have been unable to control the frenzied imaginations to which he was subject all his life. Pursued by violent alternatives of scrupulosity and elation in his earlier days, later on, by dread of assassination amounting to monomania, in his maturer years he frequently thought himself face to face with the evil one—a belief which wrought him up to paroxysms of anguished fear.

In 1507 he had left his monastery at Erfurt for the newly-founded University of Wittenberg in Saxony, where he was soon promoted to a professorship. During the ten years which preceded his "Thesis Against Indulgences," he seems to have been gradually evolving a creed of his own and abandoning one by one the doctrines of the Church. He had already broached his principal tenets—the absence of free will in man and justification by faith alone—in a course of Lenten sermons in 1517. In spite of ecclesiastical censure, he continued his erroneous teaching. The proclamation of the great Indulgence was merely the occasion, and not the cause, of Luther's open attack on the Church. It was, of all subjects, one which would ill fit in with Luther's new faith, and accordingly he immediately threw down the challenge that any similar opportunity would have called forth. This took the form of "Seventy-five Theses Against Indulgences." Public

attention was roused, and Luther's action was favourably viewed by many. Tetzel, a learned Dominican, to whom the preaching of the Indulgence had been entrusted, replied by a clear statement of the doctrine of the Church on the matter. Luther, however, daily gathering partisans around him, continued to preach. He called loudly for reforms, and promulgated what he called his gospel, but as yet gave no sign of wishing to break altogether with the Church. The most influential of his adherents were the leading Humanists, including Erasmus, Reuchlin, and Hutten, the great fighting Baron Franz von Sickingen, together with Mutian and the whole Nuremberg School of Philosophers.

In 1520, however, he declared himself a Hussite, and published his famous "Appeal to the Nobles Against Rome" and his "Babylonian Captivity." In these documents he denounced the luxury of the clergy, a point which certainly called for reform; but he went farther. He stated that all men were priests, hence judges in matters of doctrine; that the temporal power was supreme, and existed only for the punishment of offences; that where evil was found the temporal power was bound to chastise even ecclesiastical offenders. To win support for himself and his tenets, he strove to bribe the emperor by suggesting the confiscation of the States of the Church and the abolition of the papal protectorate of Naples. To gain the bishops, he proposed a national Church with independence of Rome, to the barons he offered the right of nomination for their younger sons to bishoprics, while before the people he laid the attractive prospect of pillage of churches, abolition of fasts and feasts, and of excommunication.

Luther's publications having been maturely examined at Rome, he was excommunicated in November, 1520. With the utmost contempt Luther burned the Papal Bull, and "all Germany was convulsed

with excitement." Frederick of Saxony declared himself protector of Luther, whose credit grew from day to day.

While these last events had been taking place, Charles V. had become Emperor of Germany. In 1519 Maximilian I. had died, and several candidates had appeared for the imperial throne. The most noteworthy were Francis I. of France, and Charles, Archduke of Austria, grandson of Maximilian I. Intrigues were rife, the electors bribed and took bribes. Every sentiment of honour seemed gone. At length a momentary flash of patriotism—the determination not to be ruled save by a German—prevailed, and Charles was elected. It may be mentioned in passing that this cost him and his successor forty years of warfare with France.

The position of the young emperor was not enviable. His hereditary dominions were one scene of ferment and disorder. Spain was in revolution. Naples was hourly expecting an attack from the Turks. Italy, under French influence, was threatening to rise in rebellion, while in Austria his authority was greatly compromised. The Netherlands seemed the only quarter where peace reigned, and these lands were shortly to be no exception to the rule. With Germany added to these vast dominions, the emperor-elect was, in name, master of half Europe. But Germany, composed of numerous almost independent States whose princes were devoted to their own interests alone, whose cities were in constant conflict with the princes, and whose populations were torn with religious strife, did but augment the difficulties which were too great for one man to cope with. Charles V., however, nothing daunted, took up the gigantic tasks, and immediately after his coronation in 1520 convoked a Diet to meet him at Worms early in the following year. There he laid before the assembled representatives of the Empire the bold projects he was entertaining—namely, the restoration of peace, law, and order throughout his dominions; the



establishment of a Council of Regency to act in his absence from the Empire; the recovery of the provinces in North Italy lost to the Austrian throne; the repulse of the Turks; and his own coronation by the Pope. The Council of Regency was established, but for the other projects funds and an army were necessary preliminaries, and the German princes were ill-disposed to grant either. Moreover, the religious troubles already seriously threatening the public peace demanded instant attention. An exhaustive catalogue of abuses, with a petition for redress of grievances, was drawn up in order to be laid before the Pope. Then it was that Luther, called at the beginning of the session to answer the charges against him, was invited to explain his proceedings. Luther's approach to Worms had been one long ovation. The populace treated him as a saint, and his writings and his portraits, decorated with an aureole, were publicly distributed. But riots also broke out along his passage, and his sermons were followed by scenes of excitement and violence. After a short hesitation, he boldly declared to the Diet his determination of holding by his gospel. All attempts to win him having failed, the emperor, together with all the princes, except Frederick of Saxony, united in an edict against Luther and his adherents. Luther was being taken back to Erfurt when Frederick of Saxony, to save him from all harm, had him carried off and transported to the strong castle of Wartburg.

From Wartburg Luther directed the progress of the new gospel. Itinerant preachers spread his doctrines far and wide. The violence of his partisans of the lower classes caused Luther some uneasiness, and in 1522 he returned to Wittenberg to be nearer the centre of operations. It was now evident that the movement meant a real rupture with the Church, and many of those who had at first seen in Luther's bold attacks only the strong action of a zealous if a somewhat imprudent reformer, openly returned to the ranks of the defenders of the faith.

But Luther's preaching was already bearing fruit. As early as 1520 he had begun a systematic attack on the Church. He had not hesitated to call on emperors and princes to rid themselves of Pope and Cardinals, and to destroy "this pest" from the face of the earth by the edge of the sword. In 1523 he issued a manifesto demanding the suppression of episcopal jurisdiction. Thus he threatened not only the Church, but the State, as most of the bishops were reigning princes of the Germanic Empire. Shortly after this proclamation Franz von Sickingen, sword in hand, took upon himself to carry out Luther's programme; but he added to it an ideal of his own, that of raising the lower aristocracy to power as a counter-poise to the imperial princes. Having called a number of these men, who bore the unenviable title of the "Robber Nobles," round his standard, he proclaimed his intention of "hewing a gap for the gospel." An attack on the archbishopric of Treves followed, during which churches and monasteries were wrecked and pillaged, while the villages were given up to the flames. A tardy union of some of the German princes at length stopped Sickingen's career of devastation. He himself fell mortally wounded during the siege of his own castle, where he had taken refuge. His failure caused the utter ruin of the "Robber Nobles," whose overthrow tended to consolidate still further the power of the sovereign princes.

Meanwhile, Adrian VI. was preparing to meet the demands of the Diet of Worms in a most conciliatory spirit. He acknowledged the existence of serious abuses in the exercise of ecclesiastical prerogatives, expressed his intention of instituting reforms, and promised a General Council on German soil. Janssen says: "It was a solemn moment in the history of the Germanic peoples." The Orders, assembled at the second Diet of Nuremberg, 1523, accepted the Pope's propositions with gratitude. Pending the Council, it was determined that the preaching of heretics and the publication of their writings should not

be countenanced, but the princes dispersed, and none of the things they had undertaken were put into practice. Even the spiritual princes were supremely indifferent to the course of events. Luther, inspired by their neglect, went to lengths as yet unattempted. He forbade Mass to be celebrated at Wittenberg, and called on the religious to throw off their vows and marry. Many obeyed his summons, and swelled the ranks of the Lutherans.

Even from 1521 a notable falling-off of the numbers of students in the universities was remarked. Luther had attacked these venerable institutions, and his words took rapid effect. Schools were equally abandoned, almsgiving diminished, and charitable institutions languished for lack of means. Luther himself writes: Under the papacy everyone was beneficent and gave freely, but now, under the Gospel regime, avarice reigns, each thinks but of fleecing his neighbour and enriching himself." During these transactions one of the most terrible events that Germany had yet seen was slowly maturing. The condition of the peasantry and of artisans, under the exactions of the nobles and the influence of commerce, was becoming desperate. There is little doubt that even had Luther's doctrine not been there to excite them to revolt, some great uprising must have taken place; but Lutheranism added to the movement a ferocity which seems ever to characterize religious wars.

Between 1524 and 1525 the whole of Central Germany rose in rebellion. Bavaria alone did not join the ranks of the insurgents. The vast insurrection massed itself under the banner of the "Gospel," and enrolled the peasantry, artisans, and townsfolk in the "Gospel Brotherhood." The leaders were itinerant preachers or apostate priests, and though their ostensible object was the defence of the Gospel, there was a deeper motive at work. They were determined to cast off the yoke of their grasping rulers, and to obtain once more equitable ad-

ministration of justice, public security, and freedom from arbitrary exactions. They frustrated their own ends by their violence. A long catalogue of horrors sums up the story of this terrible year. It culminated in a massacre at Weinsburg, in which, for the first time, nobles were among the victims. As long as the attacks had been confined to the Church and ecclesiastical property, the princes had looked on unmoved. It must be remembered that in those days armies only existed when they were needed. When the princes saw the danger nearing themselves they took alarm, and summoned their retainers around them. From the moment a disciplined force took the field, the Peasants' Revolt was over. It was followed by a series of savage slaughterings, in which all alike were hewn down, even the very beasts of the field not escaping. Exorbitant fines were levied on the towns which had contributed either men or money to the insurgents, and ceaseless executions by fire and sword terrified the inhabitants into submission. It is said that widows and orphans from over a hundred thousand ruined homesteads roamed over a desolate waste, in vain seeking subsistence. The starving band was swelled by the maimed and blinded wretches who had escaped with their lives from the hands of the torturing executioner. The nobles were pitiless in their revenge. It was on ecclesiastical lands alone that the poor found relief. They were allowed to share all that had been left to the churches and monasteries when they had ransacked them in their day of brief triumph.

This most terrible insurrection was, by his contemporaries, attributed to Luther, not only in his own country, but in other lands. "The atrocious character of this war," says one, "is attributed to the seditious preachers and sectaries, to the libels and pamphlets disseminated everywhere." Erasmus, in writing to Luther, says: "We are gathering the bitter fruits of your genius. You do not own the rebels, but they own you readily enough." Blessed Thomas More, in summing up the

effects of Lutheranism, counts this civil war, in which he says there were "so many thousand slain that the land lieth in many places in manner desert and desolate."

Yet, when he saw how literal was their obedience to his teachings, Luther turned against the people, and called upon the princes to exterminate them. He boasted that their overthrow was his work, and from that time his exhortations were addressed to the ruling powers rather than to the people—the "lord Omnes," whom now he declared to be worthy of death. Up to this time not one prince—not even Frederick of Saxony—had openly declared for Luther, for his revolutionary speeches had alienated them from him. Even during the revolt Luther's attacks on the rulers were severe. He openly blamed their tyranny, the intolerance of their yoke, and declared them responsible for the awful scenes going on around. But after the suppression of the rebellion his language changed. Hereafter he taught the absolute omnipotence of the sovereign and the duty of passive obedience by the subjects. Thus the power of the princes was strengthened by Luther's action, and they were not slow to profit by it.

It will be remembered that Luther had taught the Universal Priesthood of Christians. The natural consequence was that men came to regard themselves as a gospel or a law each to himself, and not only this, but each could assert his right to teach others. Obedience even to an ecclesiastical superior was therefore out of the question, and multiplying sects soon showed how literally Luther's words were taken. Religious anarchy necessarily followed, and sect after sect arose, as one person after another felt himself inspired with some new light on the meaning of the Sacred Writings. It would be impossible to follow the history of even the chief sects. Those which were the most extravagant in their doctrine and most violent in their opposition to the old faith, and with whom the Lutherans themselves frequently

came into collision, were the Anabaptists and Zwinglians. It soon became apparent that the new gospel had founded no new religious society—it had but overthrown the old, and had substituted nothing but disorder and division in its place. Fearful lest the abolition of all authority should result in universal destruction of every vestige of Christian virtue, the chiefs of the religious revolution called on the temporal rulers to come to the rescue. This placed the Church at the mercy of the State, and was the origin of the State Churches which everywhere took their rise at this epoch.

This organization imposed on the temporal prince the duty of deciding all moot questions of doctrine, and made him master of the goods of the Church.

The double doctrine of the unlimited power of the temporal prince over his subjects, and of the subordination of the Church to the State, converted to the new doctrines a great number of princes greedy of the wealth of the clergy. With incredible rapidity one State after another saw its sovereign embrace Lutheranism. Albert of Brandenburg, Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights, not only gave in his adhesion to the new gospel, but acting on Luther's advice, he took possession of Prussia which he held for his Order, made it a hereditary duchy with the consent and assistance of the King of Poland, and, disregarding his vows, married Princess Dorothy of Denmark.

The sovereign princes of Saxony, Hesse, Brandenburg-Culmbach, Brunswick-Anhalt, and Mechlingen, within two or three years of each other, all forsook the Church and set up Lutheranism in their States. This was not accomplished without severe measures against Catholics. Everywhere the churches were violently taken from them, priests and monks were driven away, and unchecked spoliation and sacrilege followed. In the free cities—most notably Magdeburg, Halle, and Halberstadt—things were carried farther. Not only did the town

authorities confiscate Church property, abolish titles and dues both ecclesiastical and imperial—taking on themselves, moreover, the prerogatives of both bishop and emperor—but open persecution was resorted to in order to force Catholics to embrace Lutheranism, and the most brutal extravagances were committed by the partisans of "the Gospel." There are many instances of convents of nuns heroically withstanding every attempt to pervert them.

In the year marked by the outbreak of the Peasants' Revolt, Luther wrote his abusive reply to Henry VIII.'s "Treatise on the Seven Sacraments." The following year he married Katherina von Bora, an ex-nun whom he had induced to abandon the religious state. In 1526 the new sect received its first organization. As we have seen, it was at this time that State Churches were established, and it became necessary to frame some kind of rules for their administration. At the first Diet of Spires (1526) it was determined that each separate congregation should manage its own affairs, that a joint commission of pastors and laymen should appoint preachers to the various churches, and that the supreme authority in all matters appertaining to Church government should be vested in the head of the State. The sectarian body, thus consolidated, found itself in a position to put on a bold front. It demanded and obtained, until the meeting of a General Council, a recognition of its existence as a separate religious party, subject to the condition of not propagating its doctrines.

In 1527 an event occurred which could not fail to have a disastrous effect on the position of religious affairs in Germany. Charles V. was still engaged in his war with Francis I. The French monarch had allied himself with the Pope and with Henry VIII. of England in a defensive league against the emperor. A band of Spanish and German imperialists, under the command of the Constable de Bourbon, a Frenchman fighting against his own sovereign through private animosity, stormed

Rome, and during two months gave up the city to scenes of atrocities and vandalism unparalleled in history. Charles, though he disclaimed responsibility for the act, did not fail to profit by its occurrence, for he would not withdraw the troops till he had obtained his ends. The sight of a Catholic monarch permitting his armies thus to insult the common Father of Christendom shocked the whole world, and the lesson was not lost on the sectaries. They added demand to demand, and by each concession were emboldened to further exactions. In 1529, at the second Diet of Spires, it was declared by the emperor that the permission previously given to the sectarians to continue as they were until the General Council, had been misinterpreted, and that as they had attempted to impose their belief on others by force, this permission was retracted and annulled. The sectarians declared that to renounce the work commenced was to be false to their consciences, hence they *protested* against any such measure. Thus they adopted an avowedly hostile attitude towards both the Church and the State, and the nucleus of a new political party was formed.

But the new gospel had to encounter opposition from its own adherents. At Marburg a conference was held between the leaders of the sects, and a furious contest broke out between Luther and the Swiss divines, with Zwingli and Oecolampadius at their head. The point in controversy was the nature of the Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist. Luther maintained that the substance of the body of Christ was present in the consecrated Host, together with the substance of bread, while the view that the Sacrament was merely commemorative was held by his opponents, and is ascribed to Zwingli or to Carlstadt, one of Luther's earliest opponents. No fusion of views was possible, and not only did the conference end in a stormy fashion, but the sects split up into rival factions, Luther's adherents forming the Lutheran



Church, those of Zwingli taking the title of the Reformed Church. The Calvinists also used this appellation.

Up to this time no formal profession of faith had been made by the new sects. Their tenets were ever fluctuating, and doctrines were added or changed as circumstances suggested. But at the Diet of Augsburg, 1530, the Protestant princes having insisted that religious affairs should take precedence of all subjects to be laid before the Orders, the emperor required that a declaration of their views and opinions should be drawn up and examined before the needed reforms in Church and State were treated of. Melancthon was charged to draw up the document, which received the approbation of Luther before it was read in presence of the Diet. It consisted of two parts, the first summing up in twenty-one articles the chief tenets of Protestantism, and the second in seven chapters treating of the abuses which they alleged had been introduced into the practice of the Church. Under this head they included communion under one kind, the celibacy of the clergy, private Masses, the obligation of confession, the laws of fasting and abstinence, monastic vows and episcopal jurisdiction. This document, which was the occasion of many disputes among the sectarians, became known as the Confession of Augsburg, and formed a kind of creed for the new faith. The Confession of Augsburg was not accepted by all the sects. The Zwinglians drew up their own; this is known as the Confession of the Four Cities. About this time, too, Luther's catechisms were published. It would be superfluous to give a summary of Lutheran doctrines, so often were they modified, but they had as their basis justification by faith alone, private interpretation of Scripture, absence of moral freedom in man, and the repudiation of Catholic teaching on the seven points before mentioned. A series of conferences was held with a view to getting Catholics and Protestants to come to some agreement, but necessarily the attempt was futile,

the real point at issue being the infallible authority of the Church in matters of doctrine, and not merely one or more articles of belief. No Catholic could yield this point, and no Protestant could accept it. Several subsequent attempts at ending the religious differences by conferences were set on foot. All equally ended in failure. Every effort to secure mutual toleration was likewise abortive. The Lutheran princes felt that their cause was lost if once the Catholic faith were permitted in their States, and Holy Mass once more publicly offered. Luther himself wrote at this time: "If I would, it were very easy for me, by the help of two or three sermons, to reinstate my people in papacy, and to found anew pilgrimages and Masses," and he added that he did not think there were ten men in Wittenberg who would resist, were he to propose to return to the ancient ways. But Luther had openly taught that the Mass was idolatry, hence his followers could not tolerate it among them, and they considered it their duty to proscribe Catholic worship in Lutheran States.

From various causes, political and religious, the protestant princes began to form alliances among themselves in opposition to the emperor, and in 1531 they combined into one great body, the Smalkald League. They strove to obtain support from foreign sovereigns, especially from Henry VIII.—whose projected repudiation of Catherine of Aragon would necessarily outrage the emperor, her nephew—and from Francis I. of France, the sworn enemy of Charles V. Moreover, when the Turks invaded Germany they refused the emperor their assistance. In all the dangers which threatened the Empire at this juncture, the Protestant princes were to be found in the ranks of the enemies of their country, and in open defiance to the demands of their sovereign. The political situation became at last so full of perils that Charles V. entered into alliance with the revolted princes by the Religious Peace of Nuremberg, 1532. The campaign then undertaken

against the Turks ended in failure, and a new coalition was set on foot in which German Protestants, French Catholics, and Turkish Mohammedans united against the Empire, 1534.

A counter-league was formed by the Catholic princes in 1538, and warfare seemed imminent. The allied Protestant princes, supported by France, had everything ready for an attack on the Catholic States, when the sudden illness of Philip of Hesse caused an adjournment of hostilities, and a truce was signed, to the great regret of Calvin and Bucer, who openly blamed the conduct of the Protestant princes in coming to terms with the Catholics.

Meanwhile, in Munster, Protestantism had kindled a veritable anarchy, and John of Leyden and the other leaders were inciting the population to a general revolution. A similar movement was going on in Lubeck, which openly revolted from Christian of Denmark. Both cities were reconquered by their sovereigns, but the example had been given which before long was to be widely followed throughout Central Europe.

During these political events Protestantism itself had not been idle. Immediately after the death of Clement VII., and the election of Paul III., the question of a General Council was renewed. The new Pope was most zealous in the cause of the reunion of Christendom and the reformation of morals, and worked hard to promote the great gathering from which so much was hoped. He announced the meeting of prelates for 1537. But Francis I. put obstacles in the way, and the Protestant princes, whose design in calling for a council had not been to facilitate the work of reunion, but only to add another element of difficulty to the already complicated relations between the Pope, the emperor and the French sovereign, declined to have anything to do with it, and even proposed a counter-Protestant Council. Luther, however, was unable to carry out this project, owing to the dissensions

among the preachers; but he drew up the Smalkald Articles, from which several of the Articles of the Augsburg Confession were eliminated, and other passages added especially abusive against the Pope and blasphemous against the Holy Mass. A period of grave disputes followed between the sectaries. Luther, to conciliate the Swiss, modified one of his Articles of Faith respecting the Eucharist, and agreed to the suppression of the Elevation during Mass in the States of Philip of Hesse. In 1542 the Elector of Saxony, having forbidden the enthronization of the lawfully chosen Bishop of Nuremberg, Luther, assisted by three preachers, consecrated an individual selected by the elector for the position, The revenues of the diocese were seized by the crown, a nominal stipend only being allotted to the prelate. This example was speedily followed by the neighbouring Protestant States, with so much rapacity that even Luther declared against the proceedings.

The public peace was at last violated by the invasion of the Duchy of Brunswick by the allied Protestant princes, who were victorious, setting up a new government, and exacting oaths of fidelity from the inhabitants. The sack of churches and convents followed, and disorder and persecution reigned unchecked. Even the Diet of the Empire approved these proceedings, the Imperial Chamber alone protesting—1542. For three years longer a kind of armed truce was maintained, during which the Turks were making fresh inroads on the frontier of the Empire, while the emperor was striving in vain to unite the discordant elements around him.

It was about this time that Luther died. The previous year, 1545, the longed-for Council had at length met. The event was hailed by the heresiarch with bitter insults. His last writings against the Pope and the Church are unrivalled for their hatred and scurrility. Worn out by passion and disease, his mind darkened with the horror of the evils he had evoked, and at enmity with his colleagues, racked with

doubts as to the life he had led, this miserable man died, February 18, Charles V. at last thought of conquering by force men whom he could not gain by compromise or concession, and assembled his troops at Ratisbonne, 1546. But for the few adherents the emperor could rally round him, the allies counted numerous well-equipped regiments, though they were without resource in money. Hence, throughout the ensuing war, the Protestant troops were quartered on the unhappy people. Without formal declaration of war, the allied princes began to pillage. The story of the ten years' war which followed belongs rather to German history than to that of the Church. It is a dreary catalogue of burnings, pillagings, and carnage. One great victory, that of Muhlberg, 1547, encouraged the Imperial party at the beginning of hostilities. But Maurice of Saxony, the prince on whose assistance the emperor counted most, betrayed him to Henry II. of France. Albert of Brandenburg, the apostate Sovereign of Northern Prussia, overran the Empire, and the whole country was one vast conflagration. The people were ruined, agriculture had failed, arts and sciences had vanished, anarchy was rampant everywhere, morals had sunk to an appalling degradation. The Catholic clergy had almost disappeared. The Lutheran doctors were in constant disaccord. Thus the people were left without assistance of any kind, spiritual or temporal, in their extreme misery. At the Diet of Augsburg, 1555, after another futile attempt at reconciliation by conferences, an arrangement called the Peace of Augsburg was drawn up. It brought no advantage except to the adherents of Luther. They had gained all they fought for—unlimited peace, undisputed possession of Church property, full control of ecclesiastical affairs wherever they were in power, each potentate having full liberty to direct his subjects in matters of doctrine and discipline. The position of Catholics was fraught with difficulties of every kind, and little more than half a century later the great struggle

again broke forth, but this time with an unprecedented fury that completed the ruin of the once magnificent German Empire.

Beyond the borders of the Empire the spread of the new doctrine was no less rapid. Before the movement was ten years old, Protestantism in some form or other had penetrated into every Teutonic nation on the Continent; and it is significant that everywhere it found entrance by force, was maintained by the secular arm, and everywhere when revolts arose against the sovereign, Protestantism was found supporting the rebellious. Whenever a Catholic sovereign strove to stem this invading tide of heresy, organized opposition to his mandates was immediately raised; even arms were not unfrequently appealed to, and concessions were wrung from the government at the point of the sword.

The Eastern Cantons of Switzerland were lost to the Church through the influence of Zwingli, a Swiss military chaplain, while the Western Cantons embraced the sect of the Anabaptists. Zurich and Constance were the first to take up the new doctrines. This was in 1523. In the next year Zwingli married. Furious contests followed with Luther about the "Lord's Supper," in which Luther maintained, while Zwingli denied, the presence of our Blessed Lord. The famous Oecolampadius was one of Zwingli's associates in the contest. Shortly after this, war broke out between the Catholic and Protestant Cantons. In the Battle of Cappel (1531) the Catholics were victorious and Zwingli was among the slain. The Catholics, at the exhortation of the Pope, used their success mildly, which Luther bitterly regretted. He would have had the Zwinglians and Anabaptists exterminated.

Denmark's apostasy was due to its sovereign. Frederic I., in 1527, at the Diet of Odensee, obtained a decree from the magnates that Catholics and Lutherans should be on equal footing. Twelve years lat-

er was solemnly promulgated a new form of ecclesiastical organization which a Wittenberg professor had been invited to draw up.

Sweden, under the leadership of Gustavus Vasa, threw off all allegiance to Denmark in 1523. It was the deliberate policy of this monarch to prevent the clergy, an especially influential body in Sweden, from holding too much power. Therefore, against the will of the people, who were staunch Catholics, the "Reformed" Religion was introduced. The Swedes, however, were not aware of the whole extent of their misfortune, for certain external observances were retained with a view of keeping them in the dark as to what had taken place.

In Norway, still under Danish yoke, the new gospel was forced on the people by the government. The heresy found its way even to Iceland as early as 1550.

Wherever the Teutonic knights held commanderies, Protestantism was introduced, and the secularized territory became a hereditary possession in the family of the apostate ruler.

Even in Austria and Bavaria the new sects gained considerable foothold, and for a time it seemed as though these nations, too, would be lost to the Church.

Among Slavonic peoples, Hungary early gave a home both to Lutheran and Calvinistic doctrines. The war between the Empire and the invading Turks, lasting from 1526 to 1633, gave opportunities for innovations to spread silently among a people crushed down by misfortune; but, as a nation, Hungary has never abandoned the true faith.

Protestantism also found its way into Poland, and there gained many adherents.

At the date of the opening of the Council of Trent, 1545, Protestantism had almost reached its high-water mark in Europe. From the

time that it closed (1563) a gradual retrogression set in, of which the causes will be noted later.



### III. Further History of the Revolt

It is not possible to do more than indicate the influence which the great Religious Revolt had on the subsequent history of Europe. There is not an event of any importance which was not affected by it, as religious differences were frequently made a pretext for taking sides on questions which had little to do with religion; hence we find that military expeditions, social development, commercial enterprise, literary and scientific activity, and even musical compositions, are all coloured by the prevailing tone of the day. Effects which would have resulted naturally from causes already operating, were regarded as arising from Protestantism or Catholicism, as the case might be, and the blame would be imputed by the rival, or the glory claimed for its own partisans by each side respectively.

The sixteenth century was an age of powerful monarchs, Charles V. in Germany, Francis I. in France, Henry VIII, in England, and Suleyman the Magnificent in the East. Each of these sovereigns was in his own way aiming at royal supremacy, controlling the action of the Church, centralizing all administrative power in his own hands, curtailing the liberties of the subject, and weakening the power of the nobles. The Continental monarchs each grasped at territorial aggrandisement as well, or at least sought to preponderate in European politics. Each of these rulers, therefore, in framing his policy, used religious rivalry to further his own ends. Thus, Francis I. while persecuting the Calvinists in his own dominions, leagued with the Lutherans of Germany and called in the Turks against Charles V. We have seen Charles V. fighting the Pope, while to repel the Turks he allied himself with the Protestant princes of the Empire. Hence the history of the earlier half of the sixteenth century is mingled with the narrative of theological

strife, but a little later there arose a series of events which were not only coloured by the religious quarrels of the day, but which actually grew out of them. Such were the Revolt of the Netherlands from the unity of the Empire, the Huguenot wars in France, the Establishment of the Church of England as by law reformed, and the Thirty Years' Civil War in Germany. Each of these demands a brief account.

## Religious Wars

### I. Revolt of the Netherlands

**T**he Netherlands, previous to the Revolt, consisted of a group of seventeen provinces, lying on and around the delta of the Rhine and the Meuse. They formed a tract of thickly populated and wealthy territory, and though each was governed by a sovereign duke or count, these states had never been wholly independent; but from the days of the Teutonic Invasion, they had formed an appanage of one or the other of the great Continental powers. For a hundred years they had been attached to Burgundy when, in 1482, by the marriage of Mary, heiress of the ducal house, to Maximilian I. these provinces became united with Austria. They, therefore, formed part of the vast inheritance which fell to the share of Charles V. when he succeeded his father. But Charles V. shortly after was elected Emperor of Germany. Hence the Netherlands followed the fortunes of the rest of the imperial domains.

In 1556, the year after the Peace of Augsburg, Charles V.—worn out by his struggles with heretics, with his unruly subject-princes and with enemies both Christian and Turk—in a strangely dramatic scene laid down the sceptres he had wielded for wellnigh forty years, and declared his intention of withdrawing from the world and its cares to

prepare for death in a monastery. The Netherlands fell to the share of his son Philip, who was also to rule over Spain; while the states of the Empire were confirmed to Ferdinand, brother of Charles V., who had long assisted him in the government. Philip II. was a Spaniard by birth and education, and after four years he withdrew from the Netherlands, leaving as regent his half-sister, the Princess Margaret of Parma, who was to be assisted in the administration by a Council of State, while each province had its own governor or stadtholder. Of these, William of Nassau, Prince of Orange, Stadtholder of Zealand and Holland, was the most remarkable. When Philip withdrew, he bequeathed to the regent a double source of danger to the peace in the shape of a large body of Spanish troops, and a decree just issued at his request by the Holy See for the multiplication of bishoprics, a measure to which the existing bishops and their flocks were much opposed. Add to this, heresy was beginning to appear, and was exciting alarm in every direction. Almost at once the Council of State split up into rival parties. The Prince of Orange intrigued for the recall to Spain of the President Granville, and then took the lead, though still in subordination to the Princess Margaret. The religious difficulties growing every day more acute, Philip, in spite of remonstrances offered by the regent and council, sought to stem the evil by edicts against heretics. The government would have delayed the publication of the king's letters, but Orange urged on the measure which played too well into his hands to be held in abeyance. A terrible panic seized the people. Thousands of seditious pamphlets were published, exciting the popular imagination by depicting the speedy advent of the Inquisition with its attendant horrors. A tide of emigration set in that did not cease until the Netherlands had seen its sons scattered far and wide over Europe, Africa, and Asia. But the heretical preachers grew in boldness, and there is a terrible monotony in the recital of the burn-

ings, sacrileges, robberies, and general vandalism that followed. In a fortnight four hundred churches were destroyed in Flanders alone. The nobles, headed by a band of about thirty Calvinists, had joined in a league to protest against the introduction of the Inquisition, but they soon found that Orange was leading them into a revolt against their Church and their sovereign. The greater number withdrew from the league, and Orange entered into open opposition to the regent's party. An attempt on the part of the government to institute energetic measures, caused the leaguers to raise the standard of revolt. Orange refused a new oath of allegiance which was tendered to the nobles, and withdrew into Germany. With his departure peace seemed about to be restored to the distracted country, when Philip sent as governor of the Netherlands the brave but sternly severe Duke of Alva, 1568.

The regent, feeling herself affronted, withdrew from her false position, and the people gave themselves up to a frenzy of terror, which was not lessened by the action of Alva. He formed a tribunal known by the people as the "Council of Blood." Arrests, trials, and condemnations became the order of the day. Orange, cited before this Board, refused to appear, and gathering forces from Huguenot and Protestant sources, recrossed the frontier and declared war in 1572. Revolts immediately broke out in various quarters, and Alva took more stringent means of repression. Two very popular noblemen—Egmont and Horne—who had for a time been leaguers, were executed; an exorbitant taxation to support the army was threatened, and, in spite of remonstrances, was finally imposed on the people. Philip, thinking the Netherlands had been sufficiently punished, sent a decree of amnesty, but Alva delayed to publish it; and when at last he did proclaim it the exceptions to the general pardon were so numerous that the people would not bear with the governor any longer, but petitioned Philip for his removal. Alva was recalled in 1573, but war had broken out,

Briel had been seized by the rebels, the great siege of Leyden had been begun by the royalists, and to save the city, Orange, who, aided by the famous "Beggars of the Sea," had fitted out a fleet, sent it to the relief of the place by water, while he flooded the land around so that the royalists might be obliged to retire.

The struggle continued for some years, but after many negotiations the Pacification of Ghent was signed; and again matters seemed to be settling down when Orange once more threw the country into disorder. The governor named to succeed Alva died, and at length Don Juan of Austria, the victor of Lepanto, a splendid soldier and most conciliatory ruler, was sent to pacify and re-establish order in the distracted and impoverished country. By the Perpetual Edict, generous terms were granted to the people, hope was springing up anew, when a third time Orange threw the nation back into a state of misery and bloodshed. He had refused to accept the edict, and he now sought by underhand measures to sow suspicions, both in the people against Don Juan, and in Don Juan against the people, warning each side against treachery. The too credulous Netherlanders accused the governor to Philip. Fearing an attack, Don Juan shut himself up in the fortress of Namur and recalled a Spanish regiment. War broke out, and Don Juan almost immediately succumbed to fever.

Alexander Farnese, another brilliant general, was sent to the Low Countries, 1578. The leaders of the revolt were foiled for a time and their hopes fell. Fresh measures of pacification were set on foot, but the provinces, differing in their demands, split up into two distinct groups—the northern, insisting on liberty of worship for the Protestants and forming a league called the Union of Utrecht; while the southern, by the confederacy of Arras were as firm in maintaining the supremacy of Catholicism. Up to this time there had been no question of withdrawing allegiance from Spain, but now, at the instigation of

Orange, the northern provinces proclaimed the king deposed, and offered the crown to the fourth son of Catherine de Medici, that Duke of Alencon who was suitor for the hand of Elizabeth of England. War was renewed with increased fury. Alencon fled, and Dudley, Earl of Leicester, was for a short time regarded as king. At this juncture, William of Orange was assassinated (1586), and his son Maurice was elected to succeed him as leader of the Protestants. Things prospered with the revolted party. The defeat of the Armada gave them a great advantage.'.' Moreover, Farnese was recalled by Philip, who then sent him against Henry of Navarre, at that time engaged in the siege of Paris. The Netherlanders were thus freed from war on their own territory, but events were complicated by a war with France, which dragged on another miserable term of twenty-four years. The breach between the northern and southern provinces was, however, final. The latter were ceded by Philip to his daughter Isabella and to her affianced husband, Albert of Austria, as a separate kingdom, in 1598, and an era of peace began for the distracted and ruined country. The northern provinces remained severed from the Empire, and soon began to be regarded as an independent republic and the champion of Protestantism in every part of the world. The position of the united provinces, or Holland, as the group began to be called, was formally recognized by the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) at the conclusion of the Thirty Years' War in Germany. It was during this memorable revolt that Holland laid the foundations of her great Colonial Empire.